

MISSIONARY

HERALD

THE MAGAZINE OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 1984 PRICE 20p



ALIVE IN ZAIRE



FEBRUARY 1984

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We share in the work of the Church in:

Angola	Nepal
Bangladesh	Sri Lanka
Brazil	Tanzania
India	Trinidad
Jamaica	Zaire

COMMENT

THE news of the death of Alberic Clement in the early hours of 20 December has been received during the preparation of this magazine for publication. Already the tributes are flooding in from all parts of the world, for he was recognized as a Baptist leader of world stature. His travels to all areas of the Society's work and his vice-chairmanship of the Baptist World Alliance had brought him into contact with church leaders in many countries, who knew him as someone totally committed to the communication of the gospel throughout the world.

Local church roots

His involvement in international Baptist life, however, never separated him from his roots. He was equally committed to the local church and during his presidency of the Buckinghamshire Baptist Association two years ago he took as his theme 'the local church in its world setting'. At the funeral service on 23 December the minister of Great Missenden Baptist Church, where Mr Clement was a deacon, was able to speak very warmly of his participation in local church life. He had taken part in the service on the Sunday before his death and was due to lead worship early in the New Year.

Alberic Clement knew, as all Baptists know, that there is no such thing as a world church apart from its expression in local fellowships. He knew also that there could be no effective worldwide witness if local churches were not convinced of the need to share the 'good news'. Where else are missionaries 'grown'? Where else is support in prayer and giving to be found?

Communicator

As BMS Editor for ten years and the General Home Secretary for 20 years, Alberic Clement was a tireless advocate of mission. Last year his work in the realm of Christian communication was recognized when he was given an award by the European Baptist Press Service. In retirement he had not laid down his pen. He continued to write, and at the invitation of the Society he had begun to work on the history of the BMS ready for the Society's bi-centenary.

We know that the work of the church does not depend upon one man and neither does the work of mission come to an end because of one person's passing. But at the moment we are aware of the absence of one who had such a grasp of world Christian affairs, and who had an encyclopedic knowledge of our Society. We thank God for the life of Alberic Clement. We rejoice in his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The greatest memorial we can offer is to reaffirm our commitment to the cause of world mission which he espoused.

Sorry

The editor of this magazine has gone away to sit penitently under his juniper tree. Profound apologies for not noticing that Ezekiel had usurped Elijah in the copy for last month's Comment, and for not correcting it before it went to press.

MISSIONARY HERALD

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JUST after eight o'clock on the morning of Sunday, 11 December, 1983, Andrew North, the Secretary for Missionaries' Affairs in Zaire, and I made our way to the Lisala Baptist Church in Kinshasa to represent the BMS at the tenth anniversary service of the formation of the Baptist Community of the River Zaire.

As we approached the church the crowds grew thicker and we had literally to inch the car through the throng at the compound gate. Inside, the crush was even greater. This gathering was in jubilant mood. Many of the women wore the distinctive cloth of the CBFZ women's meetings, a yellow material with brown patterns of lanterns and the wording 'A Christian is a light unto the world'.

The service was due to commence at 8.30 am and as it was quite impossible to squeeze so many into a building the service was held in the open air. Those conducting the worship were accommodated on a permanent concrete rostrum erected in the grounds for just such an occasion.

A unique sound

The Rev Mompoko mo Ikombo, Superintendent of the Kinshasa region, called this great assembly to worship. Prior to the service volunteers had been playing on an electronic organ but now the congregation sang 'We've come together to worship Emmanuel the Lord Jesus' accompanied by a band. The instruments were brass and silver and there was a large section of native flutes. It is difficult to describe the band, but suffice it to say that the sound it made was unique.

The choir of over one hundred voices was the Central Ladies' Choir of the CBFZ. They emphasized the words not

only by their splendid harmony but also by their actions.

The Rev Biola Loonya, pastor of the Itaga church, welcomed the huge congregation drawn from many CBFZ churches. He was followed by the Rev Koli Mandole Molima, General Secretary of the CBFZ, who gave a special welcome to those representing other branches of the Christian Church, local dignitaries and the representatives of the BMS. As each person or group was welcomed they had to stand, the

Celebrating Ten Years Of United Work In Zaire

by Alan Easter

congregation rhythmically gave three claps and the band played a fanfare!

The announcements were long, but then they had to cover the activities of so many congregations and areas, yet in a very real sense it stressed the oneness of the CBFZ.

men and with an air of rivalry between the two. The offering is counted as it is received and the men's total and women's total announced. There is prolonged applause for those who have given the most.

Thank offering

On this occasion the numbers present were so great that it was decided to take up the offering in baskets with the stewards — identified by a sash marked 'Protocol' — passing from row to row. At length everyone had had an opportunity to give and the offering was brought forward. Then it was announced that there would be a special opportunity for the pastors, evangelists and catechists to make a further thank offering and would they please come forward with their gifts.

Even this was not the end. The conductor asked the BMS representatives to come forward and make their special thank offering. By now it was 12:19 pm and having gone forward with our extra gift we judged it a good moment to slip away to another appointment.

Gospel progress

The congregation sang, with great gusto, the hymn 'God is here saving His people' and then listened with rapt attention while Pastor Koli detailed the history, not just of the CBFZ, but of the progress of the gospel in Zaire from the time that Grenfell and Bentley landed at Banana in 1878. He told how the work was in the hands of the BMS until 1960. Then the development of the gospel witness was handed over to three regional assemblies — the Baptist Community of the Lower River, the Baptist Community of the Middle River and the Baptist Community

As we left the service the congregation rose to sing 'Jesus came to seek'. That day we were celebrating not just a decade of formal association but the fact that this single Community is proclaiming in all its six regions the message of God seeking the lost through His Son Jesus Christ; we were celebrating that the CBFZ, in its uniting, had overcome many difficulties and was moving into the next ten years in the confidence that 'Hitherto has the Lord helped us' (1 Sam. 7:12).



Congregation at Tenth Anniversary of the CBFZ

Irene Masters

In facing the problem of poverty we need to ask 'What is it?' To us Westerners, who have grown up accustomed to living in our houses, it is natural to want to have lovely homes, with pictures, bright walls, nice things to look at. Zairians do not live in their houses, they only go in when it is time to sleep. Am I hiding my head in the sand or trying to escape reality when I think that they are surrounded by living pictures and things? Are we trying to exchange living things for dead things, the obtaining of which seems to have grown and eaten into our society threatening to take over and destroy? This is of course easy to say when I am surrounded by my 'things'.

who have never left their village, they cannot conceive the greatness and need of their own area let alone their own country or the world. Which needs to come first?

Unfairness

There is not only exploitation and corruption locally. We in the West are also guilty of unfair trading and selfishness. After this article was written news came of the devaluation by 500 per cent, of Zaire's currency. Selfishness in demanding higher and higher wages in order to have our things which the media is convincing us as necessities — a

WHAT IS POVERTY?

There is more to tackling poverty than 'aid'.

We need to look at our own society to see what has happened when every day the need for different things is thrust at us. As we see them a desire and a 'need' is created within us. Are we being fair to introduce as necessities things which create a desire within people who are still struggling to survive, and which so often becomes a means of exploitation? In order to get more money to buy radios, watches, and tape-recorders, people will let their family go hungry to sell their fish and other foods elsewhere at a higher price. Does there need to be more development before introducing these things? We may think a radio important in order to know what is going on in the world, but for many people,

second car or television video, freezer, holidays abroad a couple of times a year, hi-fi gear or the latest gimmick, how many have two or three radios, and cameras?

