

MISSIONARY

MAY 1987 20p



HERALD

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**HEALING HANDS
IN MIZORAM**

Editorial Comment

THERE are times when the Baptist Missionary Society needs to make its position very clear and in the light of the missionary sermon, preached at this year's Assembly by Dr Michael Griffiths, this is one of them.

1. We are committed to the Gospel which is for the whole person. As Reg Harvey has written recently in the *Baptist Times*: 'Our Lord, who is the Gospel, was not simply a mouthpiece with a message, but a man with a ministry. We cannot do justice to our Lord if we claim that only evangelists and pastors are front-line troops. Our Lord's compassionate acts and healing ministry were an integral part of the Good News. BMS missionaries who are medics, teachers or development workers, as they offer their skills in Christian love and under the guidance of God, are front-line troops serving the one Saviour Lord.'
2. We remain committed to the view that life in all its fulness is discovered only in Jesus Christ. However, 'as we come face to face with people of other faiths we are discovering a new courtesy, humility and integrity as to their own faith, but we are nevertheless encountering such folk from a standpoint of deep commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ'.
3. We see our involvement in mission as part of the totality of God's one mission through his one Body under the headship of Jesus Christ. 'For the Western Church to feel that the tasks of evangelization rest solely upon our shoulders is to be deluded as to God's guiding and blind to the evidence of the Spirit of God at work within the world as a whole. There is a continuing task for those of us who have discovered the riches of Christ within the Western world. We are able to bring the British cultural heritage to offer to the world Church. But the need is for a genuinely true partnership in the spirit of God. Across the oceans and across denominational barriers, the BMS is glad to be within such a partnership.'

'The BMS remains totally committed to being the servant of God and to engage with Him in the tasks of mission whenever, wherever, and in whatsoever role He makes clear.'

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MISSIONARY
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THE MAGAZINE OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY



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Church in:

Angola	India	Thailand
Bangladesh	Jamaica	Trinidad
Brazil	Nepal	Zaire
France	Sri Lanka	

FACING

THE

UNFAIR

AND

INEVITABLE?

by a missionary doctor in Zaire

NINE years ago, Fulani came into the world screaming with the new environment and causing her parents great rejoicing as a birth anywhere in the world does.

Father was a subsistence farmer and, thanks to his wife who carried the surplus produce on her back for sale in the market ten miles away, they were eventually able to buy a goat and start breeding goats, so having some security for unexpected expenditures.

Selling the odd goat also enabled them to pay Fulani's annual school fees at the local mud-hut primary school. Fulani's parents accepted her as a gift from God and were excited by her continuing survival – one sister died of diarrhoea and a brother of measles – and her progress at school.

High hopes

She was an attractive girl and they had high hopes that she would marry a man a bit better off even than themselves, perhaps a teacher, a nurse or even a village trader.

However, recently she has begun to lose weight and, not getting any better with the treatment at the local dispensary, they decided to sell a goat and go off to the mission hospital a day's walk away.

Mother carried her 'piggy-back' quite often because she is so quickly tired. At the hospital, a few questions and a urine test reveal that she has diabetes. After a week's treatment with injections and the high cost of food in the town, all the money they got

from selling the goat has been used up, but Fulani is feeling fine.

The doctor explained that Fulani needed an injection every day. Each injection costs a third of a nurse's daily wage and must be kept in a refrigerator. The nearest one is at the hospital. Her parents could not see the point. She was obviously cured, so they set off home delighted, but confused.

Desperation

Inevitably she fell ill once again, but since the only goat left was reserved for big brother to pay his bride price, they returned to the local dispensary where the nurse confirmed that Fulani needed insulin for the rest of her life. That was impossible, so they turned to prayer and, near the end, in desperation, to the witch doctor. Finally father and mother came to terms with the fact that Fulani only had a day or two to live.

This is not a true story, although I did have a young girl who died of diabetes in the village a few years ago, having been stabilised in





hospital. But I have another *baby*. Another gift from God. It is a vision of seeing that children in the 50 mile wide area served by the hospital have access to simple medical care, which will prevent the deaths from diarrhoea and measles from which Fulani's family suffered.

Painful decisions

I know that, as dialysis facilities in Britain are inadequate for the growing number of people being kept alive on them, so the BMS drug grant could not cope with the numbers of diabetics who would stay alive if treated. Deciding who should get such help here

would be painful were it not for the fact that the scarcity of refrigerators, high food costs in hospital towns, village beliefs keep the number of those suffering from degenerative diseases like diabetes down.

But Lord, surely it cannot be your will that children die of diarrhoea and measles that people here *can* afford to treat or prevent? Like Fulani's parents, Lord, I have put a lot of care into the *baby* you have entrusted to me. I haven't killed any goats to get my *baby* onto its feet. It's your *baby* anyway. But one aid agency is giving some money to help transport costs so that we can visit the

dispensary and maintain the quality of care, but it's only for four years and then who pays?

Getting medicines out to the dispensaries, ensuring adequate stocks despite erratic buying opportunities in the capital and the necessary pricing and book keeping, is not complicated for me. But there are no Zairian nurses here with completed secondary education, so how can I hope they will ever be able to keep this going?

I have two US Peace Corp Volunteers who do most of this, but they are not being replaced because we are 'too inaccessible'.





The Kinshasa end of the pipeline is getting increasingly fragile.

Who will help?

My, I mean your *baby*, Lord, is well now, just like Fulani after a week's insulin, but where is next week's insulin coming from? As she gets bigger she'll need more. Another aid agency in Britain has said the work is much too much for one of *their* candidates to undertake. It would be nice to think we could get 'registered' nurses from the schools in the more developed parts of Zaire, but where would we find the money to induce them to leave the security of their own tribal areas

with their good communications? How could we know if they were trustworthy?

