

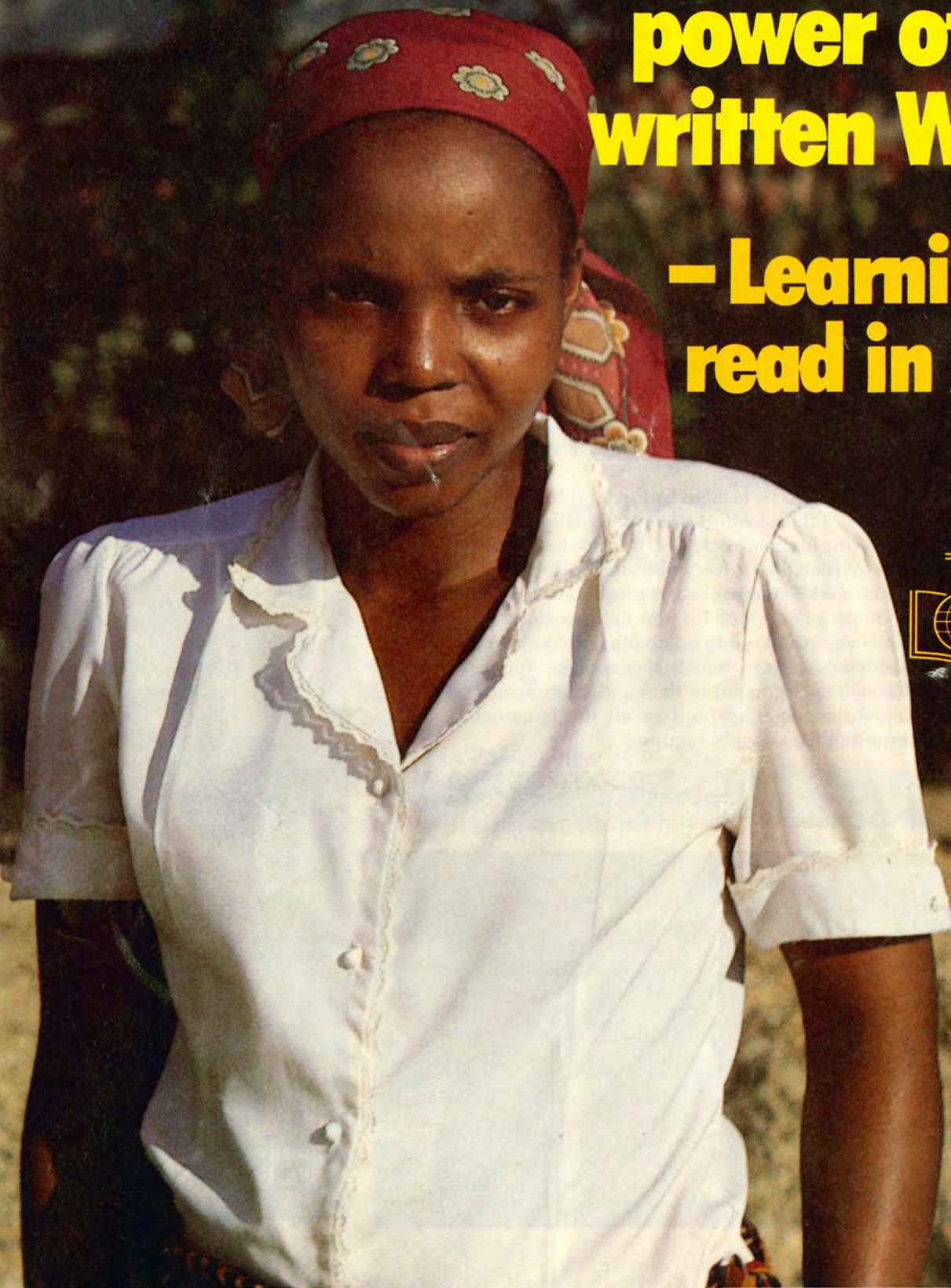
MISSIONARY

HERALD

November 1987

**'Women and the
power of the
written Word'**

**— Learning to
read in Zaire**



Editorial Comment

THE BMS General Committee meets in the first week of November, the second of the three meetings held each year. Please remember to pray for the committee members on 3 and 4 November. They are not just 'rubber-stamps' approving decisions made by BMS officers and staff, but have a real role to play in shaping the policies of the Society.

If you read Fred Stainthorpe's article this month, you will see that each General Committee member is also a member of at least one sub-committee of the Society. This is where they have the opportunity to get involved in the smaller details of the work, questioning, probing, bringing forward new ideas – in fact doing their job of representing British Baptist churches, justifying our claim that the BMS is indeed the overseas missionary arm of Baptist churches in the UK.

Fred Stainthorpe also makes the point that, as your representatives, they also have the responsibility of reporting back to churches and associations, making clear the claims of world-mission as they are being pursued through the work of the BMS.

Not an easy task and not one to be tackled by the faint-hearted, you may think. That is true and this is where your responsibility comes in. We shall soon be asking for nominations of those to be elected by the churches of your Association to serve on next year's General Committee. Do you know who your present representatives are? Do you think they are doing a good job? Do you think someone else could do it better? Are you prepared to be nominated? Remember, the General Committee is a hard working committee requiring members who can give a commitment in time and energy, not just when attending scheduled meetings, but in all the home-work, preparation and reporting back that is required.

MISSIONARY HERALD
THE MAGAZINE OF
THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY
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ISSN 0264-1372

© 1987 Baptist Missionary Society
Photoset and printed by
Stanley L Hunt (Printers) Ltd
Rushden, Northamptonshire

MISSIONARY
HERALD
THE MAGAZINE OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY



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We share in the work of the
Church in:

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



Mary Philpott



' WE WANT TO READ ! '

Mary Philpott has been a BMS teacher in Zaire since 1979. She lives and works in the town of Kisangani in the Upper River region of Zaire. In this article she explains more about her literacy work among women.

Reading groups began in all six central parishes in the city but only three continue to function on a regular basis. Another class meets from time to time but only after a lot of encouragement from me! The women in the church are keen but sadly their Pastor hasn't been too supportive in ensuring that they have a regular teacher. I have often noticed that, not only in the literacy work, but in the women's work in general that if the local pastors and church leaders aren't backing the women up then they so easily become discouraged.

Who are the classes for? The answer is easy – for anyone who can't read or who has a desire to improve their literacy skills. Due to a shortage of adequate educational opportunities within the country generally, considerable numbers within the church cannot read. Even if they possessed a copy of a Bible it wouldn't help them much as they would be unable to read it. Others can read but very poorly and sometimes, as they read aloud during a meeting, it proves difficult to understand what they are saying! Although I work amongst women I frequently stress that the reading classes are open to anyone and it's a real joy when I see men sitting alongside the women in a learning situation. Indeed, when I visited one of the reading classes in Kisangani a little boy was present. His father sent him along because he was concerned at his lack of progress at school! The classes are for Christians and non-Christians alike. In one church in Kisangani it has become a means of outreach. Two non-Christian women started attending and, after a while, they expressed a desire for baptism and church membership.