The higher our wages, the higher the price of goods like machines, tools, vehicles, exported to underdeveloped countries to aid development, becomes. Yet on our part we are not giving a realistic price for goods we import from them. Somewhere people are making a tremendous profit out of the poor. A cloth for example, cheap quality which fades rapidly, sufficient for what the women wear will cost about £30-40 the equivalent of 1-2 months wages and a decent quality about £100 — a price we wouldn't even consider as being reasonable. But for the Zairian there is no alternative.

Also in the case of shoes, would it have been better for development to encourage the use of toilets, so reducing intestinal worms, before introducing shoes which again are very expensive (even flip-flops) and are the means of exploitation? The need has been created and people are making a tremendous profit at the expense of the poor. Once, whilst waiting for the flight to Britain, we were talking to an Indian trader who told us that he can make as much in six months in Zaire as it would take him 10 years in Britain! Yes there is injustice and our Lord must grieve at the callousness and indifference of His people towards



Secondary School Students eager to learn advanced subjects

the poor, people for whom He suffered and gave His life.

Top heavy education

Education too is often talked about when thinking about poverty. The illiteracy rate is high and so many Christians particularly women, cannot read the Word of God for themselves. Again are we right in pushing the higher education and is there not a danger of it becoming too top heavy?

Not that people in underdeveloped countries do not need higher education, but the basic foundation of good primary education is appallingly low and yet there are more and more secondary schools pushing such subjects as English, Latin, Literature, and the Sciences. What will all those young people do with that type of education? The country is not developed enough to accommodate them all for there are not enough jobs to go round. They are migrating to the towns and cities where there already is high unemployment and malnutrition. Food is not available due to shortage of land for individual gardens, and the village people have not yet grasped the vision of helping those outside.

There is a great need also for education in such things as rural development, food production, road development in order to get food to where it is needed, and mechanical training. Also education in improving housing is needed so that houses can be made of more durable materials thus reducing the amount of wood consumed, which is causing deforestation, and in improving water supplies so that people are not forced to carry river water, which is used for everything, to their homes as drinking water with no facilities for boiling it first.

So much creativity

So many young people, who have been educated, are finding themselves frustrated because they cannot get a job suited to their education. Because they have been educated they are not willing to work manually. Seeing some of the toys the children make out of bits and pieces it is amazing how much creativity they have – something our own children lack these days with television and ready-made toys. What a need there is



Malnourished children awaiting food

for this creativity to be channelled into something useful for development of their own village, town, country. Zaire is still torn by tribalism with people from one tribe not wanting to help or trust someone outside his tribe.

We know that only as lives are won for Christ can this change. We can only do a limited amount to help. It needs Zairians to be made aware of the need and to have a real burden to meet that need, but it is only as they surrender to the Lordship of Christ that this will come about. This is necessary for us all. For so many of us we have accepted Christ as Saviour but not as Lord and we are still fighting.

The Lord Jesus left the glory He had with the Father in order to come alongside mankind to see, feel and live daily with

the suffering of man. He gave Himself – His time, His love and His life and He calls us to share in this ministry of suffering, of love and compassion. He sees and knows the needs of all, and as part of His body He burdens each of us, as different members each with a burden, but all part of the one body.

Spiritual or physical

Are we burdened as much about the spiritual needs of people as we are about their physical needs? We need to pray that the Lord will touch us and show us in what way He wants to use us. But we need to be burdened and if we are not burdened we need to pray that the Lord will burden us.

Some may be burdened for young people as they will be the leaders in



Woman trying to grow a crop on diseased ground

future days; others for the more educated and leaders of the community, teachers too, so that there will be less corruption and a corresponding rise in the level of basic education. Some will be concerned for the village folk awakening the desire to help others outside; some for workmen, some for nurses, a burden to pray for the Holy Spirit to work in their lives showing them the needs of their own people and what they can do to reduce suffering by injustice, corruption, exploitation and lack of development.

Awakening a love for others

We know that there can be no justice and development and freedom without Christ, for it is Christ who breaks down the barriers of fear and selfishness. If we have freedom to do as we please, without the Lord Jesus ruling our lives, we are selfish, putting ourselves first and others after and there is no justice. In other places in order to have justice, freedom is curtailed. Only Jesus can awaken within us a love for others and a desire to meet their needs.

Next time you see a poster for Aid or think of a Missionary known to you, or hear of them, don't just think about how he/she/they are coping with the heat, insects and food. Remember and pray about these questions, so many of which are not easy to answer, and the difficulty and pain of living with them and grappling with them. Pray too that the Lord will show each of us in Britain, missionaries or national Christians how He wants to use us to meet some of the needs of others as we share in His ministry.

**without Christ
there can be
no justice,
development,
or
freedom**

'LAKISA BISO!'

By Mary Philpott

'LAKISA BISO!' That plea, spoken in Lingala, is frequently on the lips of the Christian women in Kisangani. 'Teach us!' What do they want to learn? Cookery, needlework, hygiene, organization of the home, the meaning of Christian marriage? They want to improve their knowledge in many aspects of life. First and foremost, though, many of the women have a hunger for increased spiritual understanding. 'Lakisa biso!'

I am responsible, not only for the Women's Work in Kisangani, but throughout the whole Upper River Region. As much time as possible is spent travelling into the area and I organize classes and attempt to encourage the women in their faith. However, since I live in Kisangani it is natural that a considerable amount of my work is done here.

There is certainly plenty of activity! Women's Sunday is observed annually, but most of the work is done on a weekly basis. I attempt to visit the Women's Meetings as often as possible. Numerically attendances are encouraging, but, there is a need for the services to be livelier and to include a greater variety of sermon topics. Sometimes the congregation find it difficult to concentrate because the same talk has been heard several times! Outlines to assist those on the preaching rota have been prepared.

Baptismal Child

In addition to the weekly work a united District Meeting is held monthly. There was a special one several weeks ago. At baptismal services in Zaire the



Mary Philpott



candidates are assisted by a person, who not only helps on the occasion, but is expected to have an on-going ministry of encouragement to the 'baptismal child'. At the District service the women pledged themselves to the task in the presence of those who had received baptism a few weeks previously. They, in turn, renewed vows of allegiance to the Lord, and received some basic Christian teaching within the context of the service. It is evident that there is a great emphasis on corporate worship in Zaire. Christian commitment is expressed, to a great extent, within the setting of the Church community as a whole.

Into established traditions new work has been introduced. A frequent plea, not only in the city but in the villages too, is for the introduction of reading classes. A literacy scheme has recently been started in Kisangani and attempts are being made to inaugurate it into the remainder of the Region. If the women do not know how to read, then how can they study the Bible for themselves? What a witness it would be if a Christian woman were seen to be reading her Bible in a non-Christian home.

Flashcards

It is important for the growth of the Church that the nationals themselves accept responsibility for their work. I have chiefly an organizational and supervisory role. The teachers of the reading groups, chosen from amongst the women, are keen to share their knowledge with others. They received a couple of days tuition before the classes began. I outlined a few ideas as regards

organization and attempted to introduce them to the 'wonders' of flashcards like those in British Schools! Learning by rote is still the principal method of teaching in Zaire, but the younger teachers in particular were willing to accept new ideas.