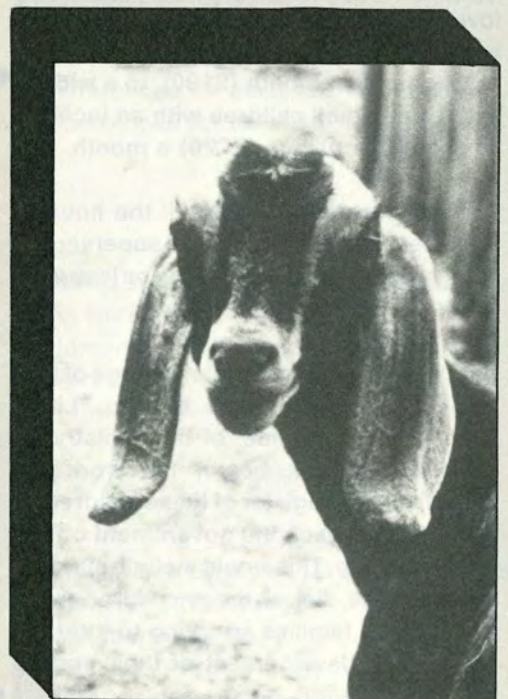
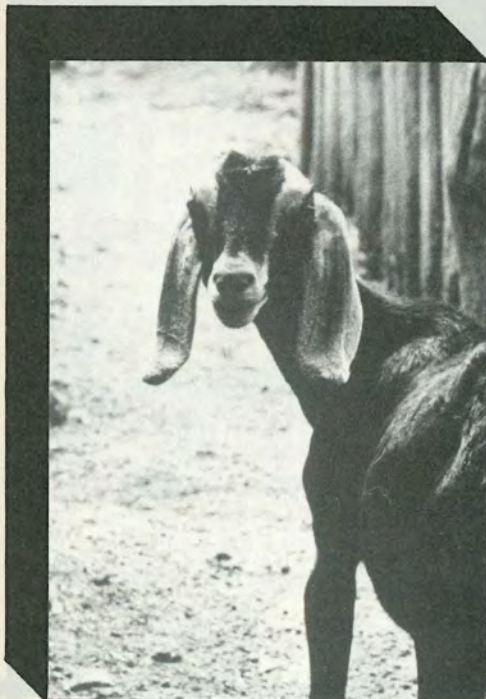
Actually the *state* gave me this *baby*, but I still believe it's yours Lord. With IMF pressures, the state cannot afford to pay health workers and hopes the church will make the *baby* self supporting from patients' fees. Maybe in 15 years time copper prices will be and oil prices down, and some of the nation's debts forgiven or paid back. But will your *baby* still be alive then Lord? Fulani needed insulin for longer than the sale of one goat could provide for. Your *baby* needs committed competent workers now, not one-off gifts,

nor armchair theories or hand-wringing.

The Zairian church each year asks for pharmacists, nurses and doctors, yet each year the number of experienced (more than five years) missionaries diminishes, while the number of one-off gifts from British churches rises. Lord, I'm sure this is your *baby*, but must it die?

PS. Lord, my Zairian colleague has a *baby*. His is called the 'hospital' and he has similar needs for committed competent staff.

PPS. Lord, my furlough's due this year.

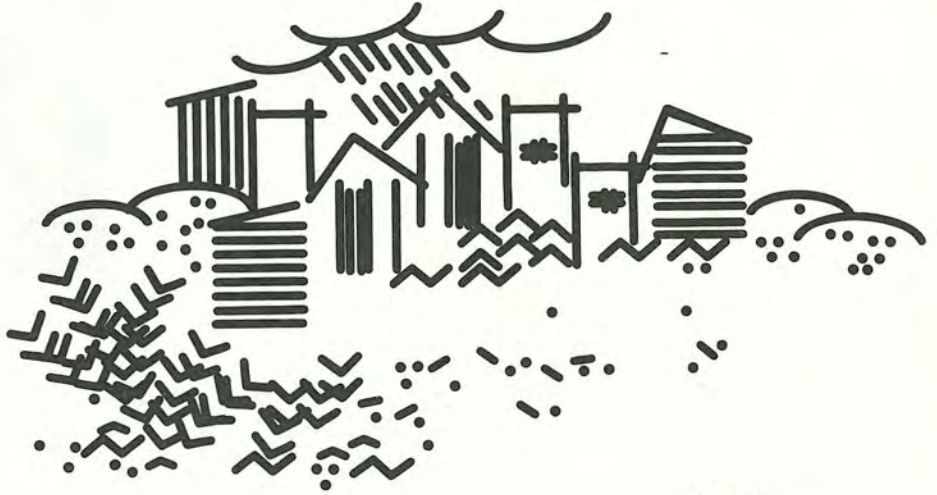


AERO RANCHO II

SOUNDS like some kind of theme park, but it's all linked with Frank and Peggy Gouthwaite's new location in Brazil. They are to work with the Baptist Friendship House in Campo Grande, Mato Grosso do Sul.

Whilst waiting for a temporary base to be prepared in the *favela* known as Dona Neta, Frank tried to get to know the most needy areas within Campo Grande and, as far as possible, meet some of those needs, so beginning what is known, in Baptist circles within the Convention, as Aero Rancho II.

Aero Rancho II is a block of 40 plots each six by 30 metres in size and situated almost one kilometre away from the main community of Aero Rancho. Families have bought their plots, representing a big step forward for them.



Low incomes



The area is served with electric light, but still does not have a mains water nor a drainage network. All of the families have low incomes, varying between a brick-layer, who would normally receive 2,000 cruzados each month (£100), to a widow with three small children with an income of only 400 cruzados (£20) a month.

It is almost a slum area. All the houses have beaten earth floors. The superstructure varies between the more or less well made, and a torn plastic sheet.

There are 36 children under the age of six, who could be helped by the 'Little Brother's programme' of the Ministry of Education. Frank began his work by establishing a register of these children in order to approach the government office to ask for help. This would include supplements to the diet of those children from low income families so trying to guarantee normal development of their bodies and minds.



Child outside shack



Children playing

Family profiles



Frank has used the opportunity given by the census to obtain other information about family income, occupation, health, hygiene, whether they produced their own food or not (and if not why not) and religion. He hopes that this profile will help in the future as Baptists develop their social work among the people of the area.

He approached the local Secretary of Agrarian Affairs to sound out the possibility of being granted a site to construct a hut where their work could be based. The Secretary was most helpful and ready to make a plot available. The local community was also ready to provide the necessary manpower to put up such a construction.

Frank is hoping to obtain the necessary materials and equip the new building with a stove, pots and pans, and to find a teacher who is able to work with children of a pre-school age. The building has been started and the first Baptist Church of Campo Grande is supporting the work.

Frank has also established good relations with various municipal authorities and with semi-official and voluntary groups.

Home creches



One positive achievement of this initial work has been the establishment of four 'home creches' in various *favela* dwellings. In this way a group of about five mothers are able to co-operate so that four can go out to work and contribute to help the one who looks after the children of all five.

After evaluating the relative needs of several *favelas* in Campo Grande, Frank has been able to suggest where the Baptist Friendship House should be sited – Afonso Pena/Taquarassu *favela*.

Frank and Peggy work with the Guanandi Baptist Church in Campo Grande where Peggy has responsibility for the Junior Sunday School. She also runs a Sunday School for about 30 children in the Dona Neta *favela* on Sunday afternoons.

Frank helps with the Embaixadores do Rei (a Baptist Boys' organization). Another aspect of Frank's ministry is that of teaching second and third year students in an Old Testament course at the Theological Faculty.

A TONIC FOR ZAIRE

Has anyone got a tonic solfa edition of Sankey's 'Sacred Songs and Solos'? A pastor in Zaire is looking for one. He has an ordinary music edition, but most Zairians can only read tonic solfa. If you have can you please write to:

The Editor,
Missionary Herald,
93 Gloucester Place,
LONDON,
W1H 4AA

but please do not send copies of the book yet.