'Lakisa biso!' (Teach us!) That was the title of an article I wrote for this magazine in 1984. Three years later that is still the plea on the lips of the Christian women in the Upper River Region of Zaire. The desire to attend retreats, services and Bible Studies has not lessened one little bit. Their faith and desire to grow in the Lord is a great challenge.

where I live. So, what has happened since then? Have the reading classes grown and begun in other parts of the region as was hoped? Let me share with you an exciting story – the joys and problems too!

When a new venture starts it is a widely accepted fact that, initially, there's often a lot of enthusiasm. However, when the problems come then sometimes that wanes! This has been the case to a certain extent in the literacy work in Kisangani.

Four years ago the literacy work was still in its beginning stages in Kisangani, the city

The classes are taught by the local people themselves. When I first attempted to introduce the scheme some told me that it would never work. They said I would never find people prepared to give of their time freely in order to teach others. That has been true to some extent. Reading classes haven't started in some places because, even though there are able readers within the church, they aren't willing to become involved unless they receive a salary. How sad this is. However, there are many who are prepared to give of their time sacrificially to share their knowledge with others. They know how to read the Bible and they want others to know too. How good it is when the men of the church help the women in this work. In a society where women take the lower place this is a real encouragement for them and helps show that their work has meaning.

The teachers certainly don't have an easy task! Zairians aren't known for their good time-keeping and as the members of the group arrive more late than early and in 'drips and drabs', the patience of the teacher can often be tested. A major problem is the shortage of materials. I have been able to provide books of simplified Bible passages for those who have progressed in their efforts. However, only the teacher in an introductory class is able to receive a copy of a book and this is obviously ideal for those in the beginning stage of reading. I visited a village where I'd been previously and given a copy of a book so that the work could begin. It had not done so because the leader was waiting for sufficient copies of books so that every woman could receive one. I attempted to encourage her by sharing news of others who, despite the lack of resources, were now reading for the first time. Again, another major difficulty is the fact that the husbands of the women are not always supportive and thus a woman might be thwarted in her desire to learn. This, obviously, is not a problem in a Christian marriage.

One would expect that, since the work initially began in Kinsangani in 1983, results there should now be in evidence. Indeed this is the case and women are rejoicing and thanking the Lord that they are now able to read His Word for themselves. Some are taking a turn in speaking in the Women's Meeting or in leading morning prayers in their local church. It was a particular thrill for me when, visiting one of the Kisangani groups, to be read a speech

of welcome written by a lady who could not read or write when I'd first met her a couple of years previously. As women are progressing in their attempts to read, some others who grew discouraged and left the classes are now returning as they realize what they have missed! There's joy in Kisangani but in other parts of the region too. Women have left work in their fields in order to attend classes and their enthusiasm to learn is now bearing fruit. Classes in the villages in forest areas are smaller but, nevertheless, if it's only two women in the church who learn to read and understand God's Word more fully it is still a cause for rejoicing. I attempted to convey this to a pastor in a village church who was concerned that only a handful of women were coming to him for instruction.

The literacy project is gradually spreading to other areas of the region but

communication is poor, and, so often, news concerning these groups is sparse. It is often only as I travel that I gain information. Therefore, I count it a priority to spend longer with the village folks giving more concentrated support and encouragement. After journeys it's obviously good to hear what new reading classes have been formed. However, I'm more interested as to whether they are still functioning six months later. For the work to flourish I'm convinced that, whatever help is given, has to be on a regular basis. Even so, there are those who have yet to be convinced of the importance of learning to read. The women in the existing groups will tell them what a lot they are missing. Hard work it may be, but many are now reading God's Word for themselves and sharing it with others. That makes it all worthwhile.

CHOLERA EPIDEMIC, BOLOBO

IT started in February and was still spreading in September according to a report received by Dr David Masters.

'At present, at least 20 new cases and three deaths occur each day in the health zone,' he says. 'Altogether this diarrhoeal disease has claimed over 100 lives. Each patient needs £10 worth and 10 pounds weight of medicines, on average.'

'Deaths in this easily cured disease are due to:

- (a) Inability to get sufficient drugs in or through the capital city for logistic rather than financial reasons.
- (b) Insufficient staff to ensure adequate drinking of rehydration salt solution, let alone fluid balance control or barrier nursing.
- (c) Refusal of many patients to drink adequately because they regard their death as inevitable by reason of age and/or witchcraft.

'Please keep praying. The hospital staff are tired, especially the Zairian nurses, whose salary (£8 a month) buys half what it did nine months ago. The people are angry at this unexpected financial burden and tired from many wakes (funeral vigils). Introducing healthier habits of hygiene is not helped by this atmosphere.

'Praise God for the Missionary Aviation Fellowship who fly in any drugs that can be obtained in the capital, and for the BMS relief grant, which should cover these freight bills.

'Pray that Christian love may be seen at the bed or mat side, and Christian integrity in the sharing of meagre resources.'

IDENTIFY... ADJUST... EVALUATE...



Whatever happened to Gift and Self Denial Week?

SOME NEW BMS MATERIAL IS AVAILABLE TO HELP YOU IDENTIFY MORE CLOSELY WITH THE WORK OVERSEAS

FOR some time now, most churches have not been observing the 'official' BMS Gift and Self Denial Week at the beginning of November. Instead they have taken the special leaflets and envelopes and used them at another time in the year, often linked with missionary deputation Sundays.

Although we accept this change and see the need to fit into the evolving patterns of church life in the UK, the Society still feels that it is right to emphasize the sacrificial element, on the part of Baptists in Britain, which is an essential part of our world mission involvement.

So, this year, we have produced not one leaflet but three. They are undated and can be used at any time within a church's programme.

Stand with them...

... asks, 'How close do you feel to those who are working with the Church overseas? Have you ever felt you would like to share more in the life and work of missionaries?'

It goes on to suggest ways in which, by using *The Herald*, missionary prayer letters, and other material, church members can identify more closely with folk working in the Church overseas.

This leads on to an adjustment of daily priorities so that more time can be spent in prayer and an evaluation of the cost of mission as each person seeks to understand the implication of Christ's call to 'go'.

PRAYING FOR...

- ... Missionaries
- ... National Christians

These are two other leaflets to go with the above. One, which includes the photographs of all our serving missionaries, picks out some of the difficulties which missionaries have to face, so that we can pray with understanding. The other focuses its attention on the particular needs and problems of national Christians in the overseas churches.

