

MISSIONARY

HERALD

July 1988

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**Seeing
ourselves
through their eyes...**

Editorial Comment

THERE are about 200,000 overseas students in Britain taking a variety of courses in universities, language schools and technical colleges. Many of them are Christians whose links with the Church in Britain have been through missionaries or missionary societies and they fondly believe this to be a Christian country.

Each year the BMS sponsors overseas students and church leaders, many of whom come to Britain to study or on fellowship visits. Several of them have been able to share something of our British church life. What do they see? How do they view us? What do we learn from them?

These are more than academic questions. We are used to reading articles from those who have visited the church overseas – we print such an article this month – which make comparisons with the church at home. Somehow that seems right, normal and part of the natural order of things. But can we take it the other way?

The churches in Derbyshire have forged a link with the Church of North India and they have had the courage to say, 'Come over. Take a look at us, and tell us what you think.' Twice, since the link was made, a group of Indian Christians has made a report on a visit to the county. We offer you some of their findings this month.

Once we begin to look at ourselves through the eyes of overseas Christians we are forced to ask questions about our priorities – in worship, in mission, in church life, in the way we spend our money. Perhaps Asian, African, or Latin American Christians are going to be the means by which God is going to help Christians in this country to live as His people.

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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

AN ADVENTURE IN PARTNERSHIP

Arthur Bonser describes

how a pioneering venture has enriched churches in Derbyshire and India.

The Derbyshire/Church of North India Partnership is unique in this country. It is the only ecumenical link in which the Anglican, Baptist, Methodist and United Reformed Churches are involved together in a project designed to promote closer fellowship with a Church overseas.

It began over ten years ago at an informal meeting of the Church Leaders in Derbyshire. The Bishop of Derby, the Rt Rev Cyril Bowles; the Rev Arthur Bonser; the Chairman of the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire District of the Methodist Church, the Rev Brian Greet, and the Moderator of the East Midlands Province of the United Reformed Church, the Rev John Slow, expressed concern at the inward-looking nature of so many of the local churches. As a method of widening their outlook, the suggestion was made that it might be possible to 'twin' with a United Church somewhere in the world in which all four denominations were involved; much as towns and cities in this country 'twin' with places in Europe. The only Church in which all the four denominations had joined together in a

United Church was the Church of North India. An approach to that Church was enthusiastically received.

The Missionary Societies of the Churches in this country were consulted and warmly approved the idea. From the very beginning it was stressed that this was to be a true partnership in which it was recognized that each had much to contribute to the other. Great care was taken to ensure that it did not give the impression of one-way traffic as the affluent West sought to meet some of the material needs of the impoverished Third World. It was to be a true sharing of equal partners.

After a great deal of careful planning, not made any easier by the problems of communications over such a great distance, the Derbyshire/Church of North India Partnership was inaugurated in a service in the Derby Cathedral on Saturday, 21 May, 1977 when Bishop Nasir, the Moderator of the Church of North India, spoke about the worldwide family of the Church and welcomed the new relationship as a contribution to fellowship and understanding, and celebrated the



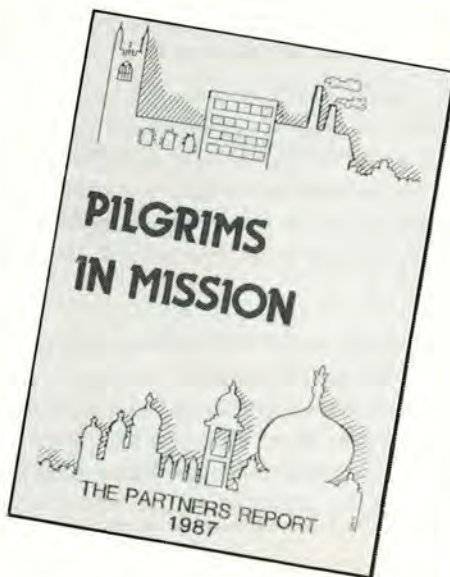
Church in North India

Eucharist using a liturgy from the Church of North India.

During the last ten years, the relationship has grown into a very real fellowship. Deeper understanding has been fostered by regular communication, the exchange of ideas and the interchange of personnel. It has been found possible to enable friends from the Church of North India to visit Derbyshire and to share, sometimes just for a weekend and sometimes for much longer periods, in the life of our churches. In this way, we have been delighted to welcome the General Secretary of the Church of North India, the Rev Pritam Santram, and a great many of the Bishops of that Church. In some cases, these friends have been in the country for reasons unconnected with our Partnership, and have made a special journey to Derbyshire as an addition to their main programme; in other cases, they have come at our invitation.

Amongst many enriching experiences, there was the 'Partners in Mission' venture in 1982 when four leaders of the Church of North India spent a month in Derbyshire seeking to assess the effectiveness of our Churches' work and witness. Mrs. Gardner, Dr Liddle, the Rev Arvind Nirmal and Bishop Vairager came to the county from a different culture and way of life and summed up their impressions of the Church here as seen through their eyes in a very challenging report which all the local congregations were urged to study seriously.

TWO REPORTS PRODUCED BY CNI VISITORS TO DERBYSHIRE



(continued from previous page)

In June last year Derbyshire received a follow-up visit when another four leaders of the Church of North India spent a month with us looking at the present situation in the light of that previous report. Bishop Ghose, Mr Uzgare, Mr Jaswant and Mrs Paul made it clear that they wished their visit to be much more than an evaluation of our effectiveness and hoped that their report would be addressed equally to both partners. They would look at the situation through their eyes and, at the same time, try to see their own church life in the light of what they experienced in Derbyshire. The title they chose for their Report, 'Pilgrims in Mission' underlines their conviction that, together, we are moving forward along the road that God has signposted for us.

For five years, a presbyter of the Church of North India and his wife worked with the churches in the centre of the City of Derby amongst the immigrants of Asian origin. The ministry of the Rev Gurbakhsh Singh and Sadiqa was greatly appreciated and there was widespread regret when Gurbakhsh Singh died of a heart attack shortly after their return to resume pastoral work in India. A lay worker, Mr Christopher Nazir Ali, has been appointed to continue this particular ministry in the city.

Just as Derbyshire has been glad to receive friends from India, so the county has been happy to enable folk from Derbyshire to share in the life of the Church of North India. Ministers have spent sabbatical leave in a variety of ways within the Church of North India; lay folk have spent time in India using technical skill and expertise in welfare work and social service organized by the Church. The Bishop of Derby and his wife spent a busy month in North India in 1986 and were warmly welcomed wherever they went.