OPPORTUNITY FOR SERVICE WITH THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY

PROMOTION SECRETARY

A good communicator with a deep commitment to world mission is required. As well as initiation and stimulation of general educational and promotional activities, the person appointed will carry special responsibility for young people's work. This will involve general supervision of the Society's work among the 15-25 years age group, with the conduct of conferences for such folk and training conferences for their leaders.

Applications should be accompanied by a curriculum vitae and names and addresses of at least two confidential referees who will be able to comment on the applicant's relevant experience.

Applications by May 31st to Revd R G S Harvey, BA, General Secretary, Baptist Missionary Society, 93 Gloucester Place, London W1H 4AA, marking envelopes 'Confidential Application'.

NEW MISSIONARY CANDIDATES



Janet Prentice

JANET PRENTICE is a doctor at present working in Burton-on-Trent General Hospital as Senior House Officer. She is a member of New Baptist Church, Burton-on-Trent, but was baptized at Llanishen Baptist Church, Cardiff, in 1973.

Janet hopes to be involved in paediatric or community medicine in Bangladesh.

IT'S only three years since Harold and Barbara Blake became Christians – the result of a Billy Graham campaign – but they are both experienced in sharing their faith with others. Baptized at London Road Baptist Church, Lowestoft, in 1984 they are involved in evangelism, visiting and in church-planting on a new estate. They have both been on a Partnership Mission to the United States.

'We were led to work overseas through a missionary prayer meeting showing slides of Butwal Technical Institute, Nepal, and the apprentice training scheme there, followed by an opportunity to take early retirement from a life-time of craft engineering and apprentice training.

'We welcome the opportunity of further training for missionary work, and see the real necessity for orientation courses as preparation for re-settling and adjusting to life in a new culture. We are aware of the difficulties and problems associated with leaving our home and church, but are convinced that we will adjust, settle and enjoy our new life and work, because of the Lord's giving of His strength and grace following obedience to His call.'

Barbara, a native of Manchester, is Head Teacher of a primary school and will be doing educational work with children or young adults in Nepal.

Harold and Barbara Blake



ALSO looking forward to life and work in Nepal are Dermot and Kathleen Morris. They are originally from Northern Ireland but are now in membership with Wigtown Baptist Church in south west Scotland, one of the newest Baptist churches north of the border.

'It's exciting that such a young church already has two missionaries among its members,' said the Rev Matthew McLachlan at the March meeting of BMS General Committee.

Dermot, 45, is an electrical engineer and has also been running a small-holding since 1982.

'We experienced a definite call to overseas service during a missionary sermon by Ron Armstrong, BMS Scottish Representative. He spoke about the need for someone with exactly Dermot's training. We realized that God had prepared us in many ways during the previous five years to respond to that need.'

Joy is an educational psychologist.



Dermot and Kathleen Morris

THE Irish-Scottish link is there too with Foster and Jean Wright. Foster, 43, has served in the Baptist ministry in Ireland and Scotland for 14 years and was President of Scottish Baptist Christian Endeavour for two years. He is at present minister of Denny Baptist Church.

Jean, 44, as well as being a pastor's wife and the mother of two adult children and two aged ten, has been involved extensively in social and community work.

They will probably be doing pastoral and teaching work in either Zaire or Sri Lanka.

'We were first led to consider overseas service by the challenge which the Lord put to us through our own local church. We were converted in a very missionary minded Baptist church in Northern Ireland and the needs and challenge of world mission were constantly before us.

'We feel that world mission should play a large part in the local church as we believe that mission is the responsibility

of the local church. We feel that a denominational missionary society, like the BMS, is really the local churches banding together to undertake a work which would be beyond the ability of individual churches.

'In view of this, world mission should play a very active part in local church life in prayer, in giving and coupled with a constant challenge for greater commitment to world mission. Sadly this is not always the situation and so many churches get so caught up in their internal church life that the wider field is neglected.'



Foster and Jean Wright



Michael and Daveen Wilson

MICHAEL WILSON has already spent three years in Lesotho doing agricultural and development work with TEAR Fund. He is an agriculturalist from Cheshire but now in membership at Sutton Coldfield Baptist Church. He met his wife, Daveen, while studying at All Nations College.

Daveen is the daughter of missionaries in Brazil, where she was baptized in 1963. It is yet to be decided where they will go to serve.

PIRJO LITTLE is no newcomer to missionary service. She has worked as a nurse in Nepal since 1982, serving with the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church. She met BMS missionary, Stuart Little, a dentist working in Nepal, and they married there in 1985. Pirjo is now a member of Hillhead Baptist Church, Glasgow.

'My commitment to the Lord meant also to be open for the possibility to work overseas and to work with a missionary society. I believe I have, therefore, a better chance to help the whole person — body, mind and spirit than in just working with an aid agency.

'After being in Nepal for four years, I am very much looking forward to settling back into that country. It is our responsibility as Christians and as part of a world wide church, to be involved in mission work. Some are called to go overseas, some are called to work in the home church. Mission should play an active part in local church life.'

Stuart and Pirjo will be returning to Nepal this summer.

This brings to 43 the number of missionary candidates in training for work overseas with the BMS.

In 1984 286 people enquired about overseas Christian service and 18 were accepted. In 1985 this increased to 299 enquiries and 22 accepted. Last year 348 people wrote to Joan Maple, BMS Personnel Secretary, and 27 were eventually accepted.



Pirjo and Stuart Little

NEW MISSIONARY CANDIDATES

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN MISSIONARY WORK WITH THE BMS CONTACT

**MISS JOAN MAPLE
PERSONNEL SECRETARY
BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY
93 GLOUCESTER PLACE
LONDON W1H 4AA**

H·E·A·L·I·N·G H·A·N·D·S

'CHIBAI' — A GRAND WELCOME TO MIZORAM

... is this year's BMS Women's Project to raise £23,000 towards the cost of the new out-patients department at Serkawn Christian Hospital, Mizoram, India.

Since the opening of a dispensary in 1919, the love and compassion of Christ have been shown through medical care in this part of Mizoram.

The story of the church there is exciting and challenging. In just over 80 years, 90 per cent of the population has become Christian.

'Hallelujah, for the Lord our God reigns.' The Mizo people sing this with great fervour and know it to be true in their own experience.

It is a long time since foreigners have been allowed into Mizoram in north-east India, so it was a great privilege for Neil and Marjorie McVicar when they were allowed to visit this state in December last year.

WE flew to Silchar from Calcutta because the direct flight to Aizawl had been requisitioned by the Lt Governor and his party. We arrived at 10 a.m. and waited until 4 p.m. for the flight to Aizawl, which, in the end, was cancelled.