Order forms for this new material have been sent to missionary secretaries, but if you have not received one and would like copies of these leaflets and a supply of offering envelopes, please write to:

**BMS, 93 Gloucester Place,
LONDON W1H 4AA**

SOME REFLECTIONS ON WORLD MISSION

Iwan Davies

TWO years have now passed since I visited Bangladesh as part of a young people's delegation of the Baptist Missionary Society. The purpose of the visit was educational and experimental in that its aim was to inform both about the nature of mission overseas as well as emphasizing the cultural and social atmosphere of the Christian community in

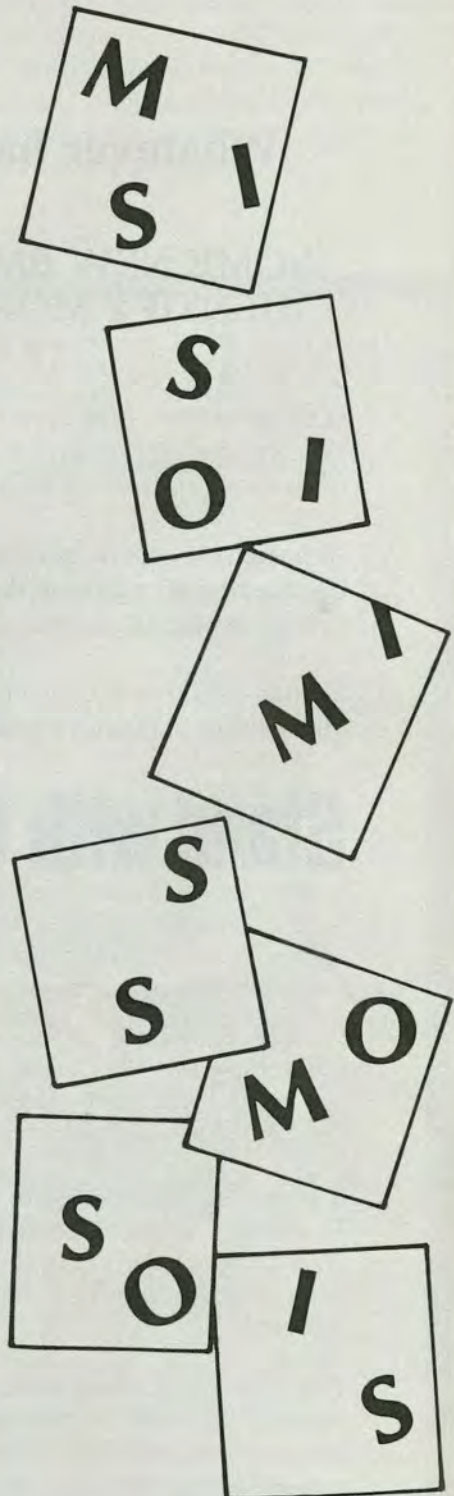
South East Asia. I believe that sufficient time has now elapsed to enable the formation of a sufficiently informed perspective to emerge regarding my experiences. In this article I would like to concentrate on these things: The meaning of the term 'mission'; The missionary with the BMS; The continuation of mission.

WHAT DOES THE WORD 'MISSION' MEAN?

The word 'mission' has in our time taken on the provocative connotation. For many it stands for atrocities committed in the name of Christianity or for the power of a mission movement, usually American, in a 'broken back' state, a crippled economy with little or no source of foreign revenue. As such it constitutes the American 'presence' overseas. Many others regard the term as being anachronistic, a throwback to eighteenth and nineteenth century non-conformity and reflecting spiritual narrowness. This approach would applaud Band Aid, Sport Aid and Development Aid but would draw the line at 'religious propaganda'. Some Christians subscribe to one or both of these approaches.

In fact the word 'mission' is very much more complicated than the above would suggest. Certainly, the Christian church has

no monopoly over its use and indeed it has become a bye-word in the politics of diplomacy. The Anglican Church has recently adopted the word to describe its humanitarian initiatives as in Terry Waite's celebrated 'mission' to the Lebanon. Nevertheless, the core of meaning which underlies the term 'mission' goes hand in hand with Christian witness. It is an indispensable word which informs the church of its obligation to discipleship which knows no geographical, ethnic, cultural, economic, social or political barrier. As such, the use of the term 'mission' unsettles an introverted theology by anticipating God's sovereignty and demonstrates how human beings of all races can live and work together. It may be that the offence in the word 'mission' to many of our contemporaries reflects the fact that mission represents a threat both to church forms as presently constituted as well as to the world.



THE MISSIONARY WITH THE BMS

The BMS is a voluntary association as described in 1792 by William Carey's classic treatise 'Enquiry into the obligation of Christians to use means for the conversion of the heathens'. There is no doubt that the BMS has developed into a highly efficient organization for sending and equipping people for the purpose of Christian proclamation and service overseas, as well as mustering 'home' support and interest for the work. In addition, the movement has produced its own spirituality which is demonstrated on the gravestones of young men and women, which I saw in Serampore, Barisal and Dhaka – the ultimate self-denial for the sake of the Gospel. However, today's

missionaries are to some extent protected from the worst inconveniences by the efficiency of the BMS and its ability to respond effectively to emergencies. Moreover the modern missionary no longer answers by necessity a lifetime call and would certainly not get a visa for this. Thus in India, no new visas for missionaries have been issued for several years and neither have many visas been renewed. The response to this has been to initiate a VSO-type programme where young people are sent for a short period of no more than 6-12 months.

Many missionaries are on short terms of service with the BMS of between 2-3

years. An important reason for this phenomenon is that the BMS works in partnership with the local Baptist church and expatriate Christians who take overseas contract posts do so on LOCAL terms. The great advantage of this is that the missionaries are in positions where they are wanted; had a local person been available they would not have been appointed, and when one is available they will not be re-appointed. In a very real sense therefore the modern missionary is vulnerable.

THE CONTINUATION OF MISSION

The very essence of the Christian faith involves mission. Unlike Judaism, Buddhism and Hinduism, Christianity has spread through cross-cultural contact. It would be simplistic to maintain that there is a 'Christian world' as distinct from a 'non-Christian' world, and it is more realistic to refer to 'mission in six continents'. However, it must be conceded that Islamic expansion has been spreading out from a central point and by and large maintaining the allegiance of those it reaches. This is not true of the Christian experience at least in the West where allegiance has waned. To arrest this decline it would appear self-evident that the certainty of the incarnation should be proclaimed. Otherwise it is as though God has remained in His Heaven and Christ's living body which is the church will become merely of archaeological interest as is graphically demonstrated in North African Arab countries as well as the Gulf States.

The need for dialogue with Islam is essential in the future of mission. The task

of mission to Islam will involve the elaboration of a systematic theology; one which is not abstract, but rather related to a particular context e.g. the importance of human dignity, the elimination of racial and sexual discrimination, the prophetic concern for justice and mercy. In a very real sense, these are Kingdom of God issues. As Stanley Jones, the Methodist Missionary would say: 'Jesus is the kingdom personalized, and the kingdom is Jesus universalized'.

