

Missionary

# HERALD

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MATO  
GROSSO

'It is largely unknown and because unknown, mysterious'

# COMMENT

Britain in itself is not a very large island, indeed it was once said that this island has produced so many good sailors because the salt is in our blood, the majority of our people having been born within sound of the sea. That, of course, is an exaggeration but it does serve to point to the fact that our homeland is by no stretch of imagination a large land mass.

## Attempting great things

It is strange then that in our mission for Christ overseas our eyes, from the beginning, have been turned toward continents and we have been engaged in evangelism in huge countries where land distances are immense. These circumstances have had their advantages in that permission to work in these places has opened up to us not just large land areas, but huge populations. Especially was this so in India, China and Africa. The work was not restricted to narrow horizons.

But there have been disadvantages also. Travelling from the southernmost tip of India to its northern borders, or progressing along the Zaire river from its mouth to Kisangani, is almost like moving across different countries. There is not just one culture, one language and one belief. There are many, and a missionary working and fluent in the language of one part of India or Zaire may feel completely strange and unable to communicate in another part of that country. The very vastness can be a hindrance to mobility.

## Working in isolation

Further, if the number of missionaries which can be sent from this country is divided into the number of square miles of continents it can be seen at once that missionary work can easily be a very isolated affair. There may be many many miles between one missionary and their nearest colleague.

If, as in this country, there was a continuing programme of road building and full transport facilities between place and place, then remoteness would be a decreasing factor. Instead we discover, in Zaire for example, that the sense of isolation is increasing instead of decreasing for with the worsening economic situation fuel is becoming harder to obtain and too costly to purchase. At the same time there is a deterioration in the

already limited public transport systems.

## Stretching the mind

As regards size, however, Brazil stretches the mind even more than does India and Zaire. How does one born and bred in the United Kingdom comprehend the vastness of a country in which the whole of Europe could be set down with room to spare? In this sense Brazil almost defies understanding. Over five and a quarter million square miles of it stretching from above the equator in the north to below the tropic of Capricorn in the south.

In this land almost every type of climate occurs. Humid heat in the Amazon region, dry heat in the north-eastern plateau, permanent warmth in large tracts of the coastlands and a temperate climate in the south where snow and frost are not unknown. The rapidly increasing population stands at present at about 113 million but this is very unevenly distributed. The majority live along the coastal strip. The vast distances needed to be travelled call for air travel facilities and Brazil has over 750 airports to meet this demand, the annual number of passengers on domestic flights exceeding six million.

## 'Power to understand'

In this issue we have tried to introduce you to something of the work in this exciting and challenging land. We do not attempt to cover the whole of it, by any means, but look mostly at one state, that of Mato Grosso. This in itself is seven times the size of the United Kingdom and so the few missionary couples we have there could seem lost in its immensity, but there is another vastness to put alongside the physical size and numbers of Brazil. That is the vastness before which Paul stands in awe as he writes to the Ephesians. 'I pray,' he writes, 'that you together with all God's people, may have the power to understand how broad and long, how high and deep is Christ's love' (Ephesians 3:18).

However large Brazil may be, Christ's love overstretching it. That is why He has called us to serve Him there. However remote one of our colleagues may feel, that same love reaches out to encompass them wherever they may be. However daunting may be the prospects of any project, that love garrisons our heart against fear.

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# When I was in Mato Grosso

Matthew McLachlan

The one-upmanship game is frequently played with great fervour and not a little subtle skill whenever people meet and the talk turns to travel. I am always a loser in such contests because, for some unknown reason, travel in this country can hardly compete with the exotic, far-away places now visited and traversed by so many. However, I have discovered that, introduced at the 'psychological now' and with appropriate nonchalance, the phrase 'when I was in Mato Grosso' is a winner hands down and every time. No matter how short one's visit may have been or how superficial one's knowledge of the territory, the very fact of having been there arrests attention and evokes no small wonder.

## Piranhas, fauna and flora

I suppose this is not surprising because Mato Grosso, so far as I know, is not yet included in the enticing glossy brochures of travel agents. There are no luxury package tours offering sailing up the fabulous river Amazon, or 'three days and two nights', or whatever, in an American Indian reservation to 'observe how the natives live', or adventurous fishing for the voracious piranha on the river Tapajoz or trekking through the tropical forest in search of rare fauna and flora. It is not yet in the tourist world, but in the world of reality Mato Grosso is massively there, right in the heart of South America, indeed, the centre point of that continent, it is claimed; and there is an obelisk with appropriate degrees of latitude and longitude to substantiate the claim, located in Cuiabá, the state capital.

Mato Grosso, particularly its northern half, is only now being developed. With an estimated population in this area of one person to every three square miles, it is largely unknown and because unknown, mysterious, and because mysterious, alluring. The search for hidden riches, whether by lone prospectors panning for gold, or teams of adventurers, or government, never ends. Back in the 1520's tales of Inca-gold inveigled Aleixo Garcia, a shipwrecked European, far into Brazil. Four centuries later adventurers like Colonel Percy H Fawcett were still searching for lost civilizations in Brazil. The latter's expedition perished without trace in the forest in the mid 1920's. The cultivation and extraction of rubber boomed in the Amazon region until cuttings surreptitiously

removed and planted in Malaya brought a disastrous slump at the end of the 19th century. Today the Federal Government is engaged in grandiose schemes of development, throwing great highways across the territory and encouraging movement of population for the exploitation of this area's huge potential wealth.

## Vast rivers amongst dense forest

My first view of Mato Grosso was from the air flying from São Paulo to Cuiabá with stops at Campo Grande and Corumbá. Thousands of feet below, the fabulous never-ending forest of hundreds of species of trees slowly and progressively unrolled. The vast rivers Paraná and Paraguay, with their numerous tributaries, snaked their way through the density of vegetation to make one vast irrigation system. Towards the border with Bolivia and Paraguay, just before touchdown at Corumbá, one looked down on the spectacular sight of the Pantanal, a vast swamp home of great flocks of storks and other birds, supporting millions of cattle as well as rice and fodder crops. Up again over rolling mountains, covered to the summit with dense forest and undergrowth, we were soon descending to the sizzling heat of Cuiabá airport. The state capital is the region's fastest growing city. Though founded 258 years ago by prospectors for gold – the precious metal can still be found when digging in the city – it remains a gateway to the unknown.