After some negotiation with the Mizoram Liaison Officer, he arranged for us to be taken by car to Kolisib, where we could meet up with Dr Lal Hminga, General Secretary of the Mizoram Baptist Church.

When we eventually got to Aizawl, we were very surprised to see a large banner across the main street welcoming 'Rev and Mrs Neil B McVicar, BMS Representative for Asia!' This was the first of many banners welcoming us to Mizoram.

We first of all went to the home of C Lal Ruala, Hminga's younger brother, who is Minister of Agriculture for Mizoram.

After a meal, we were on the move again, this time to Serchip. The roads have improved quite a bit since my last visit to Mizoram in 1963, but nevertheless there were many bends to negotiate because the road follows the contours of the hills.

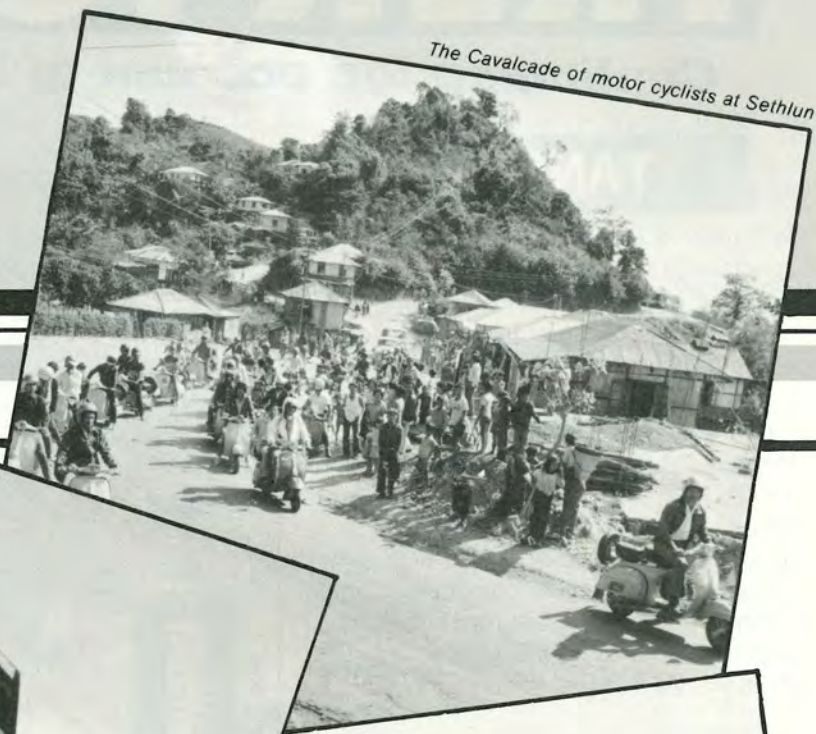
All the road improvements taking place caused a lot of dust, which found its way into everything and every place! Because we were late a welcoming party of

banners and garlands and 13 car loads and three buses of people to welcome us had to leave. This was sad as it was the second time folk had been disappointed, the first time being when it was not possible for us to visit in April.

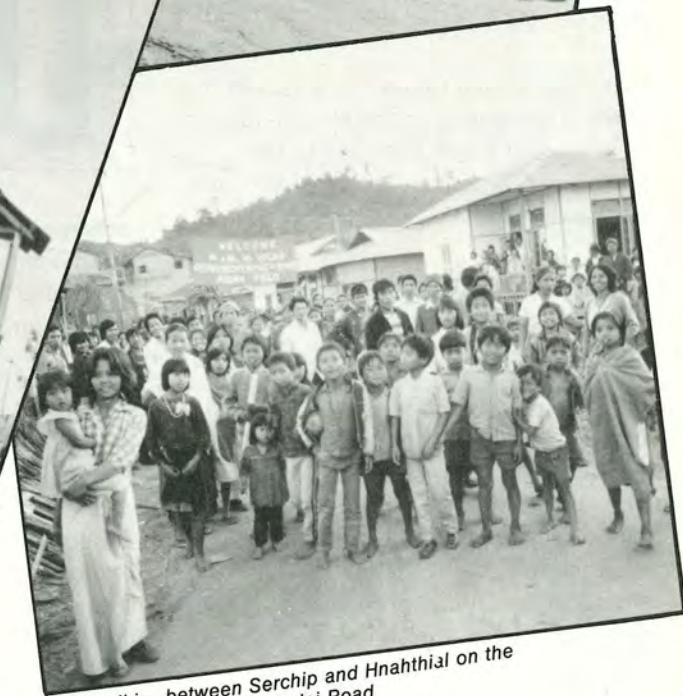
All along the way, until we got to the outskirts of Lunglei there were welcoming parties, speeches of welcome and our responses. We were certainly in no doubt that Mizoram and its people were very glad we had come to their land to share Christian fellowship.

At Sethlun, a few miles out of Lunglei town, there is the first Baptist Church in Mizoram, founded in 1903. There we were met by a cavalcade of 30 motor cyclists, who led us into Lunglei and to the Government High School, where we were given a public welcome.

The Cavalcade of motor cyclists at Sethlun



Savage Memorial Church (or Rahsiveng Baptist Church)



At Rawdhi - between Serchip and Hnahthial on the Aijawl-Lunglei Road

We were able to meet with the leaders of the Mizo Baptist Church and the heads of the various departments. We were also taken on a tour of all the different areas of work - the Central Office, Bible School, High School, Printing Press, Hospital and Orphanage.

Everywhere we went the churches were well attended with a good proportion of young people. In nearly all the churches where I preached, there were at least two choirs sharing in the service and on one

occasion a musical group with guitars and other instruments. A drum kept the time at congregational singing. Many in positions of influence in the political and secular fields seemed also to be much involved in the life of the Church.

Aizawl and Lunglei have increased in size and are much larger than I can remember in 1963. There is a great deal of building going on and the roads are being improved.

Efforts are going on to encourage tourists to visit Mizoram. In the cities and towns there are signs of materialism and secularization. The next 15 years will probably be a testing time for the church. As the country is opened and the people inevitably exposed to much more non-Christian influence and development, the Church will be facing new challenges and will have to prepare her members to face up to them.

TREK TO NEPAL

Continuing the account of last year's Trek to Nepal

TANSEN

THE road to Tansen goes through some spectacular countryside. Erosion, however, presents a real problem, particularly because of the cutting down of the forests and intensive cultivation.

When the pioneer missionaries walked these paths from India in the early 1950's there was no road. The few roads in existence today have been given by the nations of the world. Since India has an interest in communications north to south, it is no surprise that the spectacular road from Butwal to Pokhara, via Tansen, is their gift.

In the same way China has ensured that there is a highway to the Nepali-Tibetan frontier, and it has been left to the British and Americans to provide roads from east to west.

