

MISSIONARY

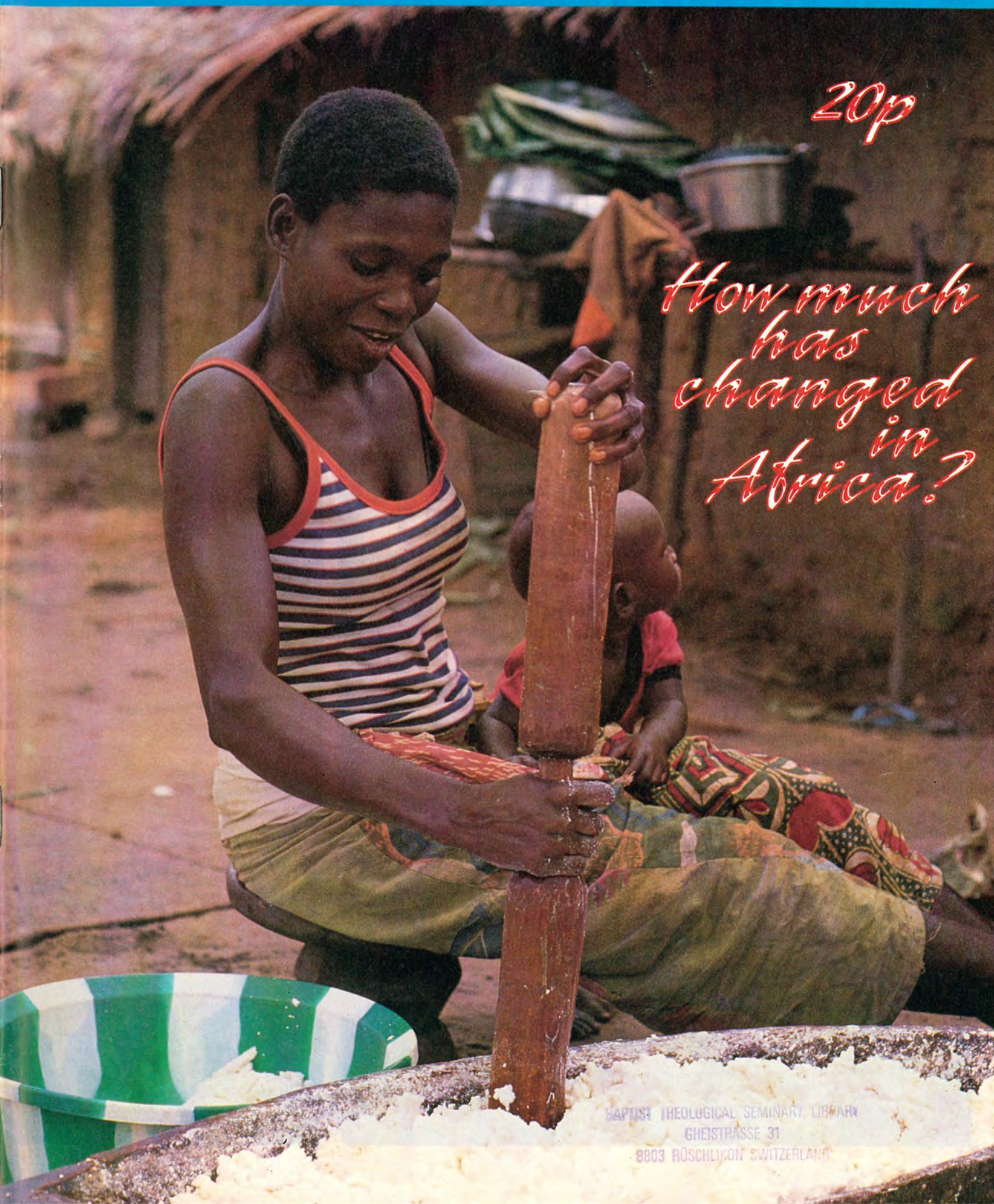
HERALD



February 1989

20p

*How much
has
changed
in
Africa?*



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Editorial Comment

THE emphasis this month is on Zaire and of missionaries looking at mission and their situation through African eyes. At Bolobo it has been evangelism by Africans, who understand the culture, that is having the greatest impact.