It is significant that the Churches of Derbyshire were invited to send representatives to the two most recent Synods of the Church of North India, giving those from the county the privilege of addressing one of the main sessions. In this way, the Rev Arthur Bonser, a Baptist, and his wife attended the 5th Synod held in Nagour in 1983, and then spent six weeks touring North India and seeing for themselves something of the work being done by the Church in cities such as Delhi, Calcutta, Amritsar and Cuttack, as well as spending time in the villages of Orissa around Balangir and in the hills and lake district of Kashmir. This extended itinerary gave them a very wide, if somewhat superficial, picture of

WHICH EFFORT TO APPLAUD AND ENDORSE TODAY

by Sombo Mondele, Zaire



CBFZ Executive Committee

While looking through last June's issue of the *Missionary Herald*, I stopped for a moment at 'Talkback', at the comments made respectively by Ian Thomas on 'Liberation Theology' and M C Brown concerning 'China Amity Foundation Guidelines'.

The latter says, as a supporter of the BMS, that he would applaud and endorse any effort made in favour of the Chinese Church to supply Christian literature, raise church buildings and train pastors and leaders.

He outlines what has always been a traditional threefold goal for many Christian missions in the developing countries. But, as fundamental it remains, I am afraid that the

the Church of North India. The Rev Cedric Blakey, an Anglican, represented the Partnership at the 6th Synod held in Delhi in 1986 and then stayed on in that city sharing in the work of a parish and gaining a much more detailed idea of local church life in an Indian city.

So personal contacts are initiated, and understanding and fellowship developed. The Partnership is administered in Derbyshire by a small committee on which all the participating denominations are represented and financed by contributions from the local

only thing to be achieved through these related actions is the spiritual growth of the converts. Maybe they are expected by themselves to fulfil the other vital tasks of improving their living conditions by developing their economic, cultural, educational and social service systems.

Well, it is a fact that a balanced development of mankind does not bear splitting up into flesh and spirit, a splitting up that leads to a commitment to save the soul at the expense of the body. As a result, there is a widespread trend among the third world churches nowadays, which makes clear their preoccupation to save both the soul and the body at the same time.

This is to say that the third world churches are aware of their social responsibilities beyond the struggle against paganism. In fact, they also have to take an active part in the overall process of liberating their members and societies from poverty, ignorance and the cultural alienation which prevents them from growing well physically, spiritually and intellectually.

Now let us ask as members of a third world church in Zaire, in China or elsewhere, or as supporters of a missionary society like the BMS, 'Which effort should we applaud and endorse then as long as Evangelism implies a total liberation of human beings, a balanced development of individuals?'

funds of these Churches, care being taken to ensure that regular giving from congregations to the denominations' Missionary Societies is not adversely affected. What began as a pioneering adventure, has more than proved its worth over the years as an exciting project that has enriched the Church here and in North India, and has become in every sense a true Partnership of mutual sharing and caring.



A GREAT EXPERIENCE

BILEPO is a member of the Baptist Church in Tondo, Zaire. She is involved in medical and public health work. She recently visited Mission House when we were able to talk with her.

I enjoy my work. God has called me to do it and I am happy in it.

You see the results of public health work. In the old days, children used to die of whooping cough, tetanus, measles and diphtheria. In the villages mothers used to die in childbirth, but now they have ante-natal clinics. They come into the hospital to have their babies if there is a bad case.

Tondo is like the education centre where they teach public health. Health workers are trained and they go out to all the surrounding villages. So Tondo is very important as a central training post.

My visit to Britain is not a holiday. I am finding out how you look after your children, old people and the sick. It is an educational visit for me.

In Tondo there is no help for the young or old and there was a great deal of malnutrition. As I've been going around Britain I have noticed the way you help old people, mainly in encouraging independence. I went to a pottery and watched people making pottery without machinery, just with their hands. I'd like to go back to Zaire and start a project like that so that people can, although old and infirm, become independent.

I've been to several churches while I have been here. In Tondo the churches are always full, but here there are few people at the services. Is this because there are many churches in one district? Mind you the offerings in Tondo are small by comparison.

On the whole it has been a good experience for me to come to Britain. I have many new thoughts to take back with me.

Baptists in Britain, I believe, need to learn more about the way of life in the third world and to understand the lives of the people so that they can help them better, be more intelligent in praying and giving and in practical work. Education is important. We often say that it is a different world and we don't know how the other half lives. We should try to learn about them.

I would like to thank BMS for all they have done. I am surprised to discover that Mission House is nearly 200 years old. When I came I thought BMS headquarters would be in the middle of London and that there would be a lot of rich people. But you are all very humble and all work together.

I am thankful to God for giving me the opportunity to see the things that I have heard about in Zaire. It has been a great experience.

QUOTES...'

'One of the things the visitors complained of was that they had been in this country for five weeks. They had travelled on trains and buses, they had shopped, and they said they had never heard the name of Jesus outside a Christian home or a church. That shattered them!'

QUOTES...'

'We had a presbyter from the CNI with us in Derby for three years,' said Arthur Bonser. 'He did a lot of hard work, but the local Church saw very little from it. I asked him where we were going wrong.'

'Very easy,' he said.

'You're trying to integrate them into your style of worship. In India the churches are just four walls and mats to sit on. We haven't the money for anything else. We cannot understand, with a world to save why you put your money into stained glass windows, public address systems. Our

people find it very difficult to fit into that pattern. If you really want to help them, build four walls and a roof and tell them to get on with it and not be concerned with all the trappings of Western Christianity.'

'But if you do that you are creating another denomination. What we want to do is integrate, to give people the idea of the family of God.'

'You won't do it,' he said. 'You are at least a generation away from that.'

• P R A Y E R C A L L •

3-9 July FELLOWSHIP VISITS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Mission can never be all one way. This is reflected in the BMS programme of fellowship visits and scholarships. More than 20 church workers for eight different countries are studying here or in other lands to equip themselves for future ministry. Whilst learning both from their courses and the new culture in which they find themselves, they also contribute their own distinctive experiences and understanding of the Gospel. This autumn pastor Joli de Freitas, the General Secretary of the Rondônia and Acre Baptist Convention, Brazil, will be visiting us and preaching in British churches, as well as having discussions with the Society's Secretaries and Committees.

10-16 July COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN ZAIRE

As part of the CBFZ and BMS's expanding development work supported by Operation Agri, two Water Projects were started in Zaire in 1983 as part of the WHO 'Water Decade'. The projects are very much based within the community, which takes an active role in the planning and preparation for the protection of their drinking water supply. In the Ntondo area, Ct Ndeke is working to improve the water supplies of the small village dispensaries under the auspices of the Health Centre in Ntondo. Cr Botalimbo is co-ordinating the work of the water project in the Yakusu area, sharing both practical and theoretical knowledge with the 30 trained men who carry out the work in the villages alongside village people. Pray for a spirit of co-operation and working together as these small village communities strive to help themselves.