We travelled by jeep, and as we emerged from the high land we could see Tansen on the other side of the valley, half way up the hillside. The valley floor was a brilliant green with the intensely cultivated rice fields.

The United Mission to Nepal established one of its first hospitals at Tansen. We were shown round by Ray Cross, a dentist from London. Ray and his wife are members of Herne Hill Baptist Church.

Such is the hospital's reputation that patients are brought up from India. We saw four Indians bearing a sick relative on a mat attached on the sides to poles. This reminded us of the men who brought their friend to Jesus and ended up letting him down through the roof because of the crowd. In Nepal there is no shortage of a crush at the hospital.

ANDHI KHOLA

At Andhi Khola, two rivers, running in opposite directions, pass either side of a range of hills. Here the UMN is undertaking an important hydro-electric



scheme. The two rivers are being linked so that water runs through a tunnel from the higher river, the Andhi Khola, to the lower river, the Kali Gandaki.

We stayed with a Norwegian couple, Dorothea and Magne Vestol. They enjoyed being in Nepal enormously. Magne, a former Norwegian Ski champion, is involved in the technical aspects of the project and Dorothea is responsible for negotiating with local Nepalis for the settlement of new missionaries, who normally rent a property from a wealthy Nepali.

Dorothea has excellent relations with the local community and is quite happy to leave her children in the care of Nepali neighbours if her duties take her away for the day.

While we were there her next door neighbour came round to paint the front door. It was the Desain festival and he wanted his family to be photographed outside the house for his own house was too enclosed for a family photograph.

Dorothea explained some of the local religious attitudes. It is a Brahmin

village, but there is one family who are not and the Mother fell ill with tuberculosis. No one lifted a finger to help. Eventually Dorothea persuaded her to go to hospital and accompanied her.

When she returned the neighbours said, 'You have done well. You will gain credit with God'.

'Why didn't you help?' Dorothea asked.

'We have troubles of our own.'

The story of the Good Samaritan is not out of date in Nepal, or anywhere else for that matter.

POKHARA

Pokhara was our holiday retreat. It provided unparalleled views of the Himalayas, the opportunity for some trekking in the foothills, and, with its busy bazaars and lakeside walks, is the nearest that Nepal can boast to a holiday resort.

It is also the site of the 'Shining Hospital' now only a clinic, but the place where Ruth Watson came in 1953 to pioneer medical missionary work in Nepal. The hospital was given its name by the Nepalis who looked down on the new structure with its tin roof reflecting the sun.

We visited Green Pastures, the Leprosy Hospital, under the direction of Mike Lavender. Leprosy is still a dreaded disease bringing rejection by the community and total isolation.

Leprosy attacks the nerves, causing hands and feet to lose their feeling so making them subject to damage from cuts and burns. In its advance state it causes the most horrific facial and bodily disfiguration.

If detected early enough, it can be cured, but such is the terror in which it is received that it is often concealed for as long as possible. Even so it is usually

treatable. At Green Pastures a marvellous work is being done by both Western and Nepali staff.

As well as the medical work, there is a farm, and we were able to see weaving which enables the patients to earn a living. Here special shoes are made for the patients to wear once the disease is under control. However they often refuse to do so because the shoes are immediately recognizable for what they are.

Pokhara is also fun. We cycled through the bazaar, talked to the Nepalis, and one local (wearing a tracksuit) told me that he was a badminton coach. When I admitted to playing the game, he wanted to take me to the local court for a match, but, in the soaring afternoon temperature, I felt it would be too one sided.

We set off on a two-day trek through the rice fields and up the river valley and mountainside to Nadaunda. But on our first evening Sandy Pollock, the party doctor, was stricken with dysentery. He was probably the only one who had had a medical to establish his fitness, but impure water is no respecter of persons.

The following day the party split up and our leader, Mike Weller, and a few others accompanied Sandy slowly down the mountain.

Paul Anderegg and I had planned to trek on to a nearby saddle and vantage point a few hundred feet above us. Unfortunately, we carelessly lost the route, so we never made the saddle and returned at a fair pace to catch up the main party half-way along the route back to Pokhara.

Again we split with the main group. Sandy descended the easy way and Nigel Unwin and I trekked down a fairly steep rocky face to the lakeside, but even this comparatively inhospitable terrain was inhabited and intensely cultivated.

When we returned, we found two lady missionaries from Bangladesh, both with BMS and one a doctor at Chandraghona, had arrived on holiday. Sandy, now very ill, was therefore able to receive expert medical attention.

I was asked to spend the night with Sandy. This was a tremendous privilege,

not only because a strong friendship was growing between us, but this seemed to me to be the very stuff that missionary service is all about – serving others for Christ's sake.

I reflected on recent SU Bible readings from the book of Job. 'Why,' I thought, 'should Sandy, of all of us, have to undergo this distressing illness?' I turned to the 23rd Psalm and asked Sandy's permission to read it before committing our predicament to the Lord.

It was time to leave Pokhara and again our party was split. Sandy was not well enough to travel and Paul's wife, Nicola, was also unwell.

AMP PIPAL

First of all there was a two hour bus journey and then we were faced with a twelve mile trek through rice fields, across rivers and ultimately ascending the mountainside to the saddle where the village and hospital are perched.

This was the hardest day of our holiday partly because of the heat, temperatures were now in the 80's causing rapid dehydration, and also because not all the members of the party were feeling as fit as they might.

When we arrived at Amp Pipal we were already into the cool of the short Nepali evening and, as we scrambled up the last steep slope and over the wall of the school house, we all felt a surge of relief.

Our hosts were Ian and Sally Smith from Leeds. Their home is the former clinic and their Nepali 'home help' had been busy all day carrying water to the butt in

preparation for our arrival. Later, after a meal, we were billeted out to Hindu Nepali families where we would eat and live for the three days in Amp Pipal. This was the crowning experience of the holiday.

It is difficult to know where a Nepali family begins and ends. Three of us stayed with a leading family in the community, but I was staggered at the simplicity of their home.

On the outside many Nepali homes have the appearance of attractive thatched cottages, but once inside there is a room devoid of furniture, with a mud floor swept spotless and an open fire in the corner for the cooking.

We ascended a ladder to find a floor with mats where the family lay down to sleep. We were billeted under the eaves and sealed off from the night air by the hanging maize stalks which will form part of the family's winter diet.

During the night a cat ran over Allan's face. In the dark he thought it was a rat and let out a roar which roused the family. They came rushing out on to the balcony, where we were, thinking it was burglars.

News went round the community like wildfire and we were celebrities before we stepped out of the house to go to the pump to wash.

We did not eat with the family. Instead they served us and watched us eat before eating themselves. This is a Hindu custom and has to do with their rites of purification.