Since the independence of African nations from colonial rule in the late 50's and early 60's there has been a growing awareness of the place of African culture and thought within the work of the Church. Africa is growing its own theologians who are beginning to relate the Christian message in the thought patterns of Africa. This means that the European missionary in Africa needs to be very sensitive to what is going on and to listen carefully to what African Christians are saying. Missionaries have to be listeners and learners before ever they can work effectively in a new environment. It is hard, and missionaries say that nothing can ever prepare a person to cope with 'culture shock' not just within their country of service, but within the local church. 'Pray for us' is a favourite phrase on missionary prayer cards; your prayers can help sustain and strengthen them that they may be used well in the place where God has called them.

The 'Home from Home' theme, the title of the current BMS Women's Project, is continued this month as we look at the Children's Hostel and British Association School in Kinshasa. It is a good reminder to us that the Baptist Missionary Society tries to maintain a loving, caring attitude for missionaries and their families. No missionary can be expected to concentrate fully on the work at hand if there is a constant worry at the back of the mind about the welfare of children. So your prayers for missionary families are valued.

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MISSIONARY

HERALD

THE MAGAZINE OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY



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Church in:

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Bangladesh	India	Thailand
Brazil	Jamaica	Trinidad
El Salvador	Nepal	Zaire

CHRIST'S LIGHT DOES NOT SET EACH DAY WITH THE SUN

From a missionary's diary

Zaire – April 1986

I had been travelling from Kinshasa to Kikwit by bus for eleven hours. A tyre had blown out, and the driver hadn't a spanner to open the locker where the wheel and wheel spanner were kept. There was probably no spare wheel there anyway and, as it was one of a pair of wheels, the driver decided to drive on.

The group of Christian women on the way to a Mennonite rally had stopped singing long ago. At last someone had turned off their personal Ghetto Blaster, and the loud-mouthed man had stopped his erotic gyrating in the gangway. We were all subdued. The sun had set and a huge red moon had risen and seemed to be lodged at the top of the bus windscreen.

By this time, Joyce, my friend, had been waiting in the darkness to meet me for three hours. I guessed that we must be nearly at the end of our

journey. I gazed heavy-eyed out of the window into the blackness. I could see small fires, very small fires, each one illuminating very little, only shining on the faces of the people squatting nearby. All day I had travelled past houses which were little more than garage-sized hovels. They were still there but I could no longer see them. Inside the houses, which are dark at the best of times, not even candles waste their light.

Suddenly the civilisation of the bus was shed, the sophistication of its passengers stripped away, the twentieth century world of the transistor was silent. I was faced, through the bus window, with Africa as it always was. I experienced shock. What were they doing, these people squatting by the fire? What were they talking about?

Have they really lived half their lives in darkness like this since fire was

discovered, and even before? Do they really come home from their work in the fields and remain in darkness from the six o'clock nightfall to the six o'clock dawn?

I was tired and stiff and could not sleep and my eyes continued to be drawn to the window. What nameless horrors did the dark conceal? There was death there, the giving of birth there, suffering there, such as I could not imagine. I was thankful that I could not see more – but my mind's eye continued the vision.

All day the bus has sped past houses like those, but in daylight they were familiar and I had become used to them, with the men lounging outside in their clean shirts and neat trousers, the women in their long cloths, hair minutely plaited, always working. I had seen them carrying on the normal tasks of Zairian domestic life. I had thought





that I had started to know and understand these women and men a little. I had worshipped with them, laughed with them, cried with them, we even shared danger and abuse with them. Why was I so moved and shocked just because the sun had set?

Had anything altered in these households since the invention of the motor car, aeroplane, atom bomb; since the discovery of aspirin, anaesthetics, antibiotics? Had anything altered in these households since Christ came to earth as man?



To what filthy fetishes were they appealing, there in the darkness? What *ndoke*, magic, were they calling up? What curses and accusations of evil were they making of each other across the simple supper of fish, manioc and mpondu? These people, who I thought I had started to understand, do I even begin to know them?