17-23 July MISSIONARIES ON FURLOUGH

Furlough is a special time for missionaries with the opportunity to spend time with families, to visit friends, to share news with the churches of how God is working in partner churches and in their own lives. Coming back to this country is a strange mixture of returning to what is familiar and yet – especially to begin with – finding so much that is alien compared to the countries where they have been working. Pray that missionaries may be rested, refreshed, restored and renewed during furlough.

24-30 July YOUNG PEOPLE

One of the most significant events in the life of British and World Baptist young people is taking place this week in Glasgow. The 11th Baptist Youth World Conference is bringing together 10,000 young Baptists from 100 countries. The theme for the Conference is 'Jesus Christ Rules' so please pray that Jesus might indeed rule in the lives of the young people coming to Glasgow. Remember them as they return to their own countries, often to a tiny minority, struggling Christian community. Please pray for the practical arrangements of this Conference and that the people might also experience something of Christ's rule. Remember too the young people in our Baptist partner churches throughout the world who are not able to come to Glasgow. Pray for young people not as the church of tomorrow, but as a vital part of today's church. It is interesting to note that Jesus Himself would have been young enough, even at the end of His life to come to Glasgow!

• P R A Y E R C A L L •

IT'S EXCITING TO BE PART OF THE WORLD CHURCH

Look at the Church in the world,
Bubbling with ever-new life,
Being God's people at work and at prayer,
In places of tension and strife.

God's Spirit at work in all lands,
Rekindling the Church of today,
Vital and growing, the salt of the earth;
'Our brothers and sisters!' we say.

Each little struggling Church
Knows itself part of the whole,
Caring and serving the neighbours around,
Reaching the Kingdom's goal.

Remember the giants of the past,
Saints who have served us so long,
Treasures of wisdom worked out from God's word
Recorded in poetry and song.

Look at the children to come,
Challenging humbug and sloth,
Building the Kingdom with truths we pass on,
Eager to prove their life's worth.

Praise God for the Church in the world,
Thank Him we are part of the whole,
Offer our worship and service today,
Seeking His Kingdom's goal.

Margaret Pearce.

ON THEOLOGY

How long more will you fly
the balloon of your theology
in the blue sky above?
Please bring it down to earth,
cut it into pieces,
and stick them on the breasts
and bellies of the gasping millions,
and see if you can raise
a tremor of resurrection there.

Where is your theology today
in this harsh world of reality?

How long more will you keep it confined
in the honeyed words
spoken from your glittering pulpit?

Come, bedeck its head with
and permit it to put on
the glorious crown of thorns

*Written and translated from the Bengali
by M S Adhikari*

THE STORY OF MARGARET PARKER MISSIONARY IN CONGO 1914-1934 by F J Grenfell

Margaret Parker was born in Preston where her father was a leading Methodist lay preacher. However, they moved to London while she was still a baby. In London the family lived in a number of places before settling in Loughton near Woodford Green. Margaret was the eldest of seven children, so she had a good deal to do with helping her mother bring up her brothers and sisters, even though her parents were able to afford people to help with the housework.

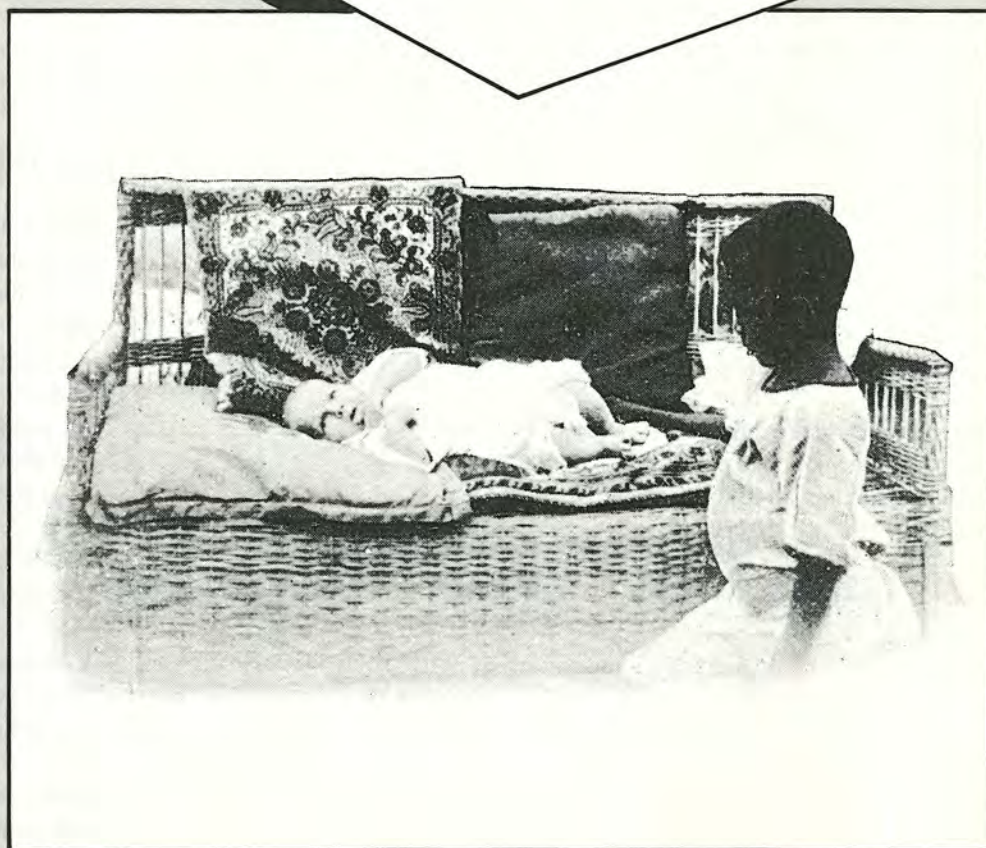
The Parkers were a happy united family led by the father who had a simple, practical faith. He brought the children up on the Bible and *Pilgrim's Progress*. With a home-life like that and a local 'chapel' where there was a warm, friendly congregation, Margaret quite naturally seems to have grown into the faith.

Until her mid-teens she admitted in her autobiography that she was hardly aware of people outside the family and chapel circle. She wrote, 'My first thought of people outside our home was when I noticed the village lads standing at the street corners.' You can be sure they noticed her too, for photographs show her to have been a tall, good-looking girl. Whether they went to chapel because of her, we are not told, but the Minister gave her a Sunday School class of 16 year old youths, when she herself was only 16! and she seems to have been able to cope with the situation.

The third article on the work of the wives of missionaries in the early years of the Congo/Zaire mission.

Margaret Parker married Christy Davies in 1914 and together they worked in Yalemba and Kinshasa until 1934.

This article also contains the story of Disasi and Longeni, the two African Christians who were real pioneers of the work at Yalemba.