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# Brazil

## Mato Grosso



## 'When I was in Mato Grosso'

*continued from page 131*

Through this gateway the Society entered Northern Mato Grosso in 1974 at the invitation of the Baptist State Convention. That venture of faith, taken some 20 years after our entry into Paraná, opened up vast new territories and presented great opportunities. The Rev John Pullin who had been working in Paraná now moved with his family into the new area. They settled in Cáceres, a growing town which, in addition to the Baptist church, boasts a military garrison, close to the frontier with Bolivia, and a Roman Catholic cathedral facing the deep-flowing Paraguay river across a pleasant square. From the base at Cáceres John and his Brazilian colleagues began probing northward into the forest, contacting and creating preaching points and giving pastoral oversight to the more distant congregations at Lambari, Figueirópolis and Jaurú.

### The 'wild west' town of Lambari

The forest looks very different from ground level, as one would expect and as I discovered on the 75 mile journey to Lambari for the service on Christmas Sunday. Women were busy doing the family wash in the river as we crossed it and made our way through scrub land into the forest. Then, on the one hand, we were able to see and appreciate the trees not only in their variety of species but of form and colour as well. All around was a riot of dense, luxuriant vegetation. On the other hand, a sense of awe was created in the heavy brooding silence of mid-day heat, and a feeling almost of claustrophobia descended as the trees closed in on either side of the road, creating a green gloaming through which one was glad to pass.

Lambari is a typical forest township straddling the dirt road, with wooden houses and shops lining each side — 'ribbon development' I suppose it would be termed in the sophisticated realms of modern town planning. But there is no particular planning evident in Lambari. It has all the characteristics of a 'wild west' township in which gun-law may suddenly be invoked. The *Templo Batista* is a wooden building, seating about 100 on wooden benches. The dust of the journey still upon us and with no time for a 'wash and brush up' we were ushered into the packed congregation. It was a young congregation, warmhearted and



*Women washing clothes in the river Paraguay, Cáceres*

friendly, uninhibited in the expression of their faith, reverent and happy in their worship. The service was reverently conducted by two brothers, businessmen in Lambari and Cáceres, and it was a joy and privilege to preach on the Christmas theme in such a setting. The joy was somewhat tarnished for me, however, when at the end of the service I was asked to sing a Christmas carol in English! I rendered one verse of 'Silent Night' with great virtuosity but am still wondering

why the congregation dispersed so quickly! It was then out into the warm sunshine to enjoy informal Christian fellowship with our fellow believers, an enriching and gladdening experience, before going on to 'the dirt' again for the bumpy journey to Cáceres, trailing not clouds of glory but of red-brown dust.

*continued overleaf*



*Congregation at Lambari*

# 'When I was in Mato Grosso'

*continued from previous page*

## **Dirt roads, wooden shacks and oil lamps**

We made two other journeys into the forest, one of over 100 miles for the Christmas eve service at Figueirapolis, and the other still further in another direction to Arenapolis and Nortelandia. Travel on both occasions was exceedingly uncomfortable on the dirt road. On the way to Figueirapolis it rained heavily until the road was awash with thick mud and we slithered and slogged through potholes and ruts often on the very edge of disaster. The whole of this area is primitive in the extreme, isolated and bearing the marks of poverty. A visit to the church leader's house revealed a wooden shack tucked away in the forest, forlorn-looking in the rain. There is no electricity in the area, except what is produced by private generators, and houses are lit by acrid, smokey oil lamps. Yet the church is growing. Poor the members may be in this world's goods, but they are rich in faith. The

unpretentious wooden building was again packed to capacity with worshippers and outside, milling around the open door and windows, others strained to hear the good news. We bounced our way home after the service, the road lit by the lurid brilliance of lightning and our conversation punctuated by the roll of thunder. We arrived in Cáceres about 2.am and all the way I kept marvelling and wondering; marvelling at the stamina and dedication of our missionaries and wondering how I would cope were my base in Edinburgh, my congregations in Aberdeen and Inverness and the road conditions as appalling as those in Mato Grosso.

## **The prospect of growth**

The journey to Arenapolis and Nortelandia, separated from one another by the river Santana, revealed other aspects of the developing work in Mato Grosso. These towns are much more developed, many of the streets are cobbled, houses and shops are of more solid construction. There is an air of activity and progress about them. Moreover, they are strategically set in a network of roads which ensures better communications — I saw a bus in Arenapolis! — and the prospect of growth. The churches in these twin towns are being served by Brazilian pastors.

But this is by no means the end of the road for us. Already our sights are being trained still further north, 500 miles from Cuiabá, and still deeper into the Amazon forest. The settlement of Alta Floresta is being hacked out of the forest and into that situation the Rev David McClenaghan and his family will move after furlough. They will be working in primitive conditions creating not only their own home and family life out of nothing but also the opportunities for preaching the gospel to the people as they arrive. Already families have trekked 1,500 miles overland from Parana State after severe frosts had twice ruined the coffee crop and among them are Baptists who may very well form the nucleus around which the church will grow.

'When I was in Mato Grosso' is no mere opening gambit in a game. We are not tourists in an area yet to be featured in the package holiday brochures. We are in Mato Grosso engaged in the serious, demanding, exhausting but rewarding business of working together with God in winning people to Himself and building up His Kingdom. The territory is large, the opportunities are increasing, our staff is numerically small, and we urgently need others to join us in this great enterprise.



*The road awash with a thick mud*

# Adventuring into the unknown

by Yvonne Pullin

## A missionary wife and mother talks of her point of view

When we moved to north Mato Grosso from the state of Paraná people were most concerned that we would be so far from colleagues and friends. We looked at it as something of an adventure into the unknown – 1,500 miles away from our previous sphere of service.

On the day of our arrival in Cáceres it was pouring with rain which made the avenue that leads into the town just one sea of mud. This was the start of our realization that this was going to be a rather different area to work in from Paraná. Even the seasons were slightly different. After the 'long rains' as we call them, there would be no more for five or six months with the result that from May onwards the area would be one huge dust bowl.

### Mud and wattle huts

The poverty of those parts could be observed in the many mud and wattle huts that are found quite close to the town centre. Cáceres is a very old town which celebrates its 200th anniversary this year and it is situated some 250 kilometres west of Cuiabá, the state capital and the next town of any size to Cáceres.

The gigantic state of Mato Grosso is well developed in the south but in the north it is a very different state of affairs. It was only last year that the telephone system was linked in to the inter-city network. Previously it was only possible to telephone within the town and if, in an emergency, one needed to contact someone further afield it had to be done by radio through the courtesy of the military.