I have visited all the classes in the various parishes. Only in one place has the work not yet begun. One Church was rather late in starting. Pastor Mbotshi was ashamed of this. So, he began the work himself and has promised to supervise the classes even when the regular teachers begin. Despite all the problems — lack of books and teaching materials — the courage and enthusiasm of both teacher and pupil alike is evident. It takes courage to attempt to

'If the women do not know how to read, how can they study the Bible?'

read when perhaps it is as long as twenty years since you were at school, if indeed you received any education at all. Some women, too, whilst proficient in their own tribal language, need to extend their knowledge of Lingala in its written form. The teachers are dedicated. No salary is received, but they work hard and give up a lot of their time, such is the depth of their love for the Lord.

To grow-up into the Lord

Please pray for the existing classes, that the Kisangani women may be more willing to share their resources in order to help others. Prayer is needed, too, for the introduction of the literacy scheme in the whole area, and for plans to add further classes in order to cater for other needs. All is done with the aim that the women might grow up into the Lord.

There is a real desire for spiritual growth. A Bible Study for the Pastors' wives has recently begun. The way in which they share their faith so freely is both an encouragement and a challenge. However, it appears that their group is only the beginning! There are many evangelists and catechists working within the Church due to the lack of fully trained Pastors. Not only do they need further teaching but their wives do also. Thus, the request that if the Pastors' wives have a Bible Study group then the evangelists' and Catechists' wives want the same!

'Lakisa biso!' That is what the Zairian Church is saying to us today. 'Teach us!' May we truly hear that plea and respond to it in the Lord's chosen way.

By Owen Clark

'WHO is going to look after the child?' asked the pilot of Mama Mbonkumu as she stepped on to the platform scales, handing her little boy to her husband.

'Why, he's coming with me, of course!'

'But I agreed to fly five passengers only.'

'We didn't count the baby, he's so small.'

'But he's a person, isn't he? He'd better be weighed with you.'

It was seven o'clock on a Saturday morning at Ndolo, Kinshasa's secondary airport, in the MAF (Missionary Aviation Fellowship) hangar. Don Davies, soon to complete his first term with MAF in Zaire, decided that the child could be strapped in with his mother, and totted up his total passenger weight. He could cut down a little on fuel, as he would fly first to his home base at Semendua and refuel there, but the weight of baggage would have to be reduced slightly.

and with an orange mask painted on his face, he was making a triumphal return to the village after receiving a Jeep from President Mobutu in Kinshasa. What better way than to descend from the skies? His driver would take the Jeep by road, a journey of several days.

By half-past seven Don was anxious to be on his way, so we left him loading baggage into the small, red and white Cessna's underbelly and drove round to the modest airport buildings. In the time it took for us all to pass through health, immigration and security checks Don taxied his aeroplane across, and filed his flight plan with the control tower. Then he strapped us into our seats — Deanna up front next to the pilot, the Mbonkumu family together and the chief and myself behind, all, it seemed, in slightly less space than a small car. Soon after eight o'clock we were taking off and banking away over the busy streets, the markets and the sprawling suburbs of Kinshasa, leaving far behind the tall office buildings.

WINGS OF THE MORNING

In a country as large as Zaire, air-transport is vital.

Owen Clark tells how an isolated community built its own air-strip

Citoyen Mbonkumu had booked the flight with a view to making the very first landing on an airstrip which had been prepared by his village of origin, Ngongo-Basengele. Some months previously Don had paid a visit to the site, towards the eastern limit of the Bandundu region, in company with a government inspector from the Aviation Authority. Neither of them had been satisfied with its length, its width, or the evenness of its surface, although the villagers had undoubtedly worked extremely hard to clear the tall grass and scrub, and remove termite mounds. Now, for some weeks, Mbonkumu had been insisting that the people had worked further to bring the airstrip up to standard, and he had finally persuaded the inspector to issue a certificate authorising its use. As a MAF pilot, however, Don was bound by regulations and urged by professional caution to visit the airstrip again on foot before attempting to land on it. His plan, therefore, was to fly to the nearest recognized airfield at Inongo on the eastern shore of Lake Maindombe, and cross the lake to get to Ngongo-Basengele.

Triumphal return

Mbonkumu had invited me and my wife, Deanna, from the CBFZ (Baptist Community of the River Zaire) General Secretariat to go on the flight, saying that the church in that region had not seen missionaries for some time. A fifth adult passenger was the colourful figure of the hereditary chief of Ngongo-Basengele. Wearing a red dress, handmade blanket, pink shawl and a high hat of striking design,

Don was a little concerned about the weather. There was rain in the region. With the green, hilly landscape only a thousand feet below, we climbed through patchy cloud and settled on a course roughly east north east from Kinshasa. At three thousand feet little variation was apparent in the dark, mottled green of the tropical forest visible through gaps in the clouds, apart from lighter patches of grass and, eventually, the broad expanse of the Kasai river with its tributaries.

Within an hour-and-a-half we were banking steeply over the former Swedish Baptist mission at Semendu, now the headquarters of the CBB (Baptist Community of Bandundu). Don throttled back the engine as he lined his aircraft up with the grass strip ahead and brought her smoothly down into contact with the approaching soil. It was drizzling slightly as we pushed the Cessna into its simple hangar, graced optimistically on its rear wall by a picture of Concorde. A short ride in the Landrover which had been summoned by the sound of the aeroplane brought us to the Davies's old, red-brick bungalow in the centre of Semendua.

Bad weather

While Joannie set about serving her visitors with coffee and cookies, Don established radio contact with Inongo to check on the weather conditions in the region of Lake Maindombe. His report was not encouraging and, as if by way of confirmation, it began to rain quite heavily. We chatted happily with the General Secretary of CBB,



Don and his passengers

Rev. Izai, and with some of the Swedish missionaries, but it began to appear that we would be grounded for some time. There was even talk of staying the night. Mbonkumu argued against this, insisting that the people of Ngongo-Basengele would be eagerly waiting for us at the airstrip, with a big reception prepared. We must not disappoint them.

Towards mid-day a meal was provided and, as we ate, the weather began to brighten. Following another radio contact with Inongo, and in spite of lingering rain cloud, Don declared himself ready to attempt the journey. Little time was lost in regaining the hanger and wheeling out the plane, and we soon found ourselves trundling over the grass, gaining speed and soaring once more into the clouds. In spite of climbing for some time we remained lost as in a thick mist, until it seemed that Don was on the point of turning back. Then the cloud suddenly thinned and, far below, a small river appeared, meandering through the forest. Before long we had emerged into bright sunlight, suspended between a clear, blue sky above and a variegated carpet of trees below, through which showed distantly the southern end of Lake Maindombe, whose western shore would provide an unmistakable aid to our navigation.

In time we began to follow the edge of the lake northwards, and noticed the occasional fishing village with its beach and canoes, and its fields cut out of the forest. Don pointed out a sawmill and its small, dirt airstrip, not one that he had used as yet, but useful to know of in case of emergency. The dark waters of Lake Maindombe (*Mai*—water: *ndombe* — dark) stretched to the eastern horizon, where the buildings of Inongo were just discernible. Conversing with difficulty above the noise of the engine, Don and Mbonkumu were seeking

a glimpse of the village established at the point where the lake was normally crossed and where a road coming from the west terminated. For Mbonkumu this was home territory, and he was clearly excited. He explained how BMS missionaries from Bolobo had long ago evangelized this area and established an outpost at Ngongo-Basengele. The church was still vigorous, he affirmed, and we could be sure of a great welcome.