The Christy Davies' first child, and the first white baby at Yalemba

When she was older, her father used to take her with him on Sunday mornings down Petticoat Lane to give out tracts and small sums of money from the chapel poor fund to some very needy people. She said she found it hard, embarrassing work at first until she got to know the people better and made friends of some of them.

About this time her mother became very worried about Margaret's future. Margaret wrote, 'Although hospitals were open to girls who "felt the call", to what was considered a life of self-sacrificing work, there still seemed to my mother to be nothing else left for daughters, but to get married. So my mother prepared us for this by teaching

us to work in the house, cook and to make our own clothes. But my mind did not run along those lines at all. I seemed to be waiting for something but, as yet, I did not know for what.'

Then she met a Baptist Deaconess who told her about her work in a struggling East End Baptist Mission. This was the thing Margaret had been waiting for. She was accepted by the Baptist Union Deaconess Board and given two and a half years of training. One fellow-student later became Mrs Rowntree Clifford. After training, Sister Maggie, as she was now called, was put in charge of a tiny, struggling cause, the Henrietta Street Mission. She led the little band of twenty members in vigorous, evangelistic effort, probably for two years or more, until one evening as she was preaching in the open air, the Rev Thomas Phillips of the Bloomsbury Baptist Church in Central London heard her and was impressed. He invited her to join the team of four Deaconesses who worked with him at Bloomsbury.



Yalemba church

She stayed at Bloomsbury for twelve years. In addition to more normal church work, the Ministerial team ran open air meetings, children and young people's clubs, opened what could really be called a job centre to find work for the unemployed, held contact clubs for young business and professional people. Maggie seems to have specialized in a kind of contact club for chorus girls and the whole group of Deaconesses regularly toured the red-light districts in attempts to rescue girls who had drifted into that kind of life because they had run out of money and were far from home. They helped dozens of lost, lonely people to rejoin their families and not a few into a life of faith and service.

She had wondered about service overseas. She knew the Rev W J Fullerton, the General Secretary of the BMS for she had been along to BMS Headquarters to support some of the Bloomsbury young women who had offered themselves as candidates. Fullerton had often asked her why she did not offer. She wondered – but threw off the idea. Then in 1913 Christy Davies on furlough from Congo spent several months helping with the work at Bloomsbury. They were married in 1914 and sailed for Congo to work at Yalemba.

At Yalemba (1914-1919)

Yalemba was a typical pioneer mission station hacked out of tropical rain forest when Maggie first lived there. It was founded in 1905 only nine years earlier. Christy Davies had worked there for seven years already and was liked by the people. He had helped to supervise the building of houses and a brick church.

Maggie and Christy arrived in 1914 and were given a warm welcome by the church people who numbered over two hundred by this time. Maggie seems to have reacted well to the pranks of the school children, who, without warning, introduced her to their pet chimpanzee, who shook her hand and chucked her under her chin. She also had an early introduction to cultural interaction when she met an old chief from inland. She wrote, 'He asked how much did my husband pay for me?' He then sized me up and down and then said, 'He must have paid a lot for you, you are so big.' Then she added, 'That old chief had ten wives, so he should know something about values.'

At that stage there were very few women in the Yalemba church. There was already a school for men and boys but nothing for girls. Neither Longeni, the wife of Disasi, nor the missionary wives seemed to be able to get through to the women. Disasi was of their tribe and could communicate with the men but they made no progress with the women. 'It's good for my husband and my sons, but not for me. I'm only a woman.' Being the third or fourth wife of a man, digging his garden and carrying his burdens of

wood, tended to this feeling of no importance.

Longini and Maggie worked together to gain the confidence of the women with little success, until one day a woman asked, 'Is it really true that God loves women also?' That was the breakthrough. By 1919 there was a girls' school, a regular baby clinic, a reading class for older women and the first women to be baptized were received into church membership.



Rev D Christy Davies

At Kinshasa (1919-1934)

After furlough in 1919 Maggie and Christy were asked to work in Kinshasa which was then called Leopoldville and had recently been made the capital city of the Belgian Congo. Fine Government offices were being built now that the Governor General had moved from Boma. In a few years, a little riverside village had grown into a big city with modern shops, high office buildings and flats. The docks had been modernized, roads, railways and fine boulevards were built. Thirty thousand Africans had been brought into Kinshasa from all over the country to work on the docks and railways, in the new textile factories, brickyards and the Lever Brothers soap factory. Over two thousand European (mainly Belgian, Portuguese and British) businessmen and their families were now living in the city. There was also a large West African trading community, some of them were the children of those evangelists, teachers, craftsmen and

(continued from previous page)

helpers from the Cameroons who took part in the pioneer period of the Congo mission.

Work in Kinshasa was obviously very different from that at Yalembe. The presence of the missionaries was often resented by the European traders who blamed them for the liberal laws which insisted on decent wages and reasonable treatment for the African workers. Some of them openly said, 'You missionaries have spoilt the natives for us, is there any wonder we resent your presence in Congo!?' And for the Africans, city life was at the same time an attraction and a temptation. The mission found that in the big city even some of the people they considered the finest Christians in the rural districts or back on the mission stations, fell away into drunkenness, adultery and witchcraft when confronted by city life.

Maggie's experience in London made her an ideal person to be involved in such a situation. The job they gave her was that of headmistress of girls' school held every morning at 7.30 until midday. There were over three hundred women and girls. They did sewing and childcare and were taught to read, write in their own language and in French. A few of the girls who went to Maggie's school are still Deacons and Elders in the various churches of Kinshasa today.

Maggie helped to find work for cripples who were ostracized by their families because they were thought to be possessed by evil spirits. She and Christy saw less of each other during their time in Kinshasa than at any time in their married life, for he was deeply involved in the administration of two large and growing parishes in the African townships, as well as taking his turn to serve the English and French-speaking congregations which had been started by their colleagues as mission outreach to the expatriate communities. However, busy as they were, one who stayed in their home during that period told me that it was a happy one. Both were extroverts and full of fun, it was exhilarating to be with them.

Possibly Maggie's most important contribution was the part she played in the founding of the Kinshasa City Bible Women. She trained them as she herself had been trained, to work in City situations – to go out in two's – to visit the sick

– to take food to the prisoners in the wretched city jail – to give out tracts – to sell Bibles – to help the poor – to encourage the women Christians to play a more active part in church life – to preach in growing numbers of preaching centres which were springing up in the shanty towns. They did the work of Pastors and Evangelists and established a kind of pattern which has persisted.

In 1934 Christy Davies had to leave Congo because of illness. Christy had had a heart attack and Maggie was crippled with osteoarthritis, and it was thought she would be confined to a wheelchair for the rest of her life. They both recovered and served the churches of Wales for many years, but that's another story.