The beat of the drum brought me back into the bus. The mamas, sensing that we were nearly at Kikwit, had taken up the beat and started to sing, *Jesu azah awa, Jesu azah awa*, 'Jesus is here'.



JESUS IS HERE

God was here before man. He created this country and its people, and was pleased. The women's song recalls me and reminds me of that. These are God's people and he uses us to call them to him. It was for these people, with their skin reflecting the flames as they squat around the fire, that he bore the pain of crucifixion, as well as for me.

No, Christ's light does not set each day with the sun. It is endless, but it does require us to reflect it into the darkness.



MISSION BOLOBO

'Zairian evangelists take account of the beliefs of the people as they proclaim the Gospel,' says Simon Houghton.

In January 1982, I left England for Zaire. My destination — Bolobo, a town with a population of 25,000, situated on the banks of the River Zaire. With a degree in zoology, four months French language training (in Belgium), a Bible and a suitcase, all 'in hand', I was bound for Bolobo's 'Institut Monyongo' — just one of its four church-run secondary schools. My mandate was to teach biology to 4th, 5th and 6th formers for a period of two years.

I returned to England in September 1985, after three years and eight months! I fulfilled my mandate and, by the grace of God, was able to go beyond it. I remained in secondary school teaching for two and a half years. I agreed, albeit a little reluctantly, to teach English and religion in addition to biology, and, between September 1984 and 1985, took responsibility for the work of Christian education for the region of Bandundu.

One of my tasks during that final year was to oversee the running of a small Bible study group in the town. The group had been in existence for many years but, of the thousands of young people in Bolobo, it attracted very few — maybe ten at the most.

Between January 1982 and July 1984, the 'faithful few' met every Wednesday to sing, pray and study the Bible. We never did much more than that. Why? I can't recall exactly. Perhaps a feeling of being too small a group to offer any effective challenge to the local population. If not that, perhaps a lack of vision of what God could do through such a small number.

God more than made up for our feelings of inadequacy and 'poor vision'. In December 1983, I was introduced to a member of the Scripture Union in Zaire (La Ligue pour la Lecture de la Bible). We spoke at length of

the 'group'. He very quickly sold me the idea of staging an SU Bible Camp. It was arranged for July 1984.

In early July, three Zairian evangelists from the Kinshasa branch of La Ligue arrived in Bolobo. We had received an 'overwhelming' response to our invitation to the young people of Bolobo to attend a week's camp. Forty or so agreed to come and promptly moved into two mission homes (my own and Ruth Jones', now Ruth Wood). Meetings were held in a hall belonging to the local nurses' school.

Few of these young people had had any significant contact with the church. All would have been brought up within a culture and family tradition predominantly animistic (belief in spirits — divine and human — reverence for ancestors and ancestral traditions, belief in and practice of witchcraft and magic). These things we found difficult to understand. Our Zairian evangelists, by contrast, 'understood' and could, therefore, account for such beliefs and practices in their proclamation of the gospel.



The extent to which all but a few of the 'forty' responded to the message and the challenges of the gospel was something we did not foresee. Midway through the 'camp' they knelt to respond to the challenge to repentance, faith and commitment to Jesus Christ. At the end of the camp they responded again, this time to the challenge to witness to others the gospel and God's power at work in their own lives. They did so, enthusiastically. Many of those with whom they spoke — family, friends or neighbours — accepted the invitation to join us in post-camp meetings for Bible study, prayer and singing.

Within two weeks, well over eighty people — young and old — were gathering every Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons for two hours prayer, song and study. After a



month, numbers were well in excess of a hundred. During the following ten months, we met on Wednesdays and Fridays only. We organised as many as were willing into teams to welcome newcomers, to visit 'members', to pray and to evangelise villages in the regions surrounding Bolobo.



Child with fetish on wrist

Numbers were never static. Some came and went; others came only irregularly to the meetings: many persevered. By July of 1985, and the anniversary of the first camp, we were well over 150. Our second camp attracted in excess of that. The Scripture Union came to our help again. Five of its evangelists joined us for what proved to be, once again, a very full and exciting week.