The 'ebb and flow' of the Gospel has been an aspect of the history of the Christian Church. The Gospel went out from Jerusalem and was preached by Paul to the Gentiles. Even at the time of the early church the churches of the diaspora collected money for the saints in Jerusalem. In our situation it is a numerical fact that by the year 2000, 60% of all Christians will be living outside North America and Europe. One of the traumas Christianity has suffered in recent years has been the breakup of Christendom, i.e. the

alliance of church and state. The conditions that made this alliance possible in the past no longer obtain. This heralds the dawn of an era of new universality in the history of the church. A time of genuine solidarity between Christians in the six continents is a positive benefit from the dissolution of the church.

When last August Desmond Tutu vented his wrath against the indifference of the West to apartheid – 'the West can go to hell' – this was more than a sharp off-the-cuff remark. It was a signal to our age. It was a sign of loss of hope that the western world might rise above self-interest. More than anything else, this demonstrates the need for Christians to become global in their vision. Our world needs the Gospel understood in terms of salvation and grace, in terms of the kingdom and in terms of the liberating gift of the Spirit.

Iwan Davies lectures in law in Cardiff

**HE'S
ON
THE**

?

The BMS General Committee is its main governing body. Made up of over 130 Baptist Church members from all areas of the country, the General Committee meets three times a year, under the guidance of God, to decide BMS policy and direction. But what do the members do! *Fred Stainthorpe* takes us into the mysterious world of the General Committee member.



**GENERAL
COMMITTEE!**

OUR Christian service begins in simple ways. We may be asked to give out hymn books or wash up some dishes or read a lesson. As time goes on we move on to different activities. These are not necessarily better or more important but they are more public. We speak at the Young People's Fellowship, we give hospitality to a visiting preacher or we represent the local church at a Conference and little by little we progress. Some go further. They become members of General Committees. The summit stares them in the face. Only the Pope and the Secretary of the BU have gone up higher!

Such positions can be regarded in different ways. One is that they enable people to travel at other people's expense. They have days out, maybe in London, and can fit in some shopping at the same time. Another is that they have access to the corridors of power and to the ears of the mighty. Another and better way is to regard them as a privilege, and an opportunity for ministry.

The Roman God Janus was depicted with two heads, able to look both into the past and into the future. The General Committee member is the same. He or she

is in the best sense a 'Mr Facing-both-ways', commissioned to represent the churches to the Society and vice-versa.

To many Christians the working of a Missionary Society is a great mystery. Its staff enter the door of, say, 93 Gloucester Place in the morning and reappear in the evening but what do they do in between? Do they do anything? Membership of a General Committee dispels much of the mystery. The visitor becomes aware both directly and indirectly of the many ministries performed by the staff of Mission House. Some of them become well-known and receive honour for their work but the most insignificant and unseen make the work of those up front possible and we should value the work of the back-room boys. Perhaps they will read these words and realize that they are noticed.

The General Committee comprises about 130 people and meets three times a year. Much of its preparatory work is done in smaller committees and each convenes regularly. Each General Committee member attends one or more of these according to gifts and inclination and in them the kaleidoscopic work of mission can be perceived. Home Organization, Finance

and General Purposes, Medical, Agricultural and Overseas Committees deal with many matters. This arrangement enables people with varying gifts, expertise and interests to use them best.

The Overseas Committee member can be likened to the owner of a village store who is suddenly transported to Harrods. His mind boggles. Soon after convening he joins a smaller group to hear the reports of returned missionaries. He hears of their work in detail. He learns things which they may not have time to say on deputation. He hears about their hopes, problems and fears as well as their vision. The doctor's wife in Africa has begun a literature project; the Asian representative's wife has become involved in the school for missionaries' children; the Brazilian missionary describes his church's growing awareness of social needs and the Zairian teacher expresses her joy at being able to preach more often. The smaller groups assemble and reports are given from each of them. Longer reports from overseas regional representatives give an overview of

their travels and the member's mind begins to reel. He thinks 'That half was never told to me!'

It is difficult to remain unmoved by such a recital. One feels a sense of high privilege at hearing so much about God's work. Yet this privilege imposes a responsibility. He is a representative of the churches. They too need to know about what God is doing and, sadly not everybody reads the *Missionary Herald*. Here the Committee member can help to fill the gap. Deputation poses a serious and in some ways a growing problem to the Society. Even the recent appointment of Area Representatives cannot fully meet the demand. Here the Committee member could find the other arm of his job in reporting back to the churches some of the news he hears in London.

Each sub-committee has its particular role to play and members can alert home constituents to current needs and opportunities through worship services, sectional meetings, District and Association

gatherings and ministers' fraternals. Are you ever short of a speaker? Discover the name of your local Committee members and invite them along! Likewise the General Committee member is uniquely placed to make known the views of local churches to the Society. Where we have matters for praise, concern or blame we should not remain silent but ask him to voice it in the right quarter.

Committee meetings are usually held in London, but once a year the summer gathering takes place in the provinces. This enables the staff to see green grass again and also helps local churches to get up-to-date with the Society's work. Two hundred missionary enthusiasts cannot easily be kept quiet and the concluding rally often brings great inspiration and a missionary challenge to some who might not normally hear it. Why not invite the next summer Committee to your area? It may be just what you and they need.

JAMAICA – THE PARTNERSHIP CONTINUES – '87



Keith and Jackie Riglin

This year has certainly been eventful in the lives of Keith and Jackie Riglin. They left Britain in mid August for Jamaica where Keith is serving at the United Theological College of the West Indies. Their journey to the Caribbean came just a few weeks after learning that Jackie was expecting their first child.

Keith has been finding out more about his work at the College.

'In addition to lecturing at the UTCWI in Philosophy, The Reformation, and Pentecost to 451 AD, I will have responsibility for the Baptist Students at the College. This will involve looking at ordination, infant dedication and the Eucharist.

'I am also involved in tutoring Baptist students in "Introduction to the Bible" during their pre-college year.'

MISSIONTALK

MISSIONTALK

MISSIONTALK

MISSIONTALK

WHOOPS! THERE GOES TWO MILLION!

In our update, last month, on the need to reach our financial target by the end of October, two million got knocked off the target figure, which should have read £2,371,414.

The amount still required was, however, correct at £800,000.

Remember it helps the Society considerably – not having to borrow from the bank – if church, auxiliary and association treasurers send in BMS money regularly rather than holding on to it until the end of the financial year.

TABLES TURNED

Ron Armstrong, the BMS Scottish Representative, is usually in the interviewer's seat, questioning missionaries about their vocation and daily tasks. But when he visited George Square Baptist Church, Greenock the other month, he found the tables turned.

Ron was leading a two day missionary training event, but during the Sunday morning service he found himself interviewed about his own work.