APPENDIX

The story of the founding of Yalembe is fascinating. The real founder was a man called Disasi and his wife Longeni. When Disasi was a boy of about six years old, Arab raiders destroyed his town, killed all the men and captured the women and children. Disasi was made the personal slave of an Arab hunter, who later exchanged him for six yards of cloth to H M Stanley who was recruiting carriers in the region of the Kisangani Falls before his great expedition down the Congo River in 1871. Disasi was Stanley's servant and gun-bearer on that expedition. When the carriers were paid off at Boma, Disasi went to work for the English Manager of the Dutch Trading Company and when this man died, George Grenfell took him on and trained him as a blacksmith and a mechanic. For several years he worked on the steamship *Peace* and eventually was made Captain. When Grenfell died he organized the supply transportations to the river stations from the base at Bolobo.

On one of his trips in the *Peace* he stopped to buy food at a riverside market and to his surprise people recognized his tribal markings, and he became reunited with his mother after thirty or more years. They were now living near the mouth of the Aruwimi River – the mother and the remnants of the tribe. Disasi had become a Christian and was an Elder of the church in Bolobo. He persuaded the Bolobo church to send him as an evangelist to Yalembe to his own people and there he went with his wife, Longeni, in 1903.



Historic

Christianity has a glorious history in Britain and has always received official recognition by the Government. So Britain has been looked upon as a Christian nation by India.

India is a secular state and has not accepted any religion as the state religion. Christianity in India therefore has no such status as in Britain. Christians in India are even now looked down upon as aliens or even agents of the west and have to face opposition from the fundamentalists of other faiths.

Clergy and ministers

It is true that the clergy are set apart for the ministry, but the priesthood of all believers cannot be ignored and the Church can ill afford to forget this. Everyone is endowed with some special gift from the Holy Spirit and it is the duty of the Church to identify these gifts and

How the visitors from India saw us:

SIMILARITIES

A Minority

In Britain the believing and practising Christians are in a minority. In India also Christians are a 2.6 per cent minority. The task of bringing Christ to the non-believer is great and demanding. This needs a deliberate thrust with a definite mission.

Christians in Britain are hesitant to share their Christian faith and are in fact defensive. Christians in India are much more assertive in the face of similar or much bigger odds. Even school-going children here brought up in Christian homes face teasing and harassment from others and find it difficult to stand firm in their Christian faith. This is the result of non-committed teachers and the indifference and apathy of parents.

The Church of North India, having accepted 'Unity, Witness and Service' as its prime objectives, is involved in a continuous process of training and mobilizing the laity including the youth to bear witness openly through personal contact. We are dismayed to see hesitancy and embarrassment on the part of the churches and their members to reach out and share their Christian faith with their fellow-countrymen of other faiths and none.

Social Concern

In Britain, most welfare activities are undertaken by the state. This diminishes opportunities for the Church in its ministry

to the poor and handicapped. We were glad, however, to see the concern of the Church – more its members individually – to explore new ways and means for rendering service in new avenues. But we were pained to note the lack of explicit Christian faith and commitment and witness. The Love of Christ remains to be projected through such programmes which tend to become only social service programmes of a secular nature.

The CNI has much better scope here because of the state's inability to undertake many responsibilities. The CNI endeavours to project the life, love and teachings of Christ through such programmes, but it has to struggle hard to find the finances. In Britain the Churches seem to get adequate financial support from the state for welfare projects. We were heartened to note that individual church members and organizations give generously for funding relief work and development projects throughout the world.

Ecumenism

We are sad that here churches are still holding on to their denominations. We rejoice however to see the growing number of Local Ecumenical Groups. We too are engaged in ecumenical work in our relations to other churches in India which are not part of the Church of North India.

In ecumenism, the predominant force is the love of God that binds us together and compels us to do something for others.

DIFFERENCES

harness them for the benefit of the Church and the glory of God. The Church is a 'people's movement' and is likely to become stunted if it becomes too clergy centred.

The Church of North India has been depending more and more on the contribution of the laity in all its activities. Wherever the CNI has shown growth, it is because of the active involvement of lay people, including women and youth.

Worship

Your worship services are becoming more relevant to youth by harnessing their talents in music. The use of new hymns has increased the devotional aspect of worship.

The Church of North India is faced with the task of indigenization whilst keeping in mind its motto 'rooted in Christ but related to the soil'. For the message and life of Christ to take root in Indian people it is necessary for the Church to penetrate into the religious and cultural life of the nation. The CNI has been giving a more active role to the laity in general and youth in particular in the conduct of worship.

Common Struggles

We do not presume to take a 'holier than thou' attitude. We confess in all humility that we in the CNI also face problems like the Church here. Among others we identify the following:

- (a) Indifference to spiritual life because of growing materialism.
- (b) Lack of commitment due to worldly distractions and weakness in our teaching ministry which we share in both countries.
- (c) In both countries, because of economic pressure, both parents may need to go out to work resulting in neglect of the spiritual nurture of children.
- (d) Want of real stewardship is also a common problem which is the result of a lack of commitment.



THE REV V E W HAYWARD MA

THE Reverend Victor Evelyn William Hayward who died on 1 May 1988 in his 80th year had a conception of, and concern for the kingdom of God that was global.

After studies at Regent's Park and Mansfield, Oxford, he went to China in 1934 as a missionary with the Baptist Missionary Society. He served for five years in Taiyuanfu and Sinchow then the unsettled state of the country compelled a move to west China and for the next five years he worked in Kweichow and Kwansi with the Church of Christ in China, ministering mainly to students and officials.

After a year as director of UNRRA in Kwangsi Province, he became British secretary of the National Christian Council of China, a position he held until he was appointed General Overseas Secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society in 1951. The nine years during which he carried this responsibility were critical ones in the life of western missionary societies as the era of missions drew to a close and a new age of mission in partnership began.

Under his leadership and advocacy the BMS undertook three new major projects. Two of these were concerned with the provision of literature for overseas Chinese and the third

with the establishing of a new type of missionary work in Brazil.

Moving to Geneva in 1959, he served until 1968 as the Executive Secretary of the Department of Missionary Studies of the World Council of Churches. His work during this period lives on in the series of volumes on 'World Studies of Churches in Mission' which he edited.

Appointed an Associate Secretary of the WCC in 1968 he had special responsibility for relationships with national and regional Christian councils. His work with these councils and with the Centres for the Study of Non-Christian Religions in different parts of the world was greatly appreciated and has had a lasting effect.

For his final piece of service he returned to his first love when in 1972 he became Research Secretary of the China Study Project at the Selly Oak Colleges in Birmingham.

Poor health clouded his last years, but nothing can dim the significant and enduring contribution he made to the work of the Kingdom worldwide.

H F Drake

BRAZIL

'WOW'

John Balchin, minister of Purley Baptist Church, reflects on a visit he paid to Brazil earlier this year.