Being so isolated meant, too, that occasions for fellowship with other colleagues and other ministers' wives were very rare. I was privileged to serve on the committee for women's work in Mato Grosso, but I was only able to attend on one occasion because the journey to the place of meeting was so lengthy. Usually they were held in Campo Grande, a distance of 1,150 kilometres away from Cáceres. This meant spending two nights on the bus and journeying for about 26 hours.

### Good friends and neighbours

It was a great joy to travel as a family whenever possible but our three children were in school and this imposed restrictions on us. When they were not free from school John had to travel on his own and so was away from home quite often. However, we had very good friends and neighbours if ever we needed a man's helping hand around the place when John was away.

Being so far from São Paulo often meant we could not obtain all that we needed in the shops so we had quickly to learn how to improvise. This distance from the source of supply also pushed up prices and raised the cost of living way above some of the coastal towns.

### Teaching brought opportunities

A problem we had to face was that in a town like Cáceres there were very few English teachers in the schools. John and I were therefore roped in to undertake these classes. This we greatly enjoyed, although teaching English to people of other nationalities is a heartbreaking job. Yet because of this opportunity we got to know a large number of the youth of the town and to form a good relationship with them. We saw that there was a need for the evangelical churches to be wide awake to the challenge of these young people.

But although Mato Grosso is such a large state, with so many administrative problems, and many church problems as well, we found that there was also a warmth among the townspeople of Cáceres. Many of the better educated people had come in from other states, but this applied mainly to the military from whom the schools drew a large percentage of their teaching staff.

There was, too, a sense of willingness to help, of which we found ourselves a part in more than a philanthropic sense. We were there to help people in need, to a knowledge of Jesus as Saviour.

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# EXPANSION brings DIVISION

by David McClenaghan

Mato Grosso is the second largest state within the Federal Republic of Brazil. Seven times larger than the United Kingdom, with a fraction of Britain's population, this wild forest region on the edge of the Amazon basin forms part of a vast frontier of some two million square miles. A history of the development and exploitation of the area was graphically told and illustrated in an article by Brian Moynahan and Lord Snowdon in the 18 June 1978 issue of the *Sunday Times* magazine. Settlers and cowboys, cattle barons and property tycoons are flooding into the region, clearing trees and building roads, establishing new plantations of rice, beans and coffee, or erecting wood pulp and alcohol processing plants. With encouragement from Brazil's progressive military government, large numbers of pioneers are leaving the coastal regions and the frost devastated plantations of the southern states, and are following the interior highways into Mato Grosso and Amazonas.

This movement of population has radically changed the church scene in Mato Grosso. Sleepy little townships, where it was difficult and sometimes hazardous fruitfully to present the claims of Christ, have now become bustling communities as the settlers move in. Many of the newcomers are ready to accept the gospel and some, particularly from Paraná, have had contacts with our Baptist churches in the south. In the little town of Alta Floresta, 820km due north of Cuiabá, I met a couple now in fellowship with the church who had been married ten years previously by a BMS missionary in Paraná.

### The call for help is answered

In the light of the rapidly developing life-style of both north and south Mato Grosso and the accelerated church growth, it is small wonder that the Society received a real 'Macedonian' call for help from the Baptist Union and churches of Mato Grosso. Despite the fact that the Brazilian BU is keen to have BMS personnel in all parts of the state, including the more developed southern



*The founder's statue, Cuiabá (Indian, Portuguese and Negro)*

region, it is significant that all four couples who to date have gone to Mato Grosso have felt called to work in the northern half of the state. This subjective understanding of God's leading has been vindicated by the eagerness of the Northern Baptist Association to issue invitations to us through the Baptist Union of Mato Grosso.

There has been a Baptist witness in Mato Grosso for about 55 years. The work began in the town of Corumbá, a port on the River Paraguay, and congregations rapidly sprung up across south Mato Grosso. Today many towns have strong churches with several congregations and preaching points in outlying villages. In the south of the state the towns are older, the communities more traditional and the infrastructure more established. Many of the roads are asphalted and there is a railway which aids industry and facilitates communications.

However the past ten years have brought the influx of settlers that has transformed the face of Mato Grosso. The largely unexplored forests of the north are now crisscrossed



*Irene McClenaghan visiting in the Cuiabá area*



with various highways carrying the heavy lorries that supply the mushrooming small towns. Such is the size of the region that in January 1979 two new states will be formed, allowing North Mato Grosso to receive more direct federal aid and to organize its political machinery in Cuiabá. The 15 or so churches of the Northern Association have decided to follow the example of the political world and divide the Baptist Union into two. So in January 1979 a new federal state will be added to the Republic of Brazil and the Baptist Union of North Mato Grosso will come into being, financed largely through the generosity of the Southern Baptist Convention of the USA.

### The need for leaders is great

There is a great deal of work still to be done in the north. Many of the villages are yet without a Baptist witness and some of the