'How did you get into this work? What does it involve? is it rewarding, or just frustrating?'

These and questions like them were fired in a regular barrage.

'I found the exercise quite a refreshing change from regular routine interviewing,' said Ron.

'I had absolutely no advance glimpse of the questions, so I was kept on my toes. The questions were really challenging and provided an opportunity for communicating the missionary message to a full church in a new and interesting way.'

EUROPEAN BAPTIST YOUTH TOLD TO 'SHINE' AS LIGHTS IN PORTUGUESE CAMP

LISBON PORTUGAL – More than 180 young people and youth leaders attended the 7th European Baptist Youth Conference 1987, held at the Portuguese Baptist Campground, 21-30 July. They represented thirteen European countries and ten different languages. The Annual Conference is a major activity of the European Baptist Federation Youth Committee. This was the first time an International Conference of this nature has been hosted in Portugal.

The theme, 'Shine as Lights in the World' challenged youth and leaders to return to their respective countries, homes and churches to make a 'difference' in Europe and the world. In a genuine way the barriers of languages, cultures, governments, and personalities were overcome by the characteristics of power, love, and unity of the Body of Christ.

A special delegation of nine youth leaders from the German Democratic Republic requested prayer for the youth work and churches in the other seven European countries who were unable to attend.

EBPS

P.S. In the September 'Missionary Herald', new candidates were introduced from the Summer Session of the BMS General Committee. We omitted to say that Alan and Ruth Wood came from the Corporation Road Baptist Church in Darlington. We all wish them every blessing as they prepare to leave for service in Zaire.

SAVE YOUR STAMPS!

Used stamps can provide money for world mission! By sending off any used stamps – British or foreign – the BMS Stamp Bureau can turn them into much needed funds for world mission. If you, or your church would like to contribute stamps – send them, all parcelled, to:

**BMS STAMP BUREAU
Kiloware/Sorting Dept.
Rev R Cave
77 Hurst Park Avenue
Cambridge CB4 2AB**

TEACHERS FOR CHINA

Teachers of English, graduates with TEFL qualifications and experience are, we hope, going to be needed again for two year appointments, from August 1988.

Churches and missionary societies are again expecting to work together in response to a request from the Amity Foundation in China.

A second category, of graduates to be used in English conversation, is also expected to be needed.

If you are interested in working in China please write to:

***The Personnel Secretary,
The Baptist Missionary Society,
93 Gloucester Place,
LONDON W1H 4AA***

BAPTIST WOMEN'S DAY 2nd NOV 1987 **OF PRAYER**

'God's Command: Be Peacemakers'

As Baptist women across the world join together in prayer and study, the BWA Women's Department hopes that more women's groups will participate in this global event.

'God's command is to be peacemakers,' says Edna Lee de Gutierrez, BWA Women's Department President. 'Let us join our hearts and spirits in a common prayer: that God's command may be a

daily experience in our lives, being peacemakers and working for peace as we give testimony of our faith and share the good news that peace is only possible through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.'

MISSIONTALK
MISSIONTALK
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MISSIONTALK

PRAYER DIARY

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN ZAIRE

1-7 November

Praise God that people continue to respond to God's call to become ministers and pastors in the church in Zaire. Because they will become leaders there are some who will apply for the wrong reasons. The CBFZ has established a sheet of criteria to help churches in their selection.

The student, his wife and family, receive a nominal sum to help them buy food but prices are high and often food is scarce. Therefore, they have to find ways of earning money as well as devoting time to their studies and to practical work in the local churches.

Roz Williams and Mama Kuvituanga help in the preparation of student wives and also run a nursery school for their children. At Bolobo, the Rev Lituambela and Irene Masters hold joint seminars for husbands and wives on the subject of the Christian family where traditional roles are tested by Christian values.

HOME BASE

8-14 November

Right from the beginning the BMS has depended on a strong home base concerned for World Mission, so those in the Mission House and Secretaries concerned with those overseas. Remember the Officers and Secretaries of the BMS, asking for wisdom and sensitivity for them in all the leadership and decisions they are called upon to give.

Give thanks for the continuing flow of enquirers about service and the increased number of candidates – pray for them in all their preparation and as they settle into new spheres of work overseas.

EDUCATION IN ZAIRE

15-21 November

Chris and Christine Spencer have recently returned from furlough and after several years at the Baptist School of Theology in Yakusu are now at Mbanza Ngungu where they are involved in Christian Education. Pray that they may settle happily with their family in this new place and to this new work.

In the High School at Kisangani, Annie Horsfall reports that classes are larger than ever, with over 60 to a class. Despite all the problems, there are encouragements – good State Exam results and teachers showing great devotion in spite of irregular salary payments.

After six months furlough earlier this year Pat Woolhouse is now back at Kimpese; continuing her work in the High School at CECO and helping in the Bible School.

CHURCH WORK IN ZAIRE

22-28 November

Missionaries are invited to work in Zaire to fulfil certain specific functions, whether in education, medical work, development, theological or other work and this would be the missionary's prime responsibility. Additionally, every BMS missionary becomes a member of the church in Zaire and can be asked by the church to fulfil responsibilities within it, in the same way as Zairian Christians. These duties themselves provide abundant opportunity for Christian service and witness. Some missionaries are elected as deacons, some are involved in Bible study groups or evangelistic outreach and others are involved in pastoral visiting. Those who have been serving in Zaire for a longer period are often looked upon by the church leaders for advice and they need the wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN BRAZIL

29 November-5 December

Baptists in Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil, are initiating schemes to help some of the poorest members of society.

In the state capital, Campo Grande, a 'Friendship House' aims to enable families to overcome the social disadvantages of poverty, illiteracy and unemployment. Centres have been established in four areas (favelas) of the city. Self-help groups have been organized among mothers so that, say, five join forces. Four go out to work and amongst them, support the fifth mother who stays at home and runs a creche for all their children. Extra (remedial) lessons are provided for favela children who are at school – enabling them to get maximum benefit from their studies.

Please pray for all those influenced by this practical concern, for Frank and Peggy Gouthwaite and Margaret Swires as they lead this work.

A taste of my own medicine...

One missionary's experience of medical care in Zaire

MY illness in Zaire was a very challenging experience. One gradually becomes immured to the certainty that few people who get sick in the city are going to get adequate medical care. They haven't the money or the resources so gradually if you are to function at all you harden your heart, accept that fact and do your own tiny job, in your own tiny sector of the great need. This is OK – until you get ill. I had been told that illness is always worse out here than at home. You are sicker, hotter, more tired, ache more and feel more alone.

I have just had a throat and subsequent chest infection, I can never remember feeling so ill. I have known for a long time that I was far from well – I could get up earlier in the morning, work later at school and at night I could never catch up with all I was trying to do. It is no use saying 'I'm tired' – by December 1st, everyone is tired, and others are visibly ill, but haven't given up.