At last the village and the road from the west were sighted, and Don banked to follow the road westwards. Ngongo-Basengele was situated on that road, declared Mbonkumu, only thirty kilometres from the lake. That would be about ten minutes flying-time, said Don.

Unfortunately, interests conflicted. On the one hand Mbonkumu was adamant that the new airstrip would be in perfect condition for a landing. The people who had laboured long and hard to prepare it would be there to watch this climactic event, and they would be greatly discouraged should we fail to crown their efforts by landing on it. Such considerations, however, could not form the basis of a MAF pilot's professional judgement. He had the safety of his passengers, himself and his plane to consider, both when landing and when taking off again, on this occasion and on future occasions too. He needed to be sure that the strip was long enough to take off with a full load, that its width left a safe margin beyond his wingspan and that no unevenness would put his plane at risk. Such information could only be gained on the ground. The two positions were irreconcilable.

Hundreds of people

Losing altitude until the sandy road was clearly visible below, the noisy, red and white intruder announced its arrival to the villages which passed beneath its wings. Mbonkumu knew their names and charted our approach, until; ahead the leaf-thatched house of Ngongo-Basengele showed through the trees. Don banked steeply to the north, where he had already glimpsed a large tract of grassland, and circled widely, steadily losing height. A thin, greyish-brown strip became apparent, standing faintly out against the surrounding, fuzzy green. On further, then banking sharply again and lining up for the approach run, the outline of the airstrip now showed clearly straight ahead. Devoid of any building or other accessory, it looked too small and bare a place on which to land a



The Hereditary Chief



Off to see the *Commissaire*

plane. We then became aware of the people, hundreds of them, streaming out of the trees from the village and beginning to bunch a little distance from the airstrip.

As Don cut his engine speed we lost height, and the strip grew rapidly larger, the plane swinging perceptibly to left and to right. Suddenly the brown earth was flashing past, only feet below, and a glance revealed excited people, waving and cheering. Then, with an unexpected roar from the engines, we were picking up speed and slowly lifting away from the pull of the ground, quickly leaving behind the surprised spectators.

Turning slowly, the Cessna came round in a very wide circle, until Don could bank steeply again and slip into line with the airstrip for a second approach run. Lower and lower it dropped, its wheels reaching for the ground. This time a landing seemed inevitable, but then a fresh burst of power from the engine declared the pilot's intentions to be otherwise. Barely skimming the hardened soil, the little craft was steadily gaining speed and height. To the consternation of the animated villagers, many of whom had sweated and ached for this moment, their reluctant visitor from the skies swung away above the forest, growing ever smaller and quieter as it returned in the direction from whence it had come.

In the plane, as we headed east again towards the lake, the excitement dissipated and an air of anti-climax settled over the passengers. Mbonkumu's disappointment was betrayed by his rhetorical questions.

'Did you see all the people? Didn't I tell you that they would be waiting?'

'Still, they know that we have come,' he consoled himself.

He knew that there was time enough to reach Inongo and return across the lake by canoe, there still being several hours of daylight left. The dark surface of the lake below was broken by fine, grey lines, like long scratches on the surface of an enormous slate, but it was only as we descended towards Inongo that these were revealed to be the crests of waves. Obtaining permission to land at the small airport, served by Air-Zaire and also used privately, Don settled his aircraft down on a runway where the grass appeared unusually lush. It was sometimes rendered unusable by flooding, explained Mbonkumu.

Loyalty at risk

A Catholic bishop who had just bid farewell to some nuns offered to drive some of our party and our baggage into town, there being no other transport available, while some of us took to the road on foot. During the twenty-minute walk Mbonkumu explained that there was a strong Catholic presence in the town and in the whole area, with churches, schools and dispensaries. Also the area to the east of the lake had been evangelized by the Swedish Baptists and the CBB, who, in recent times, had been crossing the lake to entice the CBFZ churches to join them. If we did not

do something to encourage our people, asserted Mbonkumu, we risk losing their loyalty, which was one reason why he attached so much importance to our present trip. Reaching the outskirts of Inongo, we soon rejoined our party at the house of a Protestant schools inspector.

It was here that we learnt of a setback to our plans. The local fishermen, it transpired, warned that the lake was too choppy. It would be dangerous to cross by canoe, and none of them were willing to attempt it. Undaunted, Mbonkumu insisted that we should consult the *Commissaire* responsible for the region's administration to ask whether a car-ferry and a vehicle could be made available to us, so we set off into town, leaving Mama Mbonkumu and child at the house. A big man, the *Commissaire* received us cordially at his splendid villa overlooking the lake, Saturday afternoon though it was. After listening to Mbonkumu's outline of our situation he expressed sympathy with the object of our journey. An airfield at Ngongo-Basengele, he said, would provide an alternative in the region to the one at Inongo, which was susceptible to flooding. It would also reduce the isolation of the peoples west of the lake for whom he was responsible. In the matter of a ferry, however, although one was working, there was no diesel fuel available. Fresh supplies were awaited on the next boat from Kinshasa. He advised us to arrange a crossing by canoe in the morning. Profuse in his apologies, he did put a Landrover and driver at our disposal. With expressions of appreciation we withdrew and drove into the small town, debating our next moves.

It would be necessary to stay the night, and Mbonkumu knew of a recently opened hotel. Don's priority was to get hold of a motorbike. He wanted to cross the lake at

first light, drive to Ngongo-Basengele and inspect the airstrip. If satisfied, he would return to Inongo and then fly his planeload in. Enquiries in the town led us to the shop of a Portuguese trader. Yes, the young man, whose father Mbonkumu had known, was willing to lend his Yamaha. It looked in reasonable condition and, equally important, he had a supply of petrol. Having agreed that Don would collect it early in the morning, he insisted that we all dine with him that evening, visitors being rare. It took a little while to arrange our stay at the hotel and install ourselves, but we later enjoyed steak and chips at the young man's house and spent the evening exchanging news. Before turning in it was agreed that on the morrow I would accompany Don on the pillion and stay at Ngongo-Basengele for the morning service.

To be continued next month



The bike and the lake . . . next month

The Doctor and the Dragon

by Margaret Aitchison

CHINA is seldom out of the news these days. There is a new openness with the West, politicians, businessmen, tourists commute to and fro; discussions about Hong Kong, and mutual exchange visits by Church leaders, all this ensures that books about China are guaranteed a wide readership.

This biography of Dr Tom Cochrane, pioneer medical missionary to Mongolia and China, and native of Greenock, casts valuable light on the development in China both of Christianity and modern medicine. The inclusion of new information on the Chinese court conditions at the time of the terrible Boxer Rebellion makes the book a valuable commentary on the history of the period.

Written by a step-daughter, the book inevitably is a labour of love, and perhaps lacks total objectivity in its assessment of Dr Cochrane and his work. One wonders why the story ends abruptly thirty years before the subject's death, and what happened between the early twenties and 1953?

Pickering, £3.50

One cannot but admire the pioneering Scots medical missionary, living with his young wife and family in primitive and dangerous conditions first in Mongolia and later in Peking, the heart of Imperial China. A point of interest is Dr Cochrane's association with Rev and Mrs Liddell, two other London Missionary Society missionaries, parents of the famous Olympic athlete, and later missionary to China, Eric (*Chariots of Fire*) Liddell.