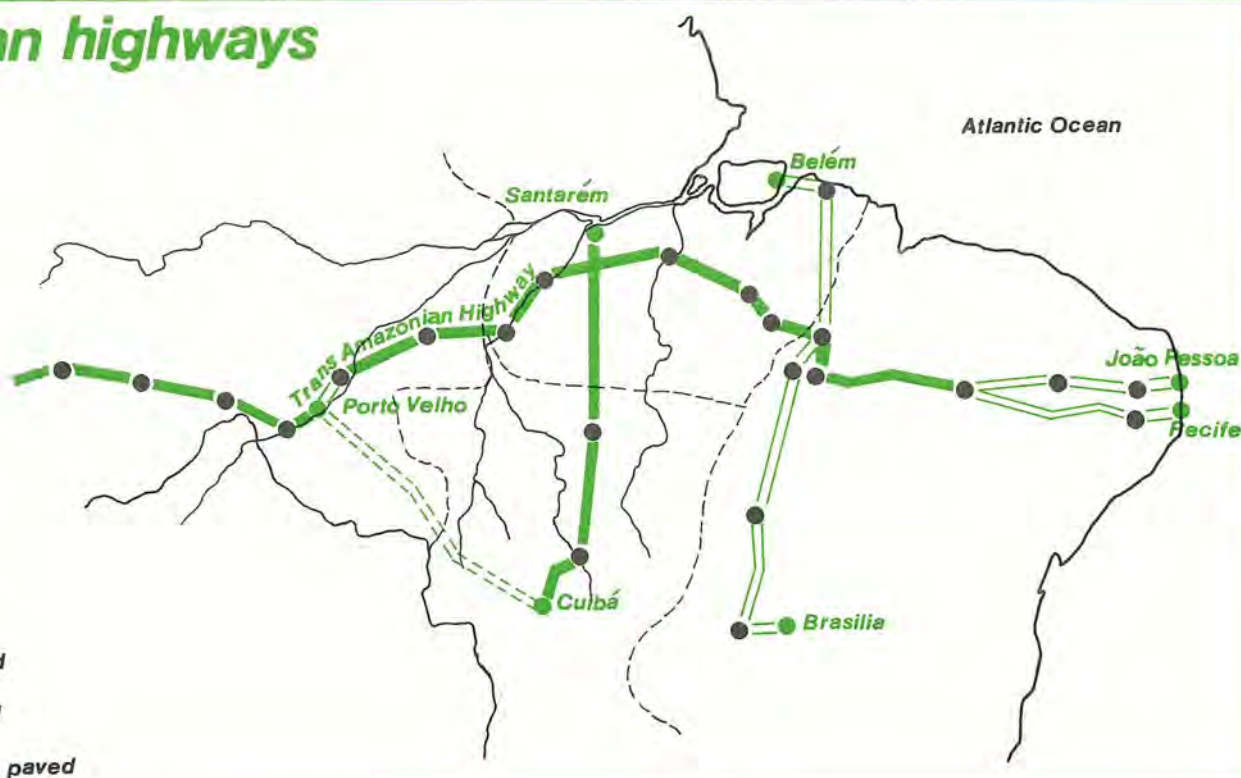
Already several attempts have been made in Cuiabá and Rondonópolis to reach our lay preachers and evangelists with concentrated Bible study. It is essential that those who take the pulpit in the congregations and who are the recognized leaders in the villages be given the opportunity to mature in their faith and thinking and become more competent in their handling of God's word. It is to be hoped that the smaller number of churches in the new union will accept the challenge of theological education by extension and support prayerfully and financially the training of men and women for leadership.

### The desire for missionaries remains

In recent days there has been encouragement for the Church of North Mato Grosso. Firstly we have seen the willingness of the National Mission Board of Brazil to regard

of us has been in seeing the desire of Baptist families settling in the north to gather themselves together into little congregations. It is sometimes the case that we have not pioneered a new preaching point but rather the leadership of the denomination has received word that folks are holding meetings in someone's home and would like the help and encouragement of the association or the Baptist Union. Visits are then made and plans outlined for the integration of the group into the main life of the church. Several small congregations will eventually be united to form one church and then a pastor will be sought for the new cause. Two new churches were formed in this way in the Cáceres region, where BMS involvement in Mato Grosso began. We ought to give thanks to God for the real desire of our Brazilian colleagues to have a large team of BMS missionaries working alongside them in

## Brazilian highways



congregations in isolated places badly need leadership. The churches that will form the new Baptist Union are not able to supply personnel to all the congregations, and programmes of training lay leaders have not yet produced much fruit. Distances are vast and communications difficult, so it is not surprising that when problems arise the existing leadership is under considerable strain. A real priority for the Church in North Mato Grosso is to organize an efficient lay training programme. This will probably be in the form of correspondence courses backed up by half-yearly Bible Institutes running for about two weeks.

the northern region as a priority area for Brazilian missionaries. One of the most exciting developments of our expansion has been the involvement in the new towns on the Cuiabá/Santarém highway. In the little town of Colider a good Brazilian brother has been working for the past two years. He is Pastor Jair da Costa Xavier and from small beginnings in his own home has now about 100 baptized members in the church there. Pastor Jair was appointed to the work on the highway by the Brazilian National Mission Board.

A source of continual encouragement to all

evangelism and pastoral oversight of churches and congregations. The way is open for us too to give leadership and direction in the field of theological education and lay training already mentioned.

These are exciting days in Mato Grosso with tremendous opportunities for presenting the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is not easy to make long term plans or policy in such a fast changing and enthusiastic church scene. We need above all things to be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit who will direct our ways, be it in evangelism, pastoral care of churches or theological education.



Brunton Scott

# Relatively Speaking

by Brunton Scott

There are 3,000 missionaries in Brazil! So says a report about foreign missionary activities. When you think of the logistics of supporting such a number of people, the financial outlay, the time spent on planning, the houses to be bought or rented, the furniture to be acquired, the transport provided and the schooling for children to be arranged, you realize that the commitment of many missionary societies must be considerable. At the time of writing, the BMS part in that 3,000 is small. There are 25 couples in all. But even that number involves the Society in heavy expenditure. I am not sure what the context of these statistics is, but a number of points need to be remembered.

3,000 are not so many really. Brazil is a very large country, the largest in South America and the fifth in the world league. It is bigger than all of the EEC countries put together and despite the rapid development of the past 25 years there are many very remote towns and villages at great distances from the main centres of population. It could be argued that the distances involved in these parts make the job of evangelism more 'labour intensive' than it might be if the towns were nearer each other and one missionary could be responsible for many more people in a more compact area. This seems to me to have been the situation in the North West of Paraná in the early 60's. Also, apart from arguing the more specific cases, the sheer size of the country makes the number 3,000 almost insignificant. Added to that of course, the population is approximately 113 millions. That is a large number of people and 3,000 helpers among such a number is a small percentage.

Looking at things from another angle, it should not be forgotten that until recently there was little restriction, if any, on the entry of missionaries to Brazil. The successive governments have had a liberal policy and did not seem to place any limitations on religious personnel entering the country. For the last 12 months or so a review of this situation has been in process and of course Brazil has the right to do this if it wills. The other side of the coin to this is that with the 'denominational situation' as it is, every church body is free to send its missionaries where it feels they should be deployed. Agreement between mission boards and Brazilian church leadership about restricting numbers and/or directing personnel to this area or that, so as to avoid duplication of work, seems not to have been thought about — even if it were possible. It is very important to state here that BMS personnel are placed at the invitation of the Brazilian church leadership.