It's now three years since I returned to this country. La Ligue, as the Bible study group is called, continues to meet under the leadership of Citoyen Lokonda. Richard Hoskins admits that the group has its problems but believes it to be 'a source of tremendous encouragement, new life and new potential in the church'. His letters of the past two years speak of a praise march, nights of prayer, a much more structured and comprehensive teaching programme and the

formation of a team of about 15 committed Christians who between them make regional evangelistic trips every two or three weeks 'with some tremendous results'.

In February or March of 1987, the group was able to stage its very own 'Mission Bolobo'. Three Zairian evangelists led them in 'a week of prayer meetings and preparation, three afternoon rallies at the market place and two follow-up seminars for the church and new believers'.

Richard writes that 'God blessed the meetings mightily . . . many people made a commitment to Christ, or recommitted themselves, some were delivered from evil spirits and others healed.'

Since 1985, La Ligue has held its third Bible camp and, in December staged number four. Once again, the Scripture Union evangelists will be travelling up from Kinshasa. Undoubtedly, there will be many others, keen to participate, travelling in from the region.

Richard wrote to many to request prayer support in the months leading up to the camp. He would, undoubtedly, want us to pray for the months following, too. As in the revival of 1935, so now in the 1980s, much of what is happening in Bolobo is happening, albeit on a smaller scale, in many of the towns and villages of the surrounding country.

Richard Hoskins is now in charge of the work of Christian education and evangelism for the region of Bandundu, as well as having responsibility for his family and the work of logistics and maintenance (ie, refurbishing the hospital, housing repair, maintenance of landrovers and generators and much more). This year has been far from easy for Richard, Sue and their baby daughter, Abigail, and, as the work of God's Spirit brings an ever-increasing harvest among the people of Bandundu, so the demands upon Richard and the family, their colleagues and, above all, the church will increase. Please pray for them.



Bolobo Church

Richard, Sue and Abigail Hoskins



Father,

We thank you for your servant church in Zaire and rejoice in its resolve to be about your work, in spite of the problems of distance and travel.

Fill it with urgency and zeal, so that the essentials of the gospel may be proclaimed and a new devotion and commitment may come to your people.

We praise you for its total ministry in evangelism, in teaching, in healing, in development, in social work.

Through all of its activities may it bring good news of life for others, through the power of your living Spirit. Father, give your servants courage and power.

(Week 47, BMS Prayer Guide 1988)

MISSION IN THE EARLIEST CHURCH

by Ian Thomas
Bolobo

We ought to speak of mission *in* the earliest church as opposed to the mission *of* the earliest church because the accent falls quite rightly on the promise and action of God here as opposed to the prerogative and possession of the Church. Even the most straightforward reading of the book of Acts makes it abundantly clear that the Church was pushed into mission — it was hardly something she deliberated over in the committee room.

But she was ready! When it became necessary to leave dear old Jerusalem, the picture is of a people ready to take Jerusalem with them. The constant reference back to Jerusalem throughout Acts makes it quite clear that Jerusalem had not been relinquished as the centre of the Church's activity, but there could be no mistaking now that Jerusalem was not the end.

In considering the Church's first

move, two elements strike us — promise and persecution. The two are so tightly related.

Concerning the promise, what is quite clear is that mission was considered part of the Church's agenda since her conception.

Indeed, we could go further and say that in Acts it is that part of the Church's agenda which conditions all other parts.

Furthermore, mission is not just one item among others on the church agenda, but the essential ingredient of any church. That is to say, she was not presented with the option of mission, she was presented with the promise of mission and with a commission.

The problem begins (and ends) right there. If we begin to conceive of mission in terms of what we are to do as opposed to who we are to be, we have taken a major false step at the outset, one which will subsequently prove very difficult to recover. There is, of course, a world of difference between nature and

imitation and specifically Christian mission can only issue from a proper understanding of the nature of the Church as a Missionary Church. We do not need church missionary societies so much as we need missionary church societies. One wonders whether there will be one in Didcot in 50 years' time. Certainly mission shouldn't be a department of the church, but her chief characteristic.