Dr Cochrane was far ahead of his time in seeking to plant an indigenous Chinese Church, independent of foreign ties, and in his determination to bring diverse missionary groups together, to give China one united Chinese Christian Church. Unfortunately his fellow missionaries were not so enthusiastic about these developments.

Perhaps his chief accomplishment was the founding of the famous Peking Union Medical College, where patients rich and poor alike, were treated in the name, and in the spirit of Christ. The graduates of PUMC brought the benefits of modern medical care to China and beyond.

One is bound to query his wisdom in seeking, so determinedly, the patronage of the notorious Empress Dowager, Tzu-Hei. It is almost as though the Apostle Paul sought the help of Emperor Nero! In mitigation, however, one must recognise it would have been impossible to accomplish very much in Peking without the Empress's approval, at least. In the event, she 'approved' to the extent of financing the PUMC with a gift of 10,000 ounces of silver!

This is a story which needed to be told, which reads well, and is an inspiration to modern Christians. It rightly ensures that this fine Christian's memory will be kept fresh in the annals of missionary story.

RON ARMSTRONG.

'Village Christians need to receive teaching and pastoral care so that they can grow in their faith'

Remember Yaolimela

Chris Spencer

JUST down-river from Yakusu, and visible from the mission, is a large island, approximately nine miles long, and two miles wide. It used to be a rubber plantation, with several square miles planted with the Hevea tree, from the sap of which rubber is produced. It had a large population – the plantation workers – and was an important part of the Yakusu church work, with chapels and dispensaries in the villages.

Now the plantation has been closed for several years. The company which ran it has withdrawn, taking the equipment with them. The trees are still there, but no-one taps them to get the rubber. The dispensaries are closed, but there are still two little chapels on the island. Some of the plantation workers stayed after the work ended, as there were good houses available, and they were able to plant gardens where there are no rubber trees, and do a bit of fishing. Many of them came from some distance away, and do not belong to the local tribes, so had nowhere else to go.

Slowly, the small villages are falling down, as no maintenance is being done. Erosion is undermining the houses, and unoccupied ones are being cannibalized to repair the others. It is a community with little hope for the future, and so the population is gradually declining.

Communion

No longer is the church there an important part of the work at Yakusu. A

catechist looks after the small Christian community still on the island, and once a month one of the pastors at Yakusu visits the island to give communion, but there is no other Christian work being done.

Yaolimela is distinctive, but there are many other small villages in Zaire where the life of the church does not greatly differ from what has been described here. There is often a lack of pastoral care, as the only trained pastors are based in the larger centres, and will only occasionally be able to visit the more distant centres. Yaolimela is fortunate in that it is not far from Yakusu – other places will see a pastor once a year, not once a month. The Christians in these villages need to receive teaching, and

pastoral care, so that they can grow in their faith – but the practical difficulties are so great, with insufficient trained church workers, and the difficulties of travelling.

Christ's Church

You may never have heard of Yaolimela, but it is a much a part of Christ's Church in Zaire as the larger, and better known places. Its needs are as great, if not greater. When you pray for the church in this country, don't just think of the large mission stations, of the hospitals and schools. Remember the small, often isolated villages as well, for they also need our prayers.



Travelling to remote communities by canoe

COMMENTS QUESTIONS QUOTES

By DEKA

IT IS very hard to put yourself into someone else's position, to imagine how you would feel and react if you were they. Perhaps you think it is a waste of time to try. After all we are the kind of people that God has made us, and we cannot change that. But then perhaps we are more comfortable if we make no attempt to understand another person's situation? Then we can continue our present existence, shutting our eyes to the circumstances and problems that many people have to face.

Trying to put yourself into another person's shoes is a hard process. They may be a style we are not accustomed to, too big or too small. But if we are truly to empathize with people that surely is what we have to do.

Here is a quote from a recent prayer letter:

'A few weeks ago the Zairian currency devalued by 500 percent, since then prices have doubled and most wages have gone up by only 25 percent. If God called us to give up our British passports and income and become Zairian citizens would we be prepared to? Yet, Paul says, "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus".'

God does not call many of us to do this but try to imagine how you might feel if God did ask such a step of you. Then think, 'How does a Zairian pastor, doctor, villager cope in such a situation, when he or she cannot get away from it?'

Obviously how far we are able to enter into another's situation is limited, but it makes you think, doesn't it? And don't forget what Paul said, our attitude should be the same as that of Jesus, so what do we do?

Q Q Q Q Q

Most of us, when we go to a new church where we do not know the folk, will be

influenced in our judgement of it by the welcome and the friendliness that is or is not shown to us. How much more so would this be true of a convert from another faith coming to a Christian church to join in the worship and fellowship, full of his own new found joy.

Another prayer letter tells of a convert, who has a setback in his faith. Why? Because he has not found a welcome in the Christian church. So he takes to his former non-Christian friends and society for identity. In many countries you more or less have to be identified with one or another religious groupings. I know this is not so in our Western society, so it is yet another concept that is hard for us to understand.

Just before we feel sorry for such a person, and then put the matter out of our mind, let us ask ourselves one other question. Could we, or the church we attend, ever be guilty of not making a newcomer — either a stranger to us, a foreigner, or even a new convert — feel welcome? Would we readily accept such a person into our fellowship?

What a difference a smile, and a short

conversation can make, but more of that another time.

Q Q Q Q Q

A quote from another prayer letter — it helped me to get some things in perspective, I hope it will help you:

'Now we climbed and the next hill was out of sight. Even what we had left behind was hidden from view by a fold in the contours. Now we reached the next summit and the path below stretched endlessly behind us while a drop, sometimes steep, sometimes slight brought us to the next climb. It reminded me of life as we move forward. We sometimes rise and sometimes fall, but always we move forward and from time to time we are permitted to see the whole scene, looking back and seeing how it all fits together, looking forward with a vision of the future. Sometimes we feel hemmed in with the hard slog of the climb before us unable to see more than the immediate past, unable to appreciate how it dovetails.'

BMS STAMP BUREAU DO YOU COLLECT STAMPS FOR THE BMS

As an individual or as a church, do you collect the stamps off your mail for the BMS? If not, why not start now? Carefully cut round the stamps without damaging the perforations. At church, a suitable box labelled up and put in the porch will bring in supplies.

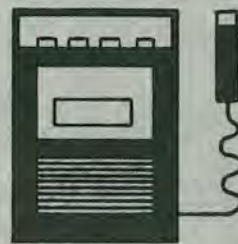
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When you have enough, please parcel and send to:

Rev. Roy Cave
77 Hurst Park Avenue
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Collect Stamps for BMS at your Work, Office, School, etc

MISSIONTALK



NEWS AND VIEWS
FROM HOME
AND ABROAD

'It was a right royal occasion for our missionaries,' says Neil McVicar

THE red carpet was laid out, the diplomats and other distinguished guests, invited by the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, were lined up on one side of the L shaped carpet. At one end was stationed the beautiful, immaculately clean, large limousine which would take Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II to Old Ganobhavan, the State Guest House, where she would stay during her State visit to Bangladesh. Such was the setting at 9 am on 14th November when promptly the British Airways Tri-Star Astral Rose drew alongside the red carpet where President Ahsanuddin Chowdhury and Lt General H M Ershad were waiting to greet and welcome the royal couple.