**Help is still needed to meet the challenge**  
The Society's missionaries also work in close collaboration with other missionary groups who co-operate with the Brazilian Baptist Convention. These Baptist missions include the Southern Baptists, who first sent missionaries to Brazil in 1881, the Canadian Baptists, and the Japanese Baptists whose work is among Japanese immigrants. Dr Jose Reis Pereira, the editor of the Baptist Journal of Brazil and an influential figure in Baptist affairs, has written, 'It is not likely that the shortage of trained workers will be overcome in the foreseeable future. This is because the

number of pastors trained each year is exceeded by the number of churches organized.' This rapid growth is not of course limited to the Baptist churches and it is in the light of this, as well as other factors, that the request for help comes from Brazilian church leaders themselves. The increase in population and the challenge this presents to the evangelical church is important.

Alongside the great increase in population, the rapid development of the country and the serious social and economic problems that have emerged, there has been an explosion of interest in Spiritist movements. Many thinking as well as unthinking Brazilians are disillusioned by traditional church attitudes and, as in Western Europe, they seek elsewhere for answers to the fundamental issues of life. The various expressions of Spiritism have found an eager response in the hearts and minds of Brazilians at all levels of society. Brazilian Christians, looking at the different aspects of their national life, including the Spiritist influence, feel that the Church of Christ is involved in a struggle for the soul of the nation. Many of them feel it to be a titanic struggle and they say often how glad they are for the help that comes from other countries. To me this says a lot about the generosity of the Brazilian mentality. Only time will tell — God's time — whether the Brazilian requests for help and the eagerness of mission boards to help, have been misplaced. Sincerity on both sides is not lacking.

**The true gospel can only be beneficial**  
There are those who question the benefit of having missionary personnel on one's soil and, of course, the whole issue of having 3,000 such people on the ground, and the benefits they bring, is an open question. The presence of Christ's servants in a community should always be of great significance for that community, in any part of the world and at any level. One would hardly question the lasting contribution that early missionaries made to the life of our own nation. Similar things can be said in modern times about the significance of missionary activity in Nagaland and Mizoram, India. We believe the good news about Jesus, His death and resurrection, to be the most important message for the individual, the community and the nation. We also believe you cannot do better for a people than introduce them to the Saviour of the world. Although I might disagree with some of the interpretations of some Brazil missionaries and with some of their activities, I should imagine they are all intent on introducing people to Jesus. That

can be nothing but beneficial to a nation in which so much hope is invested.

But I realize that there are those who would raise serious doubts about 'the gospel' that some groups preach. For example, that it is too narrow to be the majestic faith of the New Testament, or that it is too bigoted an interpretation, or perhaps it is too obviously an import, having the severe limitations of being so American or European that it is inevitably a distortion of the biblical and prophetic perspective. On the other hand, there are those missionary groups who seem to be so social and political that New Testament gospel content is minimal; so general in proclamation that the sharp and specific challenge of the Lord Christ is lost to those who need Him. Having met a good number of Brazil missionaries from various societies I have to recognize that like ourselves they are sinners and that too often policy and practice loose touch with spiritual and moral realities. That, of course, has tragically happened amongst our churches in Britain.

**Much has been achieved, yet much remains**  
But in the main my impressions are that Brazil missionaries want with all their hearts and minds to respond to the total needs of

the people amongst whom they work. Undoubtedly that response will not satisfy everybody — there will always be differences of opinion and emphases — but I would submit that good has come to the people of Brazil as the result of missionary enterprise. Christ has been made known; churches have been established; faith has been crystalized; hope has been brought to the lives of countless men and women. As the outcome of the gospel, attitudes have been changed, hospitals and schools built, clinics established and agricultural projects launched. That which has been done may well be inadequate, but the limitations of what we seek to do in the name of Christ are part of the pain and distress of our sinful humanity.

In whatever way the pundits assess the presence of 3,000 missionaries on Brazilian soil, real needs are only met when we are living and working amongst people whose problems and sorrows cry out for the response that is born of the compassion of Christ. A missionary working in Mato Grosso wrote the following, 'At the request of the Brazilian pastor, I visited an area west of Cáceres. I came away almost in tears because of the opportunities we are just not taking up.'

## News in brief...

### URGENT

A holiday relief is required at South Lodge, Worthing, the BMS home for retired missionaries. The Society would be pleased to hear from anyone who could offer a weekend or a period from one to four weeks. Please contact urgently Mr C Turner, BMS, 93 Gloucester Place, London W1H 4AA.