Then Sunday night – when it hit me – my temperature soared, my throat was a flame thrower down the whole length of my body and although it did no good I could do nothing but cough. Kind friends visited me and gave me some medication and sent for the senior missionary.

She's a dispensing chemist. After coming over later, she leaned over and put her ear to my chest and then to my back. Well, she wasn't a doctor but it was a skilled diagnosis – Tetramycin for seven days. But if I had been in the city there would have been no help. If I had money, the dispensary, eager to make a sale, would have sold me anything, regardless of its suitability. But suppose I had lain there to 'sweat it out' for a long time, with no help and no nourishment. I have had to make many, many people do just that when I have had to refuse to pay prescription fees of between two and ten pounds. What chance would I have had? I gave thanks for the care and medication received. I pray that through this experience the Lord would give me a greater understanding and sympathy for the people I am working with.





A NEW CHURCH BUILDING FROM AN OLD TEMPLE

The Majie Church is in the Xishan District of Kunming, China. The old church building was demolished in 1957. After that, Christians had to meet in private homes.

In 1981, the Majie congregation was allowed to meet publicly again, but they had to meet in a rented house. As rents rose from year to year, they had to move from place to place. By October 1984, they were frustrated with this situation, but still there was no place large enough for them and they were short of funds.

Then someone remembered an old temple in Majie which had been used by a production brigade as a storehouse. Because the brigade was later divided into three small teams, no-one was currently using the place. The church offered to buy it for a bargain price of 1,000RMB (£220).

Still, some members of the congregation had second thoughts. They asked how Christians could use a Buddhist temple as a place of worship. For many of them, a temple means a house of idols and thus of Satan. The issue became quite controversial among the members.

Finally, the problem was solved when someone pointed out the example of Jesus cleansing the temple. Why couldn't they, too, cleanse the temple in the name of Jesus? A decision was made to cut off the dragon heads on each side of the roof. In this way, the temple was turned into a house of God.

Now everyone brings their straw mats into the church to sit on, because they cannot afford benches. The building can accommodate more than 300 people squeezed together on mats.

BRIDGE

WAITING TO BE SERVED WITH BIBLES

IN Angola, the work of Bible distribution is going well. According to João Makondekwa, Secretary for the Bible Society in Angola, there is more demand for Bibles than can be met.

'We receive them from England, Portugal, Brazil, Korea and America in tens of thousands,' he says, 'but they are never enough to share amongst those who need them so desperately.

'We distribute Scriptures in Kikongo, Kimbundu, Tchokwe, Umbundu, Luvale, Luchaze, Kwanyama, Portuguese, English, French, Spanish, Russian, Songo and Nkhumbi. These last two languages only in the Gospels.

'It is a great joy to see people at Bible House lining up — queueing as at the ticket office, waiting to be served with Bibles in their own language. In fact we do ration the number of books each person may take so that we may be able to serve some of them.

'We continuously praise the Lord for this situation.'

BAPTIST WOMEN IN THAILAND

Although the sessions were held in the Thai language, there were six different languages spoken at the first Thailand Baptist Women's Union Camp held in Chiangmai, Thailand in October, 1986. Four Hill Tribes were represented — Lahu, Karen, Lisu and Hakai. These, along with Thai, Chinese and missionaries from Baptist churches met for Bible study, inspiration, business and fellowship.

As representatives shared burdens, victories and dreams, a unity of purpose developed. This led to prayer and planning for an increased women's witness through the churches of Thailand.

The Thailand Baptist Women's Union asks for prayer that they will do all they can as labourers together with God in winning the world for Christ.

BWA WOMEN'S DEPARTMENT

What's happening in the Church around the World

ASIAN RURAL INSTITUTE

The Asian Rural Institute in Nishinasuno, Japan, may not be well known to many, but it provides training for over thirty people from Asian and South American countries. The trainees live in the Institute for a year and take short courses depending on their interests and needs in the home countries.

Luis Moran serves as the Secretary of the Association Bautista de El Salvador (Baptist Association of El Salvador). He is

concerned about the landless farmers of his country who are at the mercy of a few landlords. He said that the Baptist Association collected free will offerings to purchase land where farmers' families live and work. He is hopeful that his short stay at the Asian Rural Institute will enrich him in his work. He asks the prayers of everyone for the farmers of El Salvador and for the Christians who try to help him in any way they can.

BWA WOMEN'S DEPARTMENT

PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT AQUINO ADDRESSES BAPTIST CONVENTION DELEGATES

METRO-MANILA, THE PHILIPPINES – On 22 May 1987, Philippine President Corazon C Aquino addressed the 52nd annual assembly of the Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches, Incorporated. The fact that she accepted the invitation to speak was a first in the 77-year history of Philippine Baptists. The assembly registered the highest attendance on record, with more than one thousand delegates and visitors from the 213 member churches.

In her address President Aquino, while not one herself, said she has friends who are Baptists, and with them she shares 'not only the same faith but also the same intense devotion to certain ideals'.

She also said she 'would agree with your view that the nation is defined by its

people, and a people rightly judged by the kind of society it has built'.

Referring to the 'Yellow Revolution' which has taken place here causing people to turn 'from despair to heroism', she said 'many people have experienced the light of the Gospel in all the years of darkness.

Now that light has been kindled, it continues to spread and grow, even in the noonday brightness of our freedom', she said.

Concluding, the President thanked 'our Baptist friends for having been, and continuing to be, part of our inner revolution. . . . May Christ once again hold the floor and steer (the members of our government) to straight paths as they work to serve our people'.

A TESTIMONY FROM BOLIVIA – GOD'S POWER AND PEACE ARE ALIVE AND REAL

Pedro: I am 23 years old and was born near the Mamore river in eastern Bolivia. The only school was some distance away, but I had no money to travel so far. When I was very young I started work as a wood cutter and farmer's helper. In 1981 a missionary from the Bethesda Floating Clinic visited my home. She talked to us about the Word of God. We were five young people in the home who did not know how to read, she showed us literacy materials and each one of us bought the text. Three learned how to read but I had no one to help me and couldn't learn. I had a real desire to learn to read and share the Word of God with others, but everything seemed useless.

Many times I was invited to read a portion in our little church and I said I am not prepared. No one realized I was illiterate. Four years I waited for someone to come and help me. At last I asked the Lord that the missionary lady should come. Very soon she arrived. I begged her to teach me. She agreed, we prayed together and began to study. After eleven days I was able to read a verse in our service. This was a moment of peace and happiness for me. It was a miracle from God that I could read the Bible after such a short time. I hope to continue studying and serving the Lord.