Dr Ian and Sally Smith and BMS London Representative, Derek Mucklow



We had our first meal of *dahlbaht* in a Nepali home. In order to get sufficient nutrition, it is necessary to eat an awful lot of rice, which was beyond us.

'Pep saano – small stomachs.' we said.

They seemed to understand, but were mystified at our lack of appetite. Europeans do have small stomachs compared with Nepalis. We are not conditioned to eat the huge amount of rice that is necessary for them if they are to obtain the nourishment they need.

Ian and Sally Smith showed us round the hospital and spent time highlighting the problems encountered by the community health projects. Squaring the circle with local politicians, merchants, communists, the wealthy and the poor is no more simple here than anywhere else.

We made a dawn trek to a neighbouring summit to watch the sun rise on the Himalayas. Sadly illness struck us once again and this time our leader Mike Weller went down with jardia, along with two other members of the party. They had to stay an extra day or two until they were well enough to travel.

So it was a much depleted group which took another route down the hillside and along the river valley to the roadside village where we were to catch a bus to return to Kathmandu.

It was a lovely morning. We set out at dawn, but we knew if we did not reach our destination to catch the bus by 11 o'clock, we would not make it to Kathmandu that day.

Up to this point others had succumbed to illness, but I had remained well.

Walking along a path above a river with a steep drop one side I lost my footing and hurtled down a bank covered with thorny bushes. I picked myself up and with helping hands was pulled back to the path with blood spurting from my leg. The blood congealed almost as quickly as it started and the wounds, washed in iodine, did not re-open.

Before we reached the village we descended several hundred feet below it and had to climb some 800 steps to the road above us. I did not think we could all get on the bus, which was already packed, but in Nepal you do get on

buses however full they are, even if it means travelling on the roof. Eight hours later we were back in Kathmandu.

FINALE

The last few days in Kathmandu provided an opportunity for reflection and letter writing.

Nepal is rich in human resources, beautiful and poor, but proud and royal. The Nepali boy musicians at Pokhara sang, 'Nepal sings a very fine song, moneybox is here please'. Nepal's resources are its people. They live in great poverty needing the helping hand which the West can give.

There is a paradox. There is no shortage of medicine, certainly in the towns. The pharmacies are stacked with drugs. Sadly there is no knowledge of application, except in the main Christian hospitals. Often people with serious illness had obtained totally unsuitable drugs. The few Nepali doctors have tended to set up practice in Kathmandu, leaving in the country hundreds and thousands without medical help.

Christians have not failed them. The missionary spirit is well summed up in the vision of Ian and Sally Smith who, last year, trekked to the remotest foothills of the Himalayas and were so appalled at the need of the people for medical attention that they want to take community health to them.

There are problems. The policy of the UMN is that none of their personnel shall be more than a day's journey from a medical centre. But Ian and Sally are eager to go to the regions beyond and seek God's guidance and our prayers that their vision may be fulfilled.

I asked every missionary, 'What kind of support do you get at the front line from the BMS back home?' The answer was always positive, even enthusiastic, describing a caring Society, constantly in touch with them and making sure that their needs are met and that they can carry out the task of mission confident that their needs, cares and concerns are also those of a supportive Society back home.

The relationship between the Western Christian missionaries and the Nepali church seems a happy and healthy one. There appear to be fairly clearly defined

spheres of activity, with the Nepalis engaged in worship and evangelism, in spite of the restrictive laws, whilst the missionaries engage in specialist work of mercy and compassion bringing to the people the skills of medicine and technology which they do not have.

There are no barriers. Europeans and Nepalis meet together for worship. I thrilled to discover that Christian worship is the same despite the gulf in culture, just as Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and for ever – Lord of all and Saviour of the world.

The Nepali Church is a New Testament Church, only 30 years old and yet already 35,000 strong in a country which forbids anyone to change religion. The story is told of a whole village of 3,000 converted to Christianity.



There was a desperately ill child in the village. The Hindu medicine men were unable to help, but there was a Christian family in the village and as a last resort the child was taken to them. In answer to their prayers, God healed the child and in simple faith the whole community said, 'Then we too will be Christians'.

It was a time of public holiday, so we did not see the schools in action. There is an agreement between the UMN and the Government that they will surrender the facilities which it has pioneered and in many instances Christian schools are now Government run.

This seemingly harsh condition was placed on the UMN before it could begin its work. Wisely they understood that all they have is not theirs to hold. It is given in trust and they are but the stewards.

DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN AFRICA

**May 3-9
BMS Prayer Guide Day 18**

The BMS has an increasing involvement in development and community work ranging from the sinking of wells to the running of a radio-phone system, linking all the main centres with Kinshasa. Adequate back-up and maintenance makes a vital contribution to the smooth running of the hospitals and schools. Gordon and Ann McBain have recently gone to Kinshasa, where Gordon will be taking over as Logistics Officer from Andrew North. Pray for the North family as they settle in their new home and Andrew begins ministerial training at Bristol Baptist College in September. Pray for Steve and Isabel Mantle, who were involved in the water supply project at Yakusu. Steve, too, is going to train at Bristol. Pray for John and Ruth Davies currently home on furlough as they prepare to return to Yakusu to continue construction and maintenance work. Richard and Jo Allan in Pimu are also involved in construction work. Michael and Carol King have recently arrived home after being in charge of agriculture and development work at the Evangelical Centre for Co-operation (CECO) in Kimpese, Zaire.

ADMINISTRATION IN SOUTH AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN

**May 17-23
BMS Prayer Guide Day 20**

For the last six years, David Doonan has been the Overseas Representative for Brazil and the Caribbean. Now he and his wife, Doris, have returned to this country where David will become minister at Eltham Park Baptist Church in London. After 23 years in Brazil, pray for them as they adjust to life in Britain again. John Clark takes over David's responsibilities in Brazil, with his wife Norma. He leaves the theological institute at Campo Grande and now moves to Sao Paulo. As they take over this new role, they will need great wisdom, sensitivity and strength. Pray for the Brazilian Baptist Convention, its departments, and General Secretary Orivaldo Pimentel Lopes. Remember the BBC World Mission Board and Rev Waldemiro Tymchak, its Secretary. Eric Westwood is Assistant Secretary. He and wife Jean are very involved in this overseas ministry of Brazilian Baptists. Oliveira de Araujo is Secretary of the BBC Home Mission Board. This week, also remember the Baptist Union of Trinidad and Tobago, its General Secretary Ken Cadette and other officers.