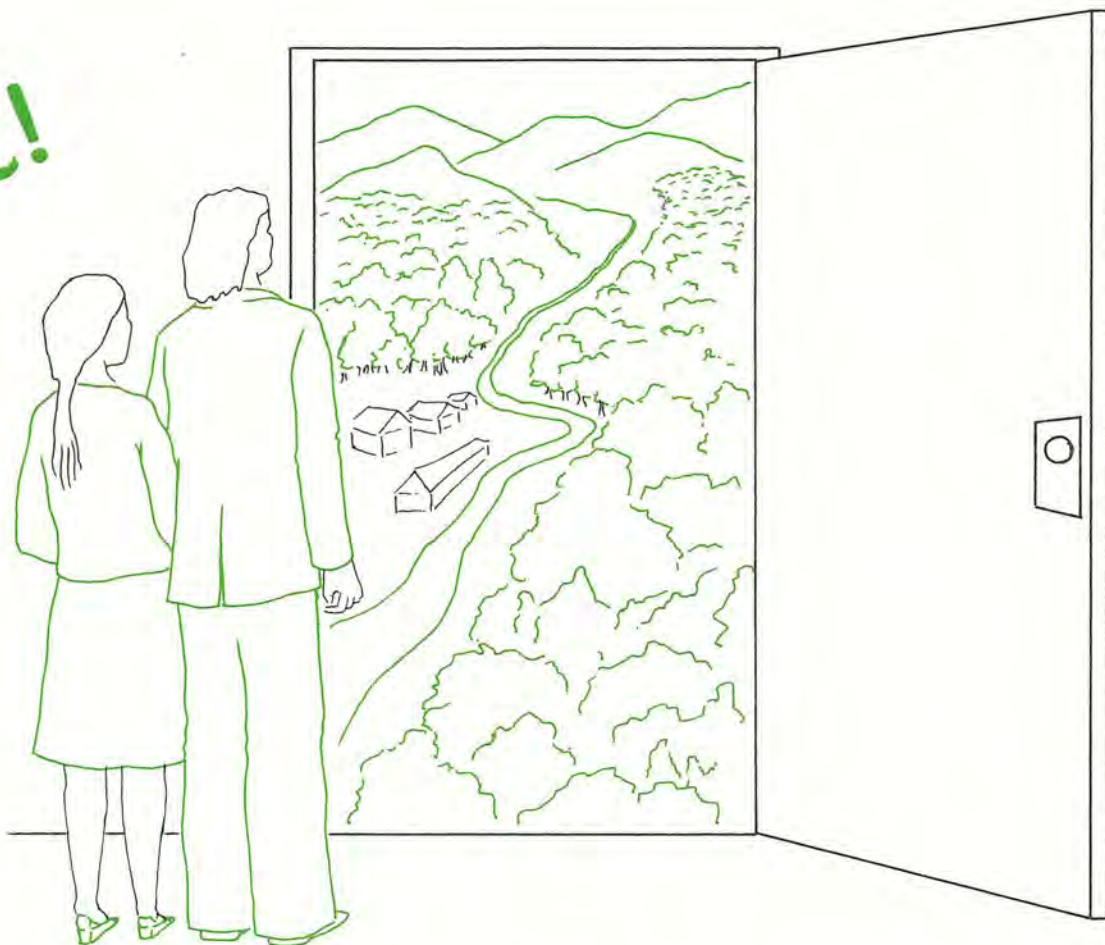
### 44 YEARS OF SERVICE

Miss Beatrice Smith of Stourport Baptist Church was first appointed as Missionary Secretary in February 1934 and has held the position continuously since that date. It is only now, due to advancing years and declining health, that she feels she must pass the reins to someone else. Miss Smith's love and devotion to the BMS is very sincere and has always been accompanied by a deep involvement. For example, to encourage young girls in BMS work, from 1937 to 1970 she ran a very successful Girls' Auxiliary Meeting.



*BMS missionaries in Brazil with their families*

# There at last!



by John and Maria Dyer

Attempting to evaluate a situation which is largely outside one's understanding can be an unproductive exercise unless as Christians we at least make the effort to keep a biblical perspective throughout.

Many of you will be aware through the Missionary Society that we had been waiting some considerable time for the day when we could begin our work as missionaries in Brazil. The time of preparation goes back to early 1972 when John was accepted for service overseas with the BMS. At that time he was completing his final year at Spurgeon's College and so it was recommended that he gain some pastoral experience in this country before leaving for Brazil. Between September 1972 and August 1973 he spent a very useful and worthwhile year alongside Alan Easter at Burlington Baptist Church in Ipswich. The idea was that he should then proceed to Brazil for language study.

#### Four year delay

Sometimes, new and perhaps unwelcome situations are the result of our own actions and decision making, if this is an appropriate way of describing the change in direction that events then took. In January 1973 we became engaged to be married and in view of Maria's age the Candidate Board, having

agreed to recommend acceptance of her offer of service, also decided that we should gain further pastoral experience together in this country. This was to occupy us during the next four years, and at first the thought of having to wait so long seemed very daunting. Not surprisingly a twinge of frustration was felt. On reflection though, it must be said that we enjoyed in Birmingham a ministry that was generally happy and helpful as far as we were concerned, and the time spent there also provided an opportunity for further study for us both.

Then, in September 1977, we moved across Birmingham to Selly Oak for what we thought was to be our last few months in England. Again the opportunity for further study and preparation was welcomed, but not the totally unexpected delay which was soon to be faced. We were within a week of finishing our course at St Andrew's College and had just completed our intake of inoculations, having also packed our belongings for shipment to Brazil, when news came that the Brazilian Government had called a halt to the issuing of visas. You can imagine how we felt! In view of this, contingency plans were being made by the Society for us to begin language study in London at the Berlitz School of Languages in Oxford Street.

This took our minds off other things for a while, but by mid-February we were simply waiting for news of our visa. However, there was little prospect of our receiving it in the foreseeable future.

#### Home on furlough?

By this time we had moved into a vacant missionary furlough house in Eltham, South-East London, but we had never expected that we should need accommodation in a furlough house before we had even begun our work in Brazil! And so we wondered what this situation in which we found ourselves was all about. The weeks came and went and then the months also. 'Surely we shall know something by Easter,' we said, and in fact we did. A visa was authorized for Brunton Scott and his wife and son just a few days before Easter and with it the promise that ours too would soon be granted.

For a few weeks we were quite elated and even went to Gatwick Airport on Easter Bank Holiday Monday in order to get the feel of things as far as our journey was concerned. But again the weeks came and went and so did the months and still our visa had not arrived. Would it ever come? What was God saying to us in all this? These were the questions uppermost in our minds.

During this time of waiting we had agreed to do some deputation work for the Society and were able to establish relations with those churches which had asked to adopt us as missionaries going to the field for the first time. We were able to share with friends in the churches our sense of God's call and our attempts to understand what was happening, and this kept us busy and involved. We did not have a lot of time to sit and mope and are grateful for this. But we had begun to realize the implication of Acts 16:6-8 for us and had asked the churches to pray that God's purposes should be fulfilled in our lives before praying that the door to Brazil would be opened to us. We appreciated tremendously the genuine interest and sympathy which we felt among all with whom we had contact.

### Looking to Australia

By now we had begun looking into other possibilities of serving our Lord overseas and it seemed as if our future work might well be outside the spheres of the BMS. We had received encouragement and much help from the General Superintendent of the South Australian Baptist Union concerning the opportunities for service there. John had once worked for the State Government of Victoria, Australia, in London and things were beginning to move along in this direction. We were concluding, therefore, that this was the way ahead for us.

On the Tuesday following the Spring Bank Holiday, we felt that it might be a good idea to go along to the Brazilian Embassy and ask once and for all if it were likely that we would be granted a visa. Neither of us had ever considered doing this before as we were confident that the Society both in London

and in Brazil had done all that could be done to secure the release of our visa. But perhaps we felt that we had been patient long enough. We certainly felt the need to come to a decision one way or the other about Brazil. We intimated to the BMS our intention of going to the Brazilian Embassy personally and went with its blessing and encouragement. So on the 31 May, with a strange feeling of destiny in our hearts, we were on our way to the biggest surprise of our lives.