EBPS

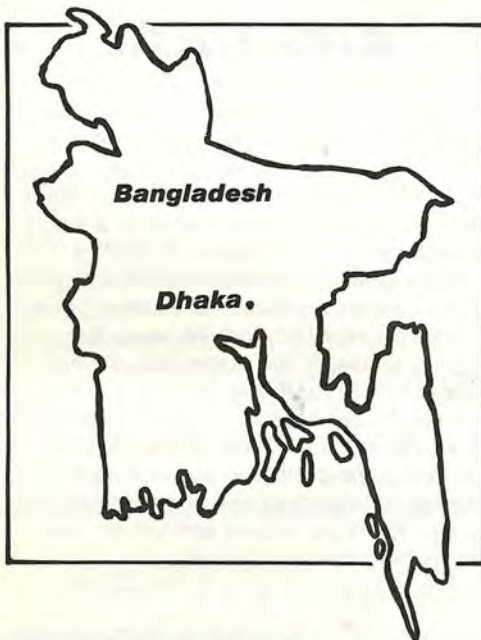
BWA

-BANGLADESH-

-FLOODS-

A Bangladeshi Response

In September, the BMS sent over £10,000 for the relief of victims of the floods in Bangladesh. The General Secretary of the Bangladesh Baptist Sangha (Union), Rev Poritosh Biswas, was in Britain when the gift was sent, and expressed his sincere thanks to British Baptists. In a letter from Bangladesh days later, the former General Secretary of the Sangha, Rev Rajen Baroi, gave the latest news.



Dhaka, Bangladesh, September 1987

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On behalf of all the people in our churches and those others who have received help in their time of deep need, I want to thank you for the gifts which you have sent and for the encouragement we have received in our efforts to relieve the hardship we have seen in so many places in Bangladesh.

As you may have read in the newspapers, it is reckoned that more than 17,000 sq miles of the country have been inundated, affecting 22 million people. Heavy torrents of water in some areas took people by surprise, coming down from the Himalayas and across the border from India. Over 500 people have lost their lives and a very large number of cattle have been drowned. Roads and bridges have been severely damaged and it will take months to rebuild the roads in some areas. The Army have done a good job in keeping most of the major trunk roads open by putting down Bailey Bridges but a very large number of the mud embankment roads in the countryside have been cut and this is making the relief operation more difficult. It is estimated that 10,000 miles of road have been made unusable.

Even more important than the damage caused has been the total loss of huge areas of the main rice crops. The aus rice was nearly ready for harvest but it all went under the water. Now the people are waiting to see whether or not the amon rice can be saved. The water is going down too slowly in most places, so

the likelihood is that most of it will be lost. Another devastating effect of this is that there is no work for those who depend at this time on harvesting the rice. The price of all food has shot up and the people cannot get anything from their own land because it is all under water. Their position is miserable.

Many of these needy people took shelter in the schools and clinics run by the Bangladesh Baptist Sangha. In Dinajpur the river embankment was breached and water poured into the town waist deep in the main road. People lost their stored rice and other things. People from the river bank took shelter on our school verandah and in the school hostels. They received food and other help in co-operation with the local government officers who were very grateful to the mission for helping. The school wall was demolished by the water but the main gate stood firm. This saved the school building and the embankment on which it is built, for which we are very thankful to God.

Later on an adhoc clinic was set up to help the people there.

The area in the town where most of the Christians live is low land so they had a very bad time. The water stayed for over two weeks but has largely gone now. The people in the countryside there are asking us to supply rice seedlings. There just aren't any to be had. We do not know how we can help them. It may be that they will have to wait and sow wheat seed instead in October when the conditions become suitable.

In Rangpur District, at the time of writing, we still do not have any real news of the village churches. The roads and bridges are all cut and we can neither visit them nor they us. Our pastors cannot visit their people. The relief team which has been set up may have great difficulty in reaching the people with the help which has been allocated. In both Dinajpur and Rangpur, many of the houses are made of mud. The thatch protects them from the rain, but the flood water undermines the walls and many of the houses have collapsed, making the people homeless. They will not be able to rebuild them till the end of November when the weather

'... it is reckoned that more than 17,000 square miles of the country have been inundated, affecting 22 million people.'

becomes suitable and they will need financial help for this.

The floodwater gradually moved down from the north to inundate southern areas.

Even Dhaka was heavily affected for a time and streets were awash. Barisal and Copalganj Madaripur districts were badly affected. The Pastoral Superintendent of Barisal district has told us that 38 out of our 42 churches have been badly affected and there is an urgent need for

food, clothing, housing and medicine. Our clinic at Santikuthir suddenly found itself having to feed many refugees from submerged villages. Moslem and Hindu neighbours took refuge there for many days until it was possible to return home. Sister Helga Thurauf of the Liebenzeller Mission was very worried about the situation but she was glad to be able to help the people sheltering there.

'The floodwater gradually moved down from the north to inundate southern areas. Even Dhaka was heavily affected for a time and streets were awash.'

Our village church and our village homes were all inundated and all the fish from the pond have escaped. All our village people try to raise fish in their ponds but our headquarters representative found that only one pond in the area did not go under the flood. It means that there has been a huge loss of fish. One man who is something of an expert in fish rearing has lost around Taka. 2,000,000 (£4,000) in fish which escaped. The cattle are also starving for want of grass and rice stalks. It is estimated that they will only be able to save 25% of the Amon rice crop. This is a tragedy for our people. We have about 11,000 people in Barisal district churches.

In Gopalganj Madaripur district was also particularly badly effected. People in the Kaligram, Chaksing, Amgram and Gopalganj areas have suffered water in their houses to knee deep level and many have moved their families up on to the embankment road and other higher places. Our Pastoral Superintendent reckons that 3,000 of our people urgently need food and perhaps 1,000 need housing provision. They cannot

even begin to think yet about the rice crops.

It is very fortunate that most of the tube wells did not go under water. It is vital that fresh clean water is available because there is the ever present danger that an epidemic of cholera, dysentery and various fevers might break out. We have had urgent calls for extra supplies of medicines to combat these things.

This flood disaster has undoubtedly put more of the people of Bangladesh into a miserable position than any in living memory. We must pray that the efforts of government and voluntary organizations will be able to prevent the worst results of famine and sickness. We must pray too that the efforts of the district teams set up by BBS may be able to be effective in relieving the misery of those they go to help. It is a very difficult task and may even be dangerous in some places.

We want to thank you for sharing with us in this work of the grace of God. When the first phase of providing food and the basic necessities of life has been completed, we will try to help our

'This flood disaster has undoubtedly put more of the people of Bangladesh into a miserable position than any other in living memory.'

people to rebuild their lives. Continue to remember us in your prayers.

Yours in Christ,

Rev R N Baroi
Acting General Secretary, BBS.

WHO ARE THE FRIENDS of Serampore?

William Carey had large visions and it is not surprising that the Friends of his College are a varied lot of people scattered around the world! What unites them is their desire to give support to one of Carey's visions that became an enduring reality.