WHAT a place! it was one thing to read about it, but it was quite another for my wife and I to spend a month there with our BMS team.

The immediate impression was even more overwhelming than we had expected. Whether it was the startling beauty of Rio, or the sheer majesty of the Iguacu Falls, the daring modernity of Brasilia, or the vastness of an interior still being opened up, Brazil assaults the senses in more ways than one.

The distances involved are overwhelming. We travelled for hundreds of miles, and yet hardly seemed to move on the map – a fact of life for our missionary friends. For them 500 miles was 'just down the road'.

It is a country of extremes and paradoxes. It seemed illogical to us that this huge land, almost as big as the USA, with its rich agricultural and mineral resources, could be practically bankrupt with a crippling overseas debt and rocketing inflation (officially 356 per cent last year).

It was equally obvious that, while some seemed to be doing extremely well, others were living in squalor and poverty. Favela slums exist cheek by jowl with luxury homes.

It seemed just as crazy to be visiting the largest hydro-electric development in the world at Itaipu, while a few miles away they were still working the land with oxen.

The same sort of conditions exist spiritually. A good comment on the Catholicism which the majority profess is the national basilica, a grandiose construction with a car and coach parking space for thousands, but built around the image of the Black Madonna. There is also a good deal of open spiritism. We frequently saw candles and offerings by roadside streams, while hundreds visited the Rio beaches at New Year to pay their respects to Imanja, the goddess of the sea. Many seem to be living on a staple of vaguely Christianised superstition which conditions so much of what they do.

In contrast, there is no denying the spiritual openness of people who seem willing to listen to the Gospel and to respond. Churches are being planted, large congregations are forming, many are professing faith in Christ.

Yet this is not a uniform picture. There are places in Brazil where it is as hard to preach the message as it is in Britain, while the numbers elsewhere sometimes represent a shallowness of commitment. Everywhere we went, we heard about the headache of 'decisionism' and of the crying need for discipleship teaching and training.

It was a pleasure to meet up with the BMS family on their annual retreat. They are a good bunch, who are buckling down to the work, taking on a variety of challenges at the invitation of the national church. Whether it was church planting in the interior or working with the Brazilian missions

board in Rio, teaching in a seminary or Bible institute, teaching agriculture in a land where the earth is frequently ravaged or being the all-important surrogate parents at the children's hostel, they all seemed to be keen and committed. There was a warm family spirit about the gathering, a sense of belonging together which we will not forget in a hurry.

There was a good number of missionaries working in Brazil. For example, there is a large North American contingent, especially Southern Baptist, as well as several independent missions like EUSA and Wycliffe Bible Translators. What impressed us about the BMS team was their clear determination to work alongside their Brazilian brothers and sisters with a view to establishing a Brazilian church.

The national Baptist Convention, held in Brasilia, was evidence enough that that church had well and truly come of age. Hundreds of delegates from all over the country came together to discuss the challenges facing them. Papers were read, business transacted, old friends reunited. There was worship, praise, prayer and preaching and, even though it was all in Portuguese it was both fascinating and moving.

So much has been done in the last 100 years. There is still much to do. Our own representatives are doing a good and worthy job. We should be prepared to support them to the hilt – and for some that will mean going to work with them.

MISSIONTALK

MISSIONTALK

MISSIONTALK

MISSIONTALK



HOME AGAIN!

THEY'RE back home! Six months after their enforced evacuation on 16 October, when hurricane force winds badly damaged South Lodge, Worthing, eight retired missionaries returned home. And the sun shone.

A group, representing the Officers and the South Lodge Committee of the Baptist Missionary Society, and the churches in the Worthing area, met with the residents and staff for a service of thanksgiving.

'The home had been restored, the family had returned from exile, so it was appropriate to rejoice and give thanks to Almighty God,' said Claud Turner, BMS Administration Secretary, who is responsible for the Society's properties.

'There had been, through all the goings and comings, the assurance of God's protection, provision and overruling. To see the joy on the faces of the residents at being home again will be a lasting memory of a happy occasion.

The service was conducted by the then Chairman of the Society, the Rev Fred Drake, assisted by Mrs Doris Vinson, the Chairman of the South Lodge Subcommittee and the Rev Vivian Lewis, Vice-Chairman of the BMS and minister of Worthing Baptist Church.

'Reference was made to all those who had helped during the six months,

especially Bill and Joyce Barratt, the Wardens of the home and their support staff,' said Claud Turner.

Since October, the residents, who had to be evacuated immediately, have been living in other accommodation in and around Worthing. The BMS has been put to considerable expense in putting the home back into operation. Not all of this could be met by insurance payments. The local support committee will be organizing special events during the year and giving opportunities for people to visit South Lodge to show their support and interest.



DR E GORDON WILKINS (died 31 March 1988, aged 80)

Gordon Wilkins applied to the BMS in March 1932 but as there was no vacancy for a doctor he was seconded to the Methodist Missionary Society with whom he served at Sarenga, West Bengal, India, for two years. He then returned home for medical treatment and in 1934 was sent by the BMS to the Kond Hills in India in order to plan, build and develop the Moorshead Memorial Hospital at G Udayagiri.

Gordon came from Missionary parents. Gordon and Nellie Wilkins served with the BMS for 35 years in Orissa and while they were in Cuttack Gordon was born in 1907. He had three sisters and was the youngest member of the family. He and Honor, his wife who also was a doctor, had been well prepared for this challenge both by the experience gained in Sarenga and from the extra

training they took while on sick leave in this country.

With the help of Edward Evans and other Missionary colleagues they planned and built the present Hospital which was opened by Dr C C Chesterman on 18 January 1939 before a large and excited crowd. Under their leadership and with sister Edna Jerry

FAMILY GAMES ENJOYED BY ALL

'Missionary deputation meetings are dull, uninspiring and it's hard to get anyone to go to them.'

Does that describe what happens in your association or auxiliary? If so, why not take a leaf out of the north-east's book?

At their welcome meeting in May, three members of the deputation literally washed up against each other in the swimming pool at Gateshead Leisure Centre. Yes, that's where the welcome meeting was held – not in the pool, the leisure centre!

Others, like Ian Smith, played with the youngsters in the 'soft' play room, whilst the more athletic types took part in a five-a-side football competition, played badminton or had a go at table-tennis.

Not your normal deputation programme, but it brought people together and after the strenuous bit, we all met for tea and a time of worship and sharing on the missionary theme.

What will they get up to in Newcastle and Gateshead next year?



Anne Linstrum, pictured here singing at the BMS Rally at the Baptist Assembly, will be the soloist with the New Horizons Choir on Saturday 9 July – the first night of the Christian Arts Festival at Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, London.

as Nursing Superintendent they developed a first class centre for medicine, surgery, training in nursing and other paramedical skills with outreach into the surrounding district. Gradually new wards were added, the whole area electrified, and an X-ray department established.