### Trip to the Embassy

It seemed as if the young lady behind the counter was expecting us. 'Have you come about a visa?' she asked. We introduced ourselves to her and she repeated our name, spelling it out letter by letter. Already our hearts were beating very fast, but not nearly so fast as when she said that a telex had just

been received. Yes, our visa had at last been granted and the authorization was dated 29 May in Brazil. The very day we had made up our minds to go to the Embassy for ourselves, feeling a tremendous burden to do so, the authorization to issue our visa had been torn out of the telex machine in London. We were not only momentarily in a state of shock and then of sheer excitement, but also acutely aware of God's hand upon us. It was as if He had given us a firm push in the back to go and collect the visa which had at that moment arrived. Everything was excitement that day at the Mission House and how thankful to God we all were.

And so the words of Jesus, the Lord of every situation, came true for us, 'Look, I set before you an open door which no man can shut' (Revelation 3:8).



*John and Maria Dyer*

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Secretaries acknowledge with grateful thanks the following legacies and gifts sent anonymously or without address.  
(30 May-30 June 1978)

**General Work:** Anon (Aberdeen): £10.00; Anon: £5.00; Anon: £25.00; Anon: £3.00; Anon (WAM): £5.00.

**Agriculture:** Anon: £5.00.

**Relief Fund:** Anon: £10.00; Anon: £5.00; Anon: £10.00; Anon (EMW): £5.00; Anon (HLW): £20.00.

Legacies	£	p
B Brooker	100.00	
Mabel Mary Chesterman	50.00	
Ethel Gain	100.00	
Miss E M Gibbons	297.90	
Eva May Golden	870.68	
Miss J A Ker	1,750.00	

Mrs L C McKendrick	34.23
R H Pulipaka Trust	2,500.00
Margot Edna McAlpine Quin	540.00
Miss J Sawers (July figure corrected)	671.18
Olga Alice Smith	500.00
Kathleen Ivy Stuart	200.00
Miss C M Sumner	478.58
Percival W White Trust	555.76

### MISSIONARY MOVEMENTS

#### Arrivals

Mr J Spiller on 28 May from CECO, Kimpese, Zaire.

Mr B Westin on 28 May from CECO, Kimpese, Zaire.

Miss E Wyatt on 14 June from Khulna, Bangladesh.

Miss M Bushill on 16 June from Delhi, India.

Miss M Hughes on 17 June from Kisangani, Zaire.

Dr and Mrs A D Hopkins and family on 17 June from Pimu, Zaire.

Mrs R Young and two children on 21 June from Dinajpur, Bangladesh.

Mr and Mrs J Mellor and family on 26 June from Tondo, Zaire.

Rev and Mrs G H Grose on 29 June from Delhi, India.

Miss J E Knapman on 30 June from Calcutta, India.

#### Departures

Miss A Matthias on 1 June to Kathmandu, Nepal.

Miss P Woolhouse on 6 June to CECO, Kimpese, Zaire.

Miss E M Staple on 28 June to IME, Kimpese, Zaire.

# Joining the Team



## AT HOME

The General Committee of the Society has appointed the **Rev David Martin** to succeed Miss Lesley Partridge as Young People's Secretary. Miss Partridge left the Society in July to be married and is now living in Cardiff. Mr Martin takes up his duties this month and will be concentrating on the under 18 age groups in the churches while Rev Vivian Lewis continues his work with the over 18's.

Mr Martin was converted as a teenager, baptized and became a member of Bordesley Green Baptist Church, Birmingham. Two years later he received a call to full time service for the Lord and eventually was accepted for training at Bristol Baptist College. Towards the end of the four year course at Bristol College and University he was accepted as a candidate by the BMS and together with his fiancée, Charmian, proceeded for a short period of study at St Andrew's, Selly Oak. They were intending to go to India but because of difficulties with visas etc they had a year's wait, during which time Mr Martin did some teaching, and eventually they were appointed to Brazil.

The couple spent five years there during which, after language school and orientation, they undertook a varied work in Paraná. Based at Guarapuava they had the privilege of starting a small congregation of believers which today is a fully fledged church under the leadership of a Brazilian pastor. Following a period of deputation on their return to this country, Mr Martin has been pastor of Green Street Green Baptist Church, Kent, for the last four years. They have an eight year old daughter, Deborah.

## IN ZAIRE

**Lorraine Carr** was born in Clarendon, Jamaica and had a strong Christian upbringing. Her grandfather was a Baptist minister.

She reports, 'After arriving in Britain I attended a Sunday School but it was not until 1974 that I accepted Christ into my life and was baptized at Elim, Camberwell. Since this time I have come to realize that there is more to living than I had ever thought possible.'



In 1976 Lorraine was led to Denmark Place Baptist Church, Camberwell, where the Lord revealed to her ways in which she could use all her skills for His work. The following year she graduated with a BSc Honours degree in Biology from Queen Mary College, London University. Her main subjects were ecology and applied biology which involved her in a study of the environment and an attempt to understand how best to use that God-given environment without destroying it. Also in 1977 she was accepted by the BMS and since then has completed theological and practical training at St Andrew's College, Birmingham before leaving for Brussels, Belgium in April to study French.

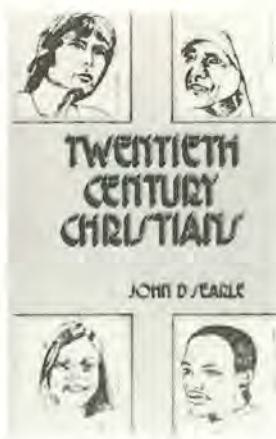
Pray for Lorraine as she completes her language study in preparation for going to Zaire in January 1979.

## IN ZAIRE

**Stephen Mantle** of Market Harborough, Leicestershire was brought up by his parents to go to church and about four years ago started regularly attending church for himself. Last summer he worked for a while in a kibbutz in Israel and then travelled back



through Turkey and Europe, hitch-hiking part of the way. During this time his faith was deepened and he was baptized in November 1977 at Market Harborough Baptist Church. On leaving school Stephen was employed as a screen printer. He thought about doing VSO work and when talking this over with his minister, the latter suggested he might get in touch with the BMS. Stephen's willingness to be useful was soon matched with a need to be met and in July, after a two-weeks crash course in French, he replaced Andrew North in Kinshasa doing the work of a courier. Pray for Stephen as he adjusts to his new way of life.



**TWENTIETH CENTURY CHRISTIANS** by John D Searle  
Published: Saint Andrew Press £2.10

In his introduction the author states, 'The aim of this book is two-fold. First, to provide something in between the longer biographies written for adults and the brief, simplified "lives" written for children. Secondly, it aims to provide up-to-date information about those whose story was first published some years ago, and to show how the work they initiated has subsequently developed.' Although this is a very worthwhile purpose, it means that, by its own admission, the book is neither original in its scope nor likely to be long-lasting in its relevance.