Some of them have been missionaries in India, some at Serampore itself. Some have made a special point of visiting the College. Others have met Indian members of the College staff who have taken opportunities of study in Britain. The Friends are of various denominations because Serampore is an inter-denominational institution, supported by many churches and missions but not the ultimate responsibility of any of them. They are not an exclusive group and they warmly invite anyone with an interest in the College to join them.

Serampore College was founded by Carey, Marshman and Ward in 1818. It is situated 18 miles north of Calcutta. It attracts gifted young people from States all over India for theological training, and its Senate grants degrees, which are recognized by the Government of India, to students at over 20 affiliated colleges throughout the country.

Missionaries from various countries and denominations have worked alongside Indian colleagues at Serampore for many years, but at present entry restrictions are preventing such appointments, though there are short term opportunities for ministers on sabbatical. In this situation the Indian staff appreciate the continuing links the Friends maintain with the College.

The Friends are kept in touch with news of the College by circular letters from Serampore. Their annual subscriptions and other donations are used to help the College library with gifts of books and journals. The college's research programme has been enlarged in recent years and the Friends in the UK have been requested to help with journal subscriptions. These are increasingly costly but vital for maintaining the standard of research.

The present membership of the UK group is 40. There must be many others in our country who have an interest in the College and they are most welcome to join. The minimum subscription is only £2 a year (for one person or a married couple). Life membership is £20. Further information can be obtained from the Secretary of the Friends of Serampore (UK) Revd Dr E W Burrows, 91 Balmuildy Road, Bishopbriggs, Glasgow G64 3AP.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Secretaries acknowledge with grateful thanks the following legacies, and gifts sent anonymously (to 26 August 1987).

Legacies	£
Miss Mary Atkinson	5,000.00
Mrs Christina Ballard	£200.00
Mrs A M Clements	200.00
Mr Philip Cocks	550.00
Miss H E Hayes	9,840.00
Mrs D M Kent	100.00
Miss C D Mathias	1,000.00
Miss Enid Francis Nicholas	1,000.00
Mrs M K Quayle	800.00
Mrs Eveline Terrell (née Wood)	303.10
Miss G W Underwood	1,801.27
Mr Arthur Ernest White	164.85

Relief Work

Anon: £40.00.

Women's Project

Anon: £60.

General Work

Cymro: £80.00; Anon Cambridge: £10.00; FAE Aberdeen: £10.00; 'Llandod': £20.00; via LBPB: £75.75; Anon: £20.00; Anon: £50.00.

MISSIONARY MOVEMENTS

Arrivals

Mr T Lehane on 6 August from Andhi Kola, Nepal. (Mid term holiday.)
Rev & Mrs N B McVicar on 12 September from Dhaka, Bangladesh.
Dr S Roberts on 20 September from Ruhea, Bangladesh.
Rev & Mrs G Myhill on 30 September from Nova Londrina, Brazil.

Departures

Dr. R. Hart on 20 August to Chandraghona, Bangladesh.
Miss J. Pullin on 20 August to Ruhea, Bangladesh.
Miss R Montacute on 9 September to Kinshasa, Zaire.
Rev & Mrs D Brown on 14 September to Porto Velho, Brazil.
Mr & Mrs I Thomas on 16 September for Upoto, Zaire.
Mr T Lehane on 19 September to Andhi Kola, Nepal.
Mrs L Hinchin on 24 September to Cuiaba, Brazil.
Mrs E Grose on 28 September to Delhi, India.
Mrs M Hart on 28 September to Chandraghona, Bangladesh.

Births

On 29 August, in Sutton Coldfield, to **Mr & Mrs M Wilson**, a daughter, Deborah Jean Wilson.
On 12 September, at Leigh-on-Sea, to **Mr & Mrs M King**, a daughter, Miriam Elizabeth King.
Ian & Sally Smith have adopted a Nepali baby girl, Rebecca Anandi Smith who is a year old.

BAPTIST HOLIDAY FELLOWSHIP

1988

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FELLOWSHIP HOLIDAYS — SPRING 1988

AUSTRALIA	2-29 January	Rev D H Weller BD
HOLY LAND	9-20 April	Rev M Banfield BA
RHODES	13-20 April	Rev Douglas Monkley

For Brochures, please write to:

**Baptist Holiday Fellowship Ltd (MH),
1 The Esplanade, Minehead, Somerset TA24 5BE**

NOTICES

1988 BMS PRAYER GUIDE

Do your church members take prayer seriously! Urge them to use the **BMS Prayer Guide** to help focus attention on the world church! The 1988 Prayer Guide returns to the weekly format and includes devotional aids. At only 50 pence a copy, the BMS Prayer Guide is a 'must' for your church family. Write in today with your order!

MAKING THE DIFFERENCE

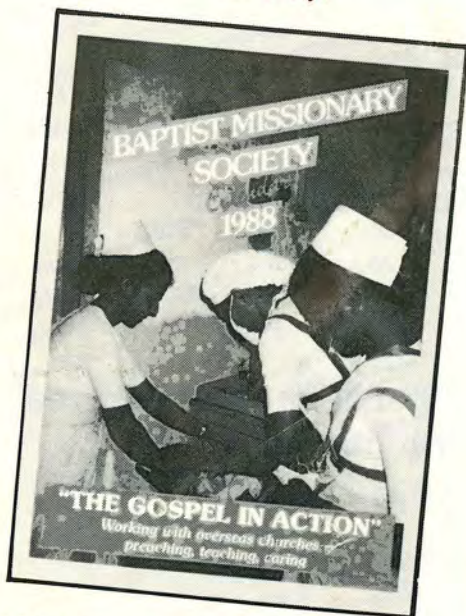
SENT OUT TO TEACH

— a new full colour leaflet highlighting the churches work in education

AVAILABLE NOW

1988 CALENDARS

These are now available!
Yes really! Just write into Mission House and your order will be despatched immediately.



It is an engagement calendar, A4 in size with 14 full colour photographs illustrating the areas where BMS is at work.

The cost? £1.50 or £1.75 by post.

NEW BMS WORLD MAP

A new full colour **BMS World Map** will be published in November. The map has the continents marked in different colours, with BMS-related countries highlighted. This will make a colourful and informative addition to your church notice board! Write in for your copy today.

1987 APPEAL LEAFLET

The 1987/88 BMS Appeal Leaflet 'Stand With Them' is now ready! The leaflet highlights the importance of world mission today, and our participation in it. The leaflet is prepared with no special dates marked — it can be used with flexibility to fit into your church programme at your convenience.

Also, two leaflets called **PRAYING FOR MISSIONARIES** and **PRAYING FOR NATIONAL CHRISTIANS** have been produced for use alongside the Appeal Leaflet. Praying for people we don't know is often very difficult. These two leaflets will give helpful hints on how to bring prayer for missionaries and national Christians alive.