It is interesting to recall that in 1898 the parents of Gordon were in Russellkonda (now known as Bhanjanagar), which is the gateway to the Kond Hills and there nursed Arthur Long, who laid down his life for this new venture into the unknown Hill Tracts. It was to be their son who would be God's answer to the prayers of the young church for a Hospital to help prevent such tragedies as the loss of Arthur Long from smallpox and others from Blackwater fever.

They returned to this country in 1951 when Gordon became Deputy Medical Superintendent of the Dorking General

Hospital and five years later Consultant in Geriatrics in York. He did excellent work in both places.

They finally settled in Colwall, Malvern where Honor died in 1986.

Gordon was a man of sterling qualities. Meticulous and patient with all who came to him for help, be they rich or poor. He was an enthusiast for all that was good and had a keen sense of humour. His Christian faith was deep and basic though he did not enjoy public speaking. Those of us who worked with him owe him much and are grateful for every remembrance of an outstanding doctor and very good friend.

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MISSIONTALK
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MISSIONTALK



ASSAULT ON SOVEREIGNTY

A CARIBBEAN church leader has complained about US domination of the area.

'Whilst the United States was preoccupied with Southeast Asia, we had the best period in modern Caribbean history,' said Alan Kirton, Secretary General of the Caribbean Conference of Churches.

'The decline of a sense of Caribbeanness and regional sovereignty set in when the Vietnam war ended disastrously for the US and it sought to reassert its presence in the region and in other parts of the world. Since then we've noted a constant assault on Caribbean sovereignty.'

Alan Kirton spoke of the invasion of Grenada and the flooding of American military hardware in the region.

'And there are other questionable programmes. For example, the existence on most of the islands of some 23 US TV channels, with advertisements and all, 24 hours a day. So we are witnessing not only a military assault, but a cultural assault as well. This has been backed up by the religious broadcasters.

'There is a very deep spiritual need today among people in the Caribbean and other parts of the world. In a period of constant change, there is a great deal of insecurity and anxiety. A lot of things people trusted as stable are no longer

stable. In that setting, people have been offered the Gospel as the theory of permanence and security.

'It's a high-pressured commercial business. We are dealing with transnational corporations, not with a religious or spiritual phenomenon. These are people who, seeing the spiritual need, have seen a mass market and have packaged Jesus and the Gospel in such attractive terms, such winsome ways, that people are buying it.

'What I find tragic is that the local churches have been extremely slow in dealing with it. Our churches have been unenterprising, dull and sterile. They're answering questions nobody's asking. Local churches have a responsibility to educate their people more effectively. There are lots of people whose faith and belief are being subverted simply because what is being presented to them may not be very much, but it is being presented in a way that is convincing and credible.'

Alan Kirton then turned to some of the issues the CCC would be facing in the near future.

'We're concerned about human rights, questions of war and peace, militarization, racism. Haiti concerns us. We believe the Caribbean cannot move anywhere when any one of its members is being held back. So we have to help

Haitians liberate themselves. We shall be consulting with Haitian church leaders to determine what their perspective is.

'Then there's tourism. We have to recognize that tourism is with us and that, whatever the churches say, it is going to be exploited by the people. So we have to support a tourism that will give our people maximum benefits.'

He also spoke of the drug trade channelling its wares through the area and went on to speak of the debt problem.

'It's just as serious as in Latin America. Jamaica is using 60 per cent of its export earnings to service the debt. The World Bank has treated the Caribbean as the Third World's First World and has indicated that a number of countries will be put in a higher bracket that would disqualify them from receiving certain funds at low interest.

'The church has to tell the people what's going on. It has to denounce and proclaim judgement and also use its brain and think up some schemes that will help to counteract all these influences.

'Some people say that we're interfering in political matters when we look at these issues. Well, if that's what it is, we have to plead guilty, but there are certain matters that we cannot allow to go unnoticed.'

What's happening in the Church around the World

LEAVING

About half of the 100 US Baptist missionaries working in Indonesia expect to be asked to leave in the next few months because of new visa restrictions.

AIDS is spreading worldwide and not least in Brazil and Zaire. In Zaire BMS and Zairian medical staff have been working with AIDS patients for a long time. At IME Kimpese a lot of research is being undertaken and a special project is being set up. But what about the ethical side? Here, Leonardo Boff, writing from Brazil, makes an attempt toward an ethical evaluation.

THE problem of AIDS is so complex that no hurried ethical judgment can be made. So my reflections should be seen only as a beginning.

A wise philosopher once said that in the face of any problem it is important neither to laugh or to cry, but to try to understand. Let that be a starting point for this reflection.

First, there are those who are laughing with glee. This is the attitude of the moralizers and those who are prejudiced. They see AIDS as a punishment from nature itself and a scourge from God. They are quick to give out comfortable, easy moral judgements and don't allow a deeper analysis of the question. Furthermore, they run the risk of sinning against the second commandment, of taking God's name in vain.

The attitude of those who laugh is a stumbling block to a society seeking ways to solve the problems generated by AIDS. And what is even worse, the attitude increases the suffering of those who are already suffering. It's a real shame that the pastoral approach of

DON'T LAUGH OR CRY; JUST UNDERSTAND

some churches is based on such a moralistic attitude.

Those who laugh hold an attitude that contradicts the Gospel. They are bearers of the sad tidings of divine punishment and nature's revenge. The cures they suggest are usually unrealistic and elitist: total sexual abstinence that supposes spirits highly motivated by a religious mystique; or total isolation from potential AIDS transmitters.

On the other hand, we have those who cry. They show concern and solidarity with AIDS victims, but they tend to dramatize the incurable aspect of the disease and see in it the beginning of the end of the human race. And it isn't unusual to hear them link the AIDS crisis to other diseases that bring about death.

They tell us not to forget that chronic malnutrition claims the lives of some 30 million people each year, that cancer and leprosy claim the lives of 15 million more . . .

The attitude of those who cry carries the shrill tone of urgency. But speed has never been a good counsellor. The cures they suggest tend to attack the effects rather than the causes of AIDS. For them, the solution is the massive use of condoms and other sanitary measures. But these are really only halfway solutions that have a certain practicality in the absence of an overall clarity from science or ethics.

Finally, there are those who seek to understand. Here we're speaking of trying to see, as objectively as possible, AIDS as a human, medical, health and social phenomenon. Only with

understanding is it possible to arrive at an ethical judgment that has some minimum level of consistency.

Before anything else, it is necessary to clarify the historical question. Was AIDS introduced from outside homosexual circles and groups of intravenous drug addicts? Or is AIDS a derivative of the daily practice of these people? Extremely contradictory versions circulate, but the answer to that question is the key in making an ethical evaluation.