It provides twelve 'mini-biographies' of modern-day Christians covering a wide spectrum of nationalities, theological positions and types of service, ranging from the very famous such as Cliff Richard and Mother Teresa, to the less well-known such as John Buchanan and Sally Trench. The narrative style is factual yet manages to retain the reader's interest, and each chapter concludes with a helpful list of books for further reading and a list of films where these are available. It is a book to educate rather than inspire, and as such would be more useful for school projects than for personal devotions. Those looking for sermon illustrations, subjects for youth club epilogues, or discussion-starters for school RE groups could also find it valuable. Through all the successes and failures in the lives of each of the people dealt with, the motivation of a deep personal commitment to Jesus Christ is always evident.

It is a pity that the cover and title of this paperback are not more exciting: neither of these will immediately attract the general reader, who is also likely to find the price rather prohibitive.

LAP



**IN HIS NAME** by George Appleton  
Published: Lutterworth Press £2.20

It is now over 20 years since George Appleton, then Secretary of the Conference of Missionary Societies, published his collection of readings and prayers for the world and the Church under the title, *In His Name*. The first edition was well and gratefully received. It was as good a collection of devotional material in traditional style as could then be obtained, and was suitable for both private and public use. The material was skilfully arranged in 71 topics with a right balance of carefully selected passages of Scripture and five prayers drawn from many sources, including some original compositions by the compiler.

Now a new edition has been published, the compiler taking into account changed attitudes to other religions and current interest in varying methods of prayer and meditation. Substantially the collection is the same, but in each section a devotional thought has been added for quiet contemplation. Here and there headings have been improved, and in the prayers verbal changes have been made.

For use in private devotions and in prayer meetings and services, it is still an excellent aid.

ASC



**THE SAINTS OF SCOTLAND** by E S Towill  
Published: Saint Andrew Press £1.95

This little book goes beyond the scope suggested by its title in that it covers not only Scottish saints but also those whose names are associated with Scottish places and folklore, and who come from other parts of the British Isles as well as the continent. Mention is also made of the saints of biblical fame, and of angels too who have a place in the religious thought of the Scottish people. Although appealing perhaps to only a limited readership, the author has provided a worthwhile handbook which will put within the reach of the ordinary reader, teacher and student, information otherwise difficult to obtain.

The book has an opening chapter entitled, 'What is a saint?' in which the historical use of the word through the ages is examined, but which shows the author himself preferring the Catholic understanding of the word 'saint' to the Protestant idea of the sainthood of all believers. He then proceeds to provide brief biographical accounts of 45 of the better known saints in some way connected with Scotland and concludes each with additional material in note form, plus suggestions for further reading. Similar but passing attention is then given to the same number of the lesser known saints, many of whom, the author admits, are likely to belong to the realm of legend rather than history.

Edwin Towill was until recently Principal Lecturer in Religious Education at Dundee College of Education and is a former parish minister. *The Saints of Scotland* is published as a paperback which at £1.95 might be considered somewhat expensive. However, it should repay itself in the time it will save those who would otherwise have to read far more widely in order to benefit by the kind of material presented in this concise and readable volume.

JBD

# THE CENTRE OF

by John Pullin

# GROWTH

The main BMS participation in Mato Grosso to date has been in the *Associação Norte* (Northern Association). The Convention is divided into five associations and has appealed to the Society to work in all five. The Northern Association is both a challenge and a problem. The challenge is that most of the new areas of development are to be found there. The problem is mainly in its size. Take its two extremes east to west. São Felix, where there is a congregation under the charge of Pastor Saulo, whose salary is paid by the First Church Campo Grande, and Jaurú, where the Pastor's salary is paid by State Missions. The distance between these two must be in excess of 1,500 kilometres. From south (Rondonópolis) to north (border with Para) the distance must be about the same. In such a vast area it is all but impossible to keep up with the needs and to know where the church ought to concentrate. The matter is not helped by the general weakness of the churches that make up the Association, including the three in the state capital of Cuiabá.

## Distance brings difficulties

This leads to the problem that many of the fourteen churches are living in isolation. There are few opportunities for them to get together for fellowship. Some find it almost impossible to be present even at the annual Association Meetings each November, because of what it costs in time and money to travel. This isolation may in part account for the strange doctrines and practices that are all too common in the work. It has led to a kind of pastoral dictatorship, with some of the pastors showing themselves totally unprepared for the responsibility.

Those involved in trying to bridge the gaps visit these isolated churches to help pastors and evangelists, but find one great frustration. The amount of time spent behind the wheel, getting to and returning from a church, in relation to the time spent on the job is out of all proportion. Naturally, in terms of longer journeys the stay would be longer to justify the expense and time spent on the journey. Some of the shorter trips, however,

often left one with the feeling that little had been done in a day's work other than drive a car from A to B and back again. It might be suggested that the visit be prolonged. But the truth is that most workers in north Mato Grosso are already away from home far in excess of normal, with the resultant family strains and problems.

## Health must be looked after

Perhaps a certain health hazard exists. Contending with the heat, dirt, lack of good drinking water, one finds after a time that general health is not as good as it should be. How careful workers in north Mato Grosso need to be to look after their health.

Those who work in Mato Grosso are not only faced with problems, but are receiving blessings on their ministry. There can be few faster growing churches than Dourados, under the leadership of Pastor William Balaniuc and few more exciting opportunities than Campo Grande, to say nothing of frontier situations like Jaurú, Cáceres, São Felix and many others.

## More workers are needed

The state of Mato Grosso will soon divide into two states. This has already been agreed by the Brazilian Government. What difference will this make to Baptist work? The now Northern Association will become a Convention. That in turn will mean that new and smaller associations will be organized. Naturally the smaller units will be good, it will be much easier to keep in touch with existing work and see new opportunities as they arise. However, the need of Baptist work in Mato Grosso is for more workers. There is still a need for State Missions, National Missions, BMS, Southern Baptist, Canadian Baptist and others to send workers into Mato Grosso.

This is the present day growth region of Brazil. It will never be as dramatic as Paraná because of the problem of distance. Mato Grosso will be more costly than any work BMS has attempted to date in Brazil. However it is a challenge that we dare not neglect.



*A leisurely form of travel*