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN ASIA

**May 10-16
BMS Prayer Guide Day 19**

The Bible School at Serkawn, Mizoram, was started in 1946 for the training of National Church Leaders. It was closed for two years in the mid-seventies for lack of staff. It re-opened in 1979 and since then Dr P L Lianzuala has been the Principal. The school trains Church leaders and students who come from Burma, Assam, Manipur and Tripura, as well as Mizoram. Along with the residential training, the Bible School has organized a Mobile Training Programme for the more remote areas. The possibility of upgrading the School to a College is being considered. The lay training programme will continue to be a vital part for many years. Remember the Serampore College in India and its vital work in all aspects of education in India; and the United Theological College, Cuttack Diocese, India and Principal, Rev H C Nanda.

PRAYER FOR ASIA

**May 24-30
BMS Prayer Guide Day 21**

Pray that the church in Asia may be seen as a great fellowship and company of people whose standards of honesty and integrity are beyond reproach; also that a ministry of reconciliation may be the hallmark of Christ's church in Asia, especially in areas where there is friction, contention and litigation. Pray that a joy of personal salvation in Christ and the encouragement of belonging to the church will be an impetus to every Christian to share their experience with others. Pray that the partnership between the churches in Asia and the BMS may lead to a growing understanding of each other's culture and interpretation of the Christian faith and encourage self-respect and self-reliance.

CHURCH WORK IN ZAIRE

**May 31 - June 6
BMS Prayer Guide Day 22**

Because the work of the CBFZ involves many hundreds of church congregations spread over a very large area, those who are called to positions of leadership and pastoral responsibility face a difficult task. The greatest administrative responsibility is laid upon the General Secretary, Pastors and the seven Regional Secretaries, Pastors for the Upper River Region; Botongo for Yakusu; Eboma for Bolobo; Mondongo for Upoto and Binga; Mompongo for the Lower Equator Region; Nkwansambu for the Kinshasa, and Enguta for South Equator Region, and Enguta for Lower River Region, and Enguta for Kinshasa. The number of trained pastors is still too few to meet the need for teaching and pastoral care in a large and fast-growing community. They are supported in their work by a large number of catechists, deacons and other church workers, all seeking to help in the preaching of the Gospel and the growth of the church.

P R A Y E R D I A R Y

MISSIONTALK

MISSIONTALK

MISSIONTALK

MISSIONTALK



The Rev **Henry Frederick Drake OBE**

FRED DRAKE has come out of retirement once again to take up the Chairmanship of the BMS. It is more than 40 years since Fred and Marjorie first sailed to the Congo. Since then Fred has served as Congo Field Secretary – during the difficult time of independence, Associate Foreign Secretary, and then, from 1975 until 1982, as one of the Societies two Secretaries.

He officially retired in 1982 and immediately accepted an invitation from the Evangelical Baptist Church in Angola to work with them for two years.

Since returning to Britain he has served as President of the London Baptist Missionary Union.

Last year he was elected as BMS Vice Chairman and succeeded to the office of Chairman at the BMS Annual Members' Meeting in Bradford.

A DEFICIT – BUT REJOICE!

BMS Treasurer, Arthur Garman, speaking at the March General Committee, wondered whether there was anything to rejoice about in the Society's accounts, especially since he was announcing a deficit.

'But yes,' he said, 'the churches have given £151,000 more than last year. Although this was less than our target figure, it is something to rejoice about. Other income, at £570,954, is higher too. That is an increase of £38,000, mainly from legacies.'

The giving from the churches was £2,155,831 which, together with income from legacies and investments, gave the BMS a total income of £2,726,785. Expenditure amounted to £2,746,232 leaving a deficit, to be made up from the reserve account, of £19,447.

The deficit would have been larger but for the fact that exchange rates worked in favour of the pound. The Society was able to make savings in other areas as well.

'So we can rejoice,' Mr Garman said. 'The total giving is up. We've continued our work and we've been able to meet the deficit from our reserves.'

'We are not asking for such a big increase this year, just 10 per cent, and giving so far is on target. The Chancellor has just given us some of our money back, so we should be able to give even more.'

The Rev Michael Sheen pointed out that the lower income tax rate would mean that Covenanted giving would be reduced and suggested that the Society should encourage those who give in that way to revise their covenants.

JOINT HEADQUARTERS

Both the Council of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland (soon to change its name) and the General Committee of the BMS have now agreed to go ahead in the search for joint headquarters.

There was little discussion at the March BMS General Committee. The feeling was that all that needed to be said had already been said many times over during the past 50 years.

'Let's sing the doxology,' one committee member said.

'I second that,' said another.

They didn't, but unanimously and without further discussion agreed to a recommendation from the General Purposes Committee reaffirming the Society's intention of sharing in joint headquarters with the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland. The recommendation included the institution of the necessary investigations that will lead to the disposal of the present Mission House and, together with the Baptist Union working for the securing of alternative premises as Joint Headquarters.

Arthur Garman



AIDS GRANT

AIDS is a world-wide problem, but the Baptist Missionary Society is hoping to help stem its advance.

The World Health Organization estimates that ten million people are infected today in Central Africa and that by 1990 – three years away – there will be 50-100 million infected throughout the world.

In order to help prevent the spread of AIDS the BMS has agreed to give an initial grant of £10,000 to church hospitals overseas, especially in Zaire. 'It's only a fleabite compared with the British Government's multi-million pound programme and the US Government's higher expenditure,' writes Reg Harvey, General Secretary, in his March *Letter to the Manse*.

'But despite the relative smallness of this grant, I would suggest that it is equal to the much larger national grants in importance and significance.

'The grant is important because it recognizes that while AIDS causes western panic, its incidence is far wider than the western world which is giving it most publicity. As one of our medical missionaries pointed out, he is 40,000 times more likely to have contact with an AIDS sufferer working in Zaire than he is in Britain.

'It is in this context that the money made available by the Society is seen only as an initial grant towards dealing with a world-wide problem,' Reg Harvey points out. 'The hope is that it will be of some help in the provision of better facilities for sterilization of surgical instruments, provision of disposable needles and other precautions that can reduce the spread of the disease.

'But it will need to be reinforced by as strong an education programme as possible.'

Mr Harvey suggests that the very presence of medical missionaries and the care that they offer are a token of God's love.

'Our missionaries and the national Christians with whom they work are venturing into the dark and they are ill-equipped for the task. But already their loving care of those who are suffering and dying has become part of their ongoing ministry.'

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, BIRTHDAY, BIRTH . . .

CHURCH magazines often contain the names of those who have had a birthday during the month and who are in the BMS birthday scheme.

Recently one church in Derby had 16 names for one month. Is this a record? If not, write in and tell us.

If you don't know what the Birthday Scheme is all about, write to us and we'll tell you. Don't be misled by the magazine of a Baptist Church in Worthing which advertised an ingenious fund raising scheme by the BMS. It promised that if you join the BMS Birthday scheme, 'on your birthday you will receive a car with an envelope inside!'

WHO'S GOT THE SCISSORS? . . .

'Where's the paste gone?' 'Shall I do this part blue?'