Soon the Queen and Prince Philip were shaking hands with the 40 or so diplomats then on to the 30 or so representatives from the British Community in Bangladesh. It was a great honour and a wonderful experience for my wife and I to be included in the British 'line-up' to welcome Her Majesty at the airport. Immediately before us in the 'line-up' were Father Golding of the Oxford Mission and Mr and Mrs Roe of the World Bank. Yes we shook hands with her Majesty and she asked 'What are you doing in Bangladesh?' 'We are with the Baptist Missionary Society, Your Majesty.' 'Oh you are Baptists!' waiting for a few moments for Prince Philip to catch up the Queen then informed the Prince that we were Baptists, 'Oh you are Baptists' responded the

Prince and then indicating Father Golding and ourselves the Prince's jovial comment was 'Their wealth is in heaven' and indicating the World Bank representatives — 'and their wealth is corruptible!' After a few more hand shakes the royal couple entered their cars and off they were to their temporary residence and we returned to '137' very elated.

On the 15th November all BMS missionaries were invited to a Reception at the UK High Commissioner's residence to welcome Her Majesty. Prior to this there was much activity as all got ready for the great event. Marjorie and I were not included in this Reception, but instead we were invited to two other functions the next day. At 4 pm on the 16th we were privileged to be invited to attend the Civic Reception for the Queen given by the Administrator of Dhaka Municipal Corporation and then in the evening to a Reception at the residence of the UK High Commissioner given by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in honour of His Excellency, the President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. At this function Prince Philip spoke to us and was very complimentary about the saree being worn by Marjorie.

The 14th-16th November 1983 will remain in our memories and many in Bangladesh for a long time to come.

Evangelical Congress

A WEEK long 'Brazilian Congress on Evangelization' drew 2,100 Evangelical leaders from 80 denominations to Belo Horizonte recently.

Brazilian Baptists and Presbyterians accounted for 45 percent of the attendance, and Pentecostals eight percent. The Congress president was Brazil World Vision Director Manfred Grellet.

Campaign

DURING a recent evangelistic campaign among Baptist Churches in Huambo, Ulge and Luanda in Angola 883 made decisions for Christ. Seven Baptist pastors from Brazil assisted in the campaign.

Jamaican churches call for new Electoral System

JAMAICA'S Council of Churches has recently made a move to resolve the major political crisis triggered by an opposition boycott of snap general elections in December. It has urged the government to call fresh elections as soon as electoral reforms are completed.

In a statement the Council says that the government of Edward Seaga should do 'all in its power' to complete a new electoral system. 'We appeal to the government in the interest of democracy and the nation to call another general election as soon as possible to be conducted under the new electoral system.'

The opposition People's National Party, which has shared parliamentary power

with Seaga's Labour Party since 1944, boycotted the elections. It felt that the Labour Party had breached a solemn pledge by calling elections before completion of reforms. Both parties have been meeting since 1981 to fashion a new system which includes photo-identification, thumb-printing and the compilation of a new voters list.

54 of the 60 Labour Party candidates registered for the elections were unopposed on nomination day. The party has therefore been re-elected by default to a new five year term.

The Council of Churches says it is not desirable for the country to be without a parliamentary opposition. It notes that on nomination day several independents and representatives of small parties were

prevented from handing in nomination papers by political thugs. Further, there is 'a marked change in the society from one of relative calm and unity to one of growing tension, polarization and disunity'.

The Council of Churches says it intends to seek early meetings with both Edward Seaga and PNP leader Michael Manley 'in an attempt to arrive at a consensus as to the way forward'.

The Council includes Anglicans, Baptists, Roman Catholics, Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Moravians, the Salvation Army, the Disciples of Christ, the Quakers, the YMCA, YWCA, SCM, the Bible Society and others.

E.P.S.

Tribute To Alberic Clement

'This man shows exceptional promise,' was the Principal's comment when Alberic Samuel Clement left Manchester Baptist College in the early years of the 1939-1945 war. It would be hard to discover anywhere so well fulfilled a prophecy.

He was born and spent his early years in Liverpool. Within the Richmond Baptist Church he came to faith in his Lord and Saviour and was baptised. When he left school he began work in an office, pursuing additional studies in the evenings. Responding to God's call to ministry, he entered College when quickly the breadth and clarity of his mind became apparent. Had the war not intervened he would probably have pursued his studies beyond his BA and BD degrees.

His first pastorate was in Shropshire. This rural community was ably served by an informed preaching ministry and good administrative leadership. In many ways, a shy person, he was nevertheless very perceptive of human personality and exercised a fine pastoral care.

At Hearsall Baptist Church, Coventry, he built upon the earlier experience. He was quickly used in District Baptist affairs and became the youngest ever president of the West Midland Baptist Association. A Free Churchman through and through, he regretted that the Free Churches have not had the influence that could have been theirs. He was secretary of Coventry Free Church Federal Council and served on Coventry Education Committee for several years.

In 1952 he was appointed Editor of the Carey Kingsgate Press and of the BMS. This was the beginning of a deep involvement in international Baptist affairs. He was responsible for the production of all the major publications for the Baptist World Alliance held in London in 1955. He rose to the challenge and began to make his mark among world Baptists.

by Reg Harvey

In 1962 he was appointed General Home Secretary of the BMS. The next 20 years saw many changes in the Society, to which Alberic Clement made a unique contribution. He was a rock of stability in his considered judgements, carefully weighed words and in the clarity of his interpretation of Constitutional matters.

He was convinced of the worth of the work overseas. By spoken and by printed word, he encouraged the denomination to give support on an unprecedented scale both financially and in the continuing supply of volunteers for the partnership of the Gospel overseas. He believed that nothing less than the best should be offered in God's service. He set exacting standards for himself and his colleagues, thereby winning the respect of all. His overseas visits established him as a church statesman.

Alberic Clement served as a member of the Baptist Union Council winning respect for his contribution to the discussions in the Council, its Committees and particularly the General Purposes and Finance Committee. He was appointed, on the Union's behalf, a member of the Baptist World Alliance Council.

He was acknowledged as 'A true English Gentleman' listened to and heeded for the quality of his contribution, particularly as he championed the cause of the younger and financially poorer Baptist communities. His depth of insight from the European standpoint was a valuable correcting influence on the near dominant American presence in Baptist World Alliance affairs. He helped found the International Missionary Secretaries' Conference within the BWA. He was invited, as a BMS Representative, to share in the European Federation Council Meetings, and was appointed a Vice-

President of the BWA in 1980. Last year he went as their special representative to the Peace Conference in Prague.

He joined the governing body of Manchester Baptist College very early in his career and for many years was Secretary to the Board of Studies. When the College merged with Rawdon to become the Northern Baptist College his participation and commitment remained as keen as ever. He also served as a governor of Regent's Park College, and as Chairman of the Psalms and Hymns Trust. He shared in the affairs of the Conference of British Missionary Societies and its successor the Conference for World Mission.

Mr Clement retired as General Home Secretary of the Society in April 1982. He was then elected Vice-Chairman, succeeding as Chairman in April 1983.

In retirement he continued to serve the Society in speaking and in committee. He had also been invited to write a definitive History of the BMS in preparation for the Bicentenary in 1992.

Many who saw Alberic Clement the public figure did not always realise the warmth of the man himself. The precision and care of his administrative activity sometimes masked his wit and humour. He had an apparently unlimited supply of interesting anecdotes and amusing stories culled from his wide reading, his keen appreciation of music and art and his wide experience, all stored in an extraordinarily accurate memory.

For virtually the whole of his ministerial career, the tasks have been shared and supported by his deeply loved wife, Joan.

In offering our prayers of thanksgiving for the quality of life of this exceptional servant of His, we pray God's blessing of comfort and strength for Joan.



TALKBACK



WHAT OUR
READERS ARE
THINKING

More An Obstacle Than A Foe

From Rev Ron Armstrong

I WELCOME Fred Stainthorpe's article in the December *Herald* ('The Minister, Friend or Foe of Missions?') and hope it will touch a few ministerial consciences! I don't know if Mr Stainthorpe was responsible for the headline, which goes further than the argument in the article — I doubt if any of our ministers is actually a 'foe' of Missions, perhaps 'obstacle' might be more accurate.

In my work of promoting world mission and BMS in particular among the churches, I do find Fred Stainthorpe's main points valid. Some ministers lack a world view for the Gospel, and are apathetic to the claims of 'The Great Commission' beyond their own neighbourhood. Their's is an attitude more reminiscent of the Jerusalem Church under James than of the Antioch Church which commissioned Paul and Barnabas for the Gentile mission (Acts 13).

The opportunities for the local minister to keep the claims of mission before his congregation are numerous, preaching through the Church Year as Fred points out, keeping the needs of BMS before the church in intercession and news reports, encouraging the Missionary Council in planning missionary events, giving the congregation an example in attending united missionary meetings locally (sad to say, some ministers still take the opportunity to go absent when a missionary is preaching).

I cannot generalise about theological training (although I think Fred's point was relevant to the situation when he and I were both in college together). I would hazard a guess however that the theology and claims of missions are neglected in the curricula of

our colleges, and that theology tends to be more 'church centred' than 'kingdom centred'. This may well be, as Fred argues, where the ministerial apathy begins.

To be fair to the minister, and speaking as one who himself spent nearly thirty years in the pastorate, he is under enormous pressures, his time is at a premium, all kinds of causes thrust their claims upon him, and I know the background. But this is not only theologically indefensible but practically also can lead to an imbalance in our ministry and in the church's total commitment to obedience to our Lord.

BMS is now producing more missionary preaching and educational material than ever. It is hoped that missionary secretaries will keep this before the attention of the minister with requests that he use it and put it to use in the church's education programme for all ages.

At a recent ministers' conference I attended over a three-day period, I laid out a display of BMS literature, especially focusing on the teaching material produced by the Society. I hardly saw one minister pause by that table, and don't think more than half a dozen items were taken throughout the whole conference. I hope this doesn't entirely reflect the ministers' concern (or lack of it) for world mission — but I do agree with Fred Stainthorpe that more of our brethren do need to waken up and take this question of our Christian obedience seriously.

RON ARMSTRONG
BMS Scottish Representative

From Norman Ellis

MISSIONARIES with any experience of deputation will have read with warm approval Fred Stainthorpe's article on 'The Minister: Friend or Foe of Missions?' in the December 1983 issue.

The variations in reception one receives range from the genuinely warm to the distinctly frigid.

There is the minister's home where you are made to feel a member of the family and the vestry which conveys a very different impression (if the Minister is there to greet you).

One of the happiest weekends I spent was with the family of a minister who is now an Area Superintendent. On the other hand, there was the Home Counties minister's

wife whose first words on answering my knock at the manse door were, 'I hope you're not staying late on Monday morning. That's my washing day.' I assured her that I would be leaving straight from evening service, as my fiancée lived in London and I could see her before I left for home.

There is a marked contrast between the attitudes of some Baptist ministers and Anglican clergy. After I retired from the BMS, I spent six years with the interdenominational Leprosy Mission and was frequently on deputation. Whenever I went to an Anglican church, the reception was the same. The Anglican clergyman regards it as his personal responsibility to be present as your host in the church, or his deputy is there.

You are escorted to your chair in the chancel and when the time comes to speak, the vicar escorts you to the foot of the pulpit steps.

When the vicar and I reached the lowest pulpit step at the last parish church in which I preached, he spoke out of the side of his mouth, 'Enjoy yourself!' My reply, also from the side of my mouth, was, 'I shall!'. And I did.

In some Baptist churches where the minister's reception was something less than welcoming, I felt that the cause was not so much lack of interest in work overseas as the financial effects of a deputation visit. I trust that this is not the case today.

NORMAN ELLIS

New Malden, Surrey

Point of View

From Kenneth E G Akers

I AM glad Andrew Mawson has expressed in your columns a point of view concerning the Society's Brazilian work which I have been feeling very strongly for years.

So far as I remember only Derek Winter amongst the missionaries (I hope I remember the name rightly) has given anything other than the individualist and pietist point of view and he no longer works for the Society.

KENNETH E G AKERS

London

'Face Up To Reality'

From Evelyn Cornell

I AM writing to congratulate the *Missionary Herald* on your recent articles on people of other faiths. Unlike Mr A John Coles I feel that a better understanding of other people's faith is vital for real missionary work to take place. For example the article 'India is Rich' by Marian Carter attempted to show a little of how the beliefs of Hindus affect their way of life and thus the different emphasis which Christianity brings. To know that the influence of Christians could lead Brahmins to ask Untouchables for water gives great reason for joy if one knows a little about the

Hindu faith. Without that knowledge it is just an unimportant event. Christianity is a minority religion in many countries of the world and rather than close one's eyes to the fact that others believe there are other ways to God than through the Lord Jesus, we need to face up to reality. Rather than merely labelling all other religions as 'false cults' we should try to look at beliefs from both sides, just as Rosemary Williams' article on the conversion of a British girl to the Muslim faith tried to do. I am sure that Christianity will be the stronger for the more honest approach that this calls for. It is no longer

enough merely to say we are right and everyone else is wrong. A look at the Christian Church itself with its many divisions makes that a nonsense.

I welcome the more balanced approach that the *Missionary Herald* appears to be taking. I don't believe that 'salvation's plan is being compromised' (to quote Mr Coles) by looking at the beliefs of others. Rather I feel that the love of God can be shown in a fuller light and Christianity can justify itself even better.

EVELYN CORNELL

Southend-on-Sea

Let Me Make It Quite Clear

From Rosemary Williams

I AM sorry that my articles have upset Mr John Coles of Shetland. Firstly, may I point out to him that the accompanying photos were not mine but were presumably chosen by the Editor! Secondly, I wrote the second article in reply to a request from the Editor for further writings. Thirdly, I am not at all sure what Mr Coles means by my 'going down the road' that is 'dangerous and quite unnecessary'; nor am I 'seeking to appease' anyone. His instance of multi-faith prayers in Westminster Abbey was a totally different matter from the one I was discussing. I did not suggest anywhere, moreover, that we 'accept our folk's conversion'; I made it quite clear that I felt distinctly unhappy, uneasy and saddened and hoped that readers would join us in turning to further thought and prayer on this important issue. Let me assure Mr Coles that I too believe in the glorious Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

I imagine that the situation is very different in Shetland from Birmingham and that our backgrounds account for our differing opinions. If Mr Coles ever comes to Birmingham, I would like to introduce him to some of our very devout friends of other faiths as well as our Christian ones.

ROSEMARY WILLIAMS

Birmingham

Fascinating

Fabulous

David Doonan was part-way through the preparation of an article on the political and social situation in Brazil when he read Andrew Mawson's letter. Here is his reaction. The article will appear next month.

From Rev David Doonan
In reply to Rev Andrew Mawson

DEAR ANDREW,
Fascinating! Fabulous! Frightening! These were the first reactions on reading your letter published in the December *Missionary Herald*, received here in the centre of South America well within the same month. Communications are improving!

Fascinating! That a (presumably) young Baptist minister living in the idyllic (for us who live in a permanent sweat) conditions of Kingston-upon-Thames should have such a competent view of Brazil's complex political, social and religious situation. Fascinating! A goodly number of Brazil's injustices stem from the social system which the Roman Catholic Church helped to establish. That some of her theologians and priests are

having second thoughts doesn't go far to alleviate the appalling ignorance and spirit of subservience which she created.

Fabulous! I thought, here is someone who, knowing what mission in South America is all about, will obviously conclude his letter with an offer to serve in Brazil. But no, the Third World's problems are still to be resolved from an armchair in Kingston-upon-Thames. Shame! We were praying urgently the other day for a pastor for the newly-born church in Juina, a small town on the border with Rondônia. It is so difficult to get volunteers, partly because it takes about 40 hours on a bus from Cuiabá to get there. But it would be an interesting situation in which to test your 'incarnational theology which believes that God is present and working in the midst of the social-political world of His people'. Mind you, it would not be too easy explaining this to a small congregation of unlettered farmers who are busy swatting the mosquitoes from around their ears or trying to catch one of their twelve children

Frightening

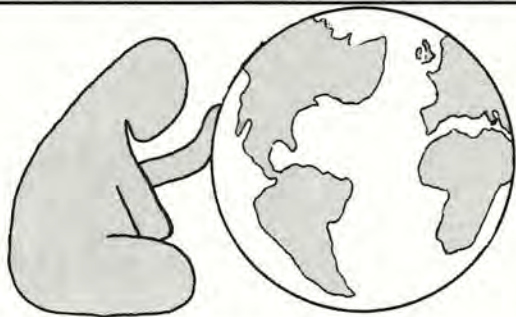
(remember that the R.C. church prohibits the use of contraceptives) who has just decided to wee on the floor in front of the preacher!

Frightening! That you, dear Andrew, represent those who live in comfort on one side of the world and presume to have ready made answers for those who struggle on the other. That you, dear Andrew, have the temerity to suggest that BMS does not seriously seek to evaluate its task, and to prophesy its demise unless it conforms to your particular version of the Church militant. That you, dear Andrew a leader of God's people, write in such a way that reflects a certain arrogance, which ill becomes a colleague in the frighteningly responsible task of communicating the word of God in a world gone mad.

Perhaps three years in Juina would be a useful experience.
Um ambraco.

DAVID DOONAN
BMS Overseas Representative
for Brazil and the Caribbean.

Cuibá, Mato Grosso,
Brazil.



CALL TO

PRAYER

1784 - 1984



Bangladesh

Bangladesh - Dhaka 5-11 February

DHAKA is often described as the city of mosques, literally hundreds of them, from large ones in the centre to small ones in the back streets, and five times a day the call to prayer goes out. Visibly you are conscious that this is a land where the vast majority are Muslims. Against this background, conscious of being a tiny minority the churches witness to their faith. As the city continues to spread out groups of Christians meet together for witness, and gradually more congregations are established.

Many people come from the villages to the city looking for work, and there is much poverty and physical need. The churches at Sadarghat, Farmgate, and Mohakhali all have projects for helping children - clothing, food, school books.

Father, we think of those for whom being a Christian may involve costs and temptations that we will never know, and who, at times, feel very alone. May they know your courage and strength, and through your church may your light and peace shine out.

Trinidad & Tobago 12-18 February

TRINIDAD has been described as the melting-pot of the Caribbean. The population is a mixture - East Indian, African, English, German, Taiwanese and Japanese. As a result there are 171 religious groupings including Hindus, Muslims, Bahai and Mormons as well as many Christian denominations.

There are 22 Baptist churches with 3,000 members and 15 pastors. They still look to the BMS for financial help, but hope to be financially independent by the end of the 80's. They are no longer inviting BMS missionaries as pastors to Trinidad, but they are looking for someone to help in a lay training programme.

What a picture Lord!

*Island of sunshine and steel bands,
Caribbean colour and carefree people,
the caricature of the travel brochure.*

*Forgive us for not seeing the tensions of a
mixed population and many faiths; the
high cost of living and the low
incomes; the needs of real people.*

*May the Baptist community, as it grows in
maturity and broadens its vision, witness
to your reconciling love, which can
fashion many peoples into one family.*



Tobago



Trinidad



Zaire

Zaire - Yakusu 19 February - 3 March

YAKUSU hospital, situated on the riverside so close to the city of Kisangani in the Upper River Region of Zaire is at a disadvantage. The standard of health care in Kisangani is not very high and a large proportion of the patients treated at Yakusu come from that city. This pressure of work can often get in the way of the ministry of caring in the many villages of the large district for which the hospital is responsible. The economic problems of the country make it difficult to get all the supplies which are needed, and the Nursing School often faces staffing difficulties.

Yakusu is a centre for other Baptist work, in particular the Theological School to which there is a steady flow of students who put into practice what they are learning by preaching and working in the villages. BMS has a team of eleven workers at Yakusu, but the Theological School Director, Rev Kuvitwanga, and Dr Likwela at the hospital are Zairians.

*Lord, bless the partnership of the BMS
with the Baptist Church at Yakusu.
Through your servants may the wholeness
of the gospel be made known in the
healing of body, mind and spirit.*

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MISSIONARY MOVEMENTS

Departures

Miss S Evans on 22 November to Yajusu, Zaire
Mrs N Passmore & family on 22 December to
Khulna, Bangladesh
Mr & Mrs O Clark & family on 28 December to
Kinshasa, Zaire

Arrivals

Mr R Foster on 15 November from Tondo, Zaire
Miss A Matthias on 14 December from
Nepal
Miss C Cox on 17 December from Kinshasa, Zaire
Rev R & Mrs Connor & family on 17 December
from Rio Negro, Brazil
Mr & Mrs I Morris & family on 20 December from
Tondo, Zaire
Miss J. Parker on 22 December from Bolobo, Zaire
Mr & Mrs L Alexander & family on 3 January from
Pimu, Zaire

Deaths

On 9 November, **Rev Duncan Scott Wells, FCA**
(India 1919-1955) (Society's Accountant 1922-1924),
aged 93
On 28 November, **Mrs. Agnes Morgan** (India 1929-
1967), aged 81
On 2 December, **Dr Ruth Young** (India 1917-1940),
aged 99

On 4 December, **Miss Constance E Waddington**
(China 1915-1947), aged 94
On 20 December, **Rev Alberic Clement** (Editor
1952-1962; General Home Secretary 1962-1982;
Chairman 1983), aged 67

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Secretaries acknowledge with grateful thanks
the following legacies and gifts sent anonymously.
(24 November-12 December 1983)

Legacies

	£	p
Mr E R J Bass	300.00	
Mrs H M Brumby	823.29	
Sir C C Chesterman	100.00	
Miss A I Larke	500.00	
Mrs S E I Lloyd-Williams	2,417.94	

General Work

Anon: £5.00; Anon: £2.00; Anon (Cymro): £20.00;
Anon: £30.00; Anon (FAE-Aberdeen): £10.00; Anon:
£30.00.

Medical Work

Anon: £4.00.

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30 July-11 August
30 July-11 August
14-23 August
16-26 August
1-15 September
4-13 September

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Romania
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Rev Douglas Monkley
Rev Ralph Maycock
Rev Edward Smalley
Pastor Philip Boreham
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