If AIDS has been intentionally introduced from outside, we're faced with a crime against humanity. Homosexuals and drug addicts, in this case, would be more victims than the initial cause of the disease's spread. But if this isn't so, and if the second hypothesis is valid, it is society's duty (and that includes the churches) to find humanitarian ways, that are neither prejudicial or exclusive, to relate to these high-risk groups.

Today, the disease is not just limited to these groups. A pluralistic, democratic society cannot give priority only to those solutions inspired by one moral view. It must put the protection of life — the supreme gift — as its fundamental objective and as its highest ethical value. All are called to support the search for ways to stop the disease. All are called to reduce the prejudices against AIDS victims. All are charged with caring for those victims who desperately need to be surrounded with compassion and human warmth.

The church, which tries to be a 'specialist in humanity' should be the first to show this attitude toward AIDS victims.

Ordination — Zairian style

IT'S interesting, reading through missionary prayer letters, to discover how the churches overseas differ in their practices from our Baptist churches in Britain. In May, two missionaries in Zaire wrote about ordination.

Chris Spencer, at Mbanza Ngungu in the Lower River area attended an ordination service for eight pastors.

'This was of particular interest as two of those being ordained were our former students from the pastor's school at Yakusu — the first time in fact, that we have been present for the ordination of anyone who we had trained.

'As ordination does not take place until a pastor has shown himself both capable and committed to his ministry, those involved had all been working as pastors for some time (in one case for 20 years). The service was also, therefore, a celebration on the part of their parishes.

'While the central elements were the same as we would expect from any ordination service, it was still very different from those we have known in Britain. It was an open-air event, with an enormous congregation, several thousand, and a theatrical produced by brass band, processions, choirs and cassocks, gowns or robes. I was one of the very few in a suit and clerical collar!

'We had expected that I would be asked to take some part in the service, but it came as a bit of a shock to be asked to preach, at 24 hours' notice. It is not the first time that I have been asked at such short notice, but for such a major event it was a little too short.'

Annie Horsfall attended a similar service at Kisangani in the Upper River area.

'At Kisangani three pastors were ordained, two from Kisangani district and one from Yakusu. The two Kisangani pastors have served in this district since leaving college a few years ago, but the Yakusu pastor was an older man, trained as a catechist (lay-pastor) at Upoto many years ago. He was ordained because of his long and faithful service, despite not having the full academic qualifications.

'At the ordination ceremony, each Pastor had to make a statement of his background and of his call to the ministry. Each one then had to make promises and they knelt, as the ordained pastors present laid hands on them and invested them with their clerical collars, the outward sign of being an ordained pastor!

'Then their wives had to promise to support their husbands and they were all given Bibles. It is good that the wives are involved, showing that husband and wife have a joint ministry, something which the Zairians can teach us, perhaps.'

MISSIONARY MOVEMENTS

Departures

Mr and Mrs S Little on 21 April to Tansen, Nepal. (Compassionate leave.)
Dr S Roberts on 2 May to Ruhea, Bangladesh.
Mr and Mrs G McBain on 18 May to Kinshasa, Zaire. (Private visit.)
Mr and Mrs M Wilson on 19 May to Potinga, Brazil.
Mr and Mrs M Roake on 21 May to Butwal, Nepal. (Mid term holiday.)
Rev E Westwood on 21 May to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. (Compassionate leave.)

Arrivals

Miss W Aitchison on 22 April from Tondo, Zaire.
Mr and Mrs G McBain on 22 April from Kinshasa, Zaire. (Private visit.)
Miss C Whitmee on 23 April from Balangir, India.
Mrs. S Samuels on 6 May from Delhi, India.

Birth

On 25 April 1988, in London, to **Rev and Mrs S Christine**, a daughter, Lindy.

Death

On 13 May 1988, in Worthing, **Mrs Winifred Doris Merricks**, who served in Angola from 1935-56 and 1958-61.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Secretaries acknowledge with grateful thanks the following legacies and anonymous gifts. (To 26 May 1988.)

Miss M J Carruthers
 Miss E B Craig

Miss J Crook	1,000.00
Miss A E A Dando	1,177.21
Mrs E Hignell	53.45
Mr A H Hindle	100.00
Mrs V Hodges	200.00
Mr E H Jones	4,000.00
Mrs L A Renaut	200.00
Miss E R Sands	500.00
Miss K Savill	150.00
Mr R Smith	30,500.00
Mrs K Sterry	250.00
Miss V R Taylor	14,000.00
Mrs F M Webb	250.00
Mrs S J Williams	100.00

General Work

£	
500.00	Anon: £10.00; FAE Aberdeen: £20.00; Anon
500.00	£5.00; Anon: £20.00; Anon: Durham £20.00.

HALF WAY TO FRANCE

THAT'S how far Trevor Woodget, minister of the Red Hill Baptist Church, Worcester, ran to raise money for the **FRENCH CONNEXION**, BMS Young People's project which has just ended.

The Sunday School had organized a sponsored bicycle ride to raise money. They had a half mile circuit prepared in the Ministry of Agriculture complex in Worcester and planned a French evening with cheese and coffee to round off the day.

Someone suggested that if the children could cycle ten miles surely the minister could run . . . for £5. What started as a joke ended with others in the congregation matching the original £5 so that at the end of the day there was an extra £80 to add to the £300 raised by the children.

And what of the running minister? He says that he is now contemplating a full marathon for next year which will, of course, take him all the way across the Channel!



BMS ENGAGEMENT CALENDAR 1988 'MISSION IN CHRIST'S WAY'

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Use the order form
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NOTICES

IN THE SOUTH WEST "MAKE MISSION LIVE" WORKSHOPS

designed to assist
Ministers, Missionary Secretaries,
Youth Leaders, Sunday School Teachers, etc,
engaged in mission education
have been arranged at:

TRURO – SATURDAY 23 JULY
and
BATH – SATURDAY 1 OCTOBER

Further details and Booking Forms are
available from the South West Area
Representative

REV PETER AMIES
9 Newport Close, Clevedon BS21 5DZ
(Tel: 0272 875563)

PIMU PLAN
BMS YOUNG PEOPLE'S
PROJECT 1988/90
£50,000
BUILD IT!

PIMU PLAN

EACH year the BMS has a special project for Young People. Recently the young people in our churches have raised money for motorbikes, outboard motors, a mini bus and of course sending two couples to work with the French Baptist Federation.

But what is this year's project to be?

The PIMU PLAN, launched at the Baptist Assembly in April, is the new project. It will run for two years and aims to raise £50,000. The money raised will go towards the major rebuilding programme of the Hospital at Pimu in Zaire.

For further information please write to:

John Passmore, Young People's Secretary,
Baptist Missionary Society, 93 Gloucester Place, London W1H 4AA.