No, not a primary school classroom, but the hall of Tabernacle Baptist Church, Wolverhampton. Thirty people were engrossed in practical activities designed to get over the message of mission and in particular the BMS.

Another group was making a collection of songs, hymns and poems conveying the same message, while others were preparing a mime on the theme 'One shall tell another'.

It was the culmination of a day conference arranged by Peter Briggs, Midlands Area Representative of the BMS, and the South Staffs district of the West Midland Association.

Fred Stainthorpe, one of the local ministers and himself an ex-BMS missionary from Zaire posed the question, 'Why BMS?' There was no missionary society in the days of the Acts, yet mission was an integral part of their work. However, in the late 18th century, when the churches were clearly not getting on with the task of mission it took a special interest group, led by William Carey, to awaken them to the needs of the world.

Granted that we need a society, it is imperative that the churches are closely involved with the 'professionals'. (The District Committee later decided to try to arrange a trip to 93 Gloucester Place as part of its programme.)

Peter Briggs gave an overview of mission in practice. With the help of an overhead projector, he took the conference to the miraculously vigorous church in China, to the long-closed but now available field of Nepal and to the embattled Christian community forming such a tiny minority within the teeming population of Bangladesh.

Then there was Angola, where the tragedy of war has led indirectly to the strengthening of the church as a result of exile experiences in Zaire. In Brazil, the emphasis was on the needs of the fast-growing church for expertise in nurturing converts. The planning of new ventures in Thailand and France showed BMS to be keen to be wherever the need is.

As the participants dispersed, they took with them a bag of BMS promotional material and a deeper understanding of and commitment to the Society.

MISSIONTALK
MISSIONTALK
MISSIONTALK
MISSIONTALK

What's happening in the Church around the World



SIMPLE AND PLAIN FAITH

THE Protestant Church in Zhengzhou, China, is composed of several groups originating from different denominations. The most recent group to join is the True Jesus group, which has about 20 members, most of them women. Their simple and plain faith is shown in their hymns – really moral exhortations – which they chant in the Chinese style. One of them goes like this:

True Church, source of good things, hear me sing a song of believing in the Lord. If you want to know how good it is to believe, let me tell you one by one. A child who believes does not curse; an adult who believes does not go astray; A girl who believes becomes able and virtuous; a boy who believes follows the correct path;

A mother-in-law who believes loves her daughter-in-law, and a daughter-in-law shows obedience to her mothers and fathers-in-law; Brothers who believe do not get angry; sisters-in-law make the family harmonious; A magistrate who believes gives blessing to the whole country; a village head brings joy to the whole village; A bad person who believes becomes good; a lazy person works fast; A foolish person who believes becomes wise; a literary person adds wisdom; A blind person who believes is able to see; a lame person is able to walk; A deaf person who believes can hear; a dumb person can sing;

A possessed person who believes is rid of demons; a sick person does not need medicine; A smoker who believes ceases to smoke; a drunkard does not drink; If the whole family believes in the Lord, both men and women, old and young, sing happily together; Many good things, full of hope, Jesus is leading us to heaven. May I offer a piece of advice to all of you; think about it yourself. Whoever wants to be blessed, come quickly to the church of the Sabbath. Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! Jesus is leading us to heaven.

UNCO-OPERATIVE MISSIONARIES

DISAGREEMENTS have been reported among missionaries connected with the Evangelical Fellowship of Thailand about where they will work.

'Denominations which have established themselves in a province do not want others to work there,' says EFT Chairman, Charan Ratanabutra. He says that territorial conflicts are limited to the 50 or so foreign denominations associated with EFT. The 40 local Christian bodies and more than 300 local congregations do not have such problems.

A senior missionary said many EFT missionaries are from denominations which do not co-operate with one another, and they bring such attitudes and problems to Thailand.

Though EFT does not have a policy of allocating mission territories, many foreign missionaries informally set certain areas as their own and resist the presence of others there.

The Thai government grants work permits to foreign Protestant missionaries only if they are affiliated with EFT or the Church of Christ in Thailand. The united Church of Christ reports few territorial problems.

DISPENSARY DESTROYED

A Baptist dispensary in the province of Matagalpa, in the north of Nicaragua, has been destroyed. Church representatives say the facility, one of 22 run by the Baptist Convention, was destroyed by contra forces fighting the Nicaraguan government. The group also kidnapped Jose Luis Escorcia, a rural development worker with an ecumenical organization. He escaped two hours later.

AMITY PRESS

WORKERS at the construction site of the new Amity printing press close to Nanjing, China, are being urged, by posters, to 'wage a strenuous fight to finish the main building of the Amity press' before the middle of the year.

The press, a project of the Amity Christian Foundation, will be giving priority to the production of Bibles, New Testaments, and other Christian literature in Chinese.

MISSIONARY MOVEMENTS

Arrivals

Mr and Mrs M King on 10 February from CECO, Kimpese.

Departures

Miss P James on 19 February to Cuttack, India.
Miss R Williams on 27 February to Yakusu, Zaire.

Deaths

On 21 February, **Dr Jean Benzie**, MB, ChB (India 1925-56).

Miss E G Ockenden
Miss G W Underwood

320.00
50.00

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Secretaries acknowledge with grateful thanks the following legacies, and gifts sent anonymously (to 31 January 1987).

	£
Ronald Mason Brown	43.81
Florence Emily Cullington	100.24
Frank Malcolm Godfrey	100.00

General Work

Anon: £55.00; Anon: £5.00; Anon, Enfield: £10.00; Cymro: £35.00; FAE, Aberdeen: £10.00; Anon: £15.00; Anon: £25.00; Anon: £50.00.

Prayer Partners

Anon: £5.00.

BAPTIST HOLIDAY FELLOWSHIP

WESTHOLME, MINEHEAD

- ★ Seafront Hotel
- ★ 31 comfortable bedrooms – some en suite
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- ★ Spacious – Sleep 2-10
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MEET BAPTISTS ACROSS THE WORLD

DENVER – USA

14-29 August

Leader: – Rev Dan Weller

- ★ Stay with Baptist Families in the shadow of the Rockies
- ★ Visit the Grand Canyon

AUSTRALIA

January 1988

Leader: Rev Dan Weller

- ★ Join the Australian Bi-centenary Baptist Convention
- ★ Holiday in Queensland
- ★ Stay on with Family or Friends

FELLOWSHIP HOLIDAYS

MALTA – 21-28 April – Leader: Rev Douglas Monkley

CYPRUS – 26 May-9 June – Leader: Rev Frank Wiltshire

Full details from: Baptist Holiday Fellowship (MH)
1 The Esplanade, Minehead, Somerset TA24 5BE (0643) 3473

NOTICES

BMS Young People's Project

1987-88

HELP RAISE

£18,000 . . .

French Connection

. . . And share with French

Baptists in telling people

about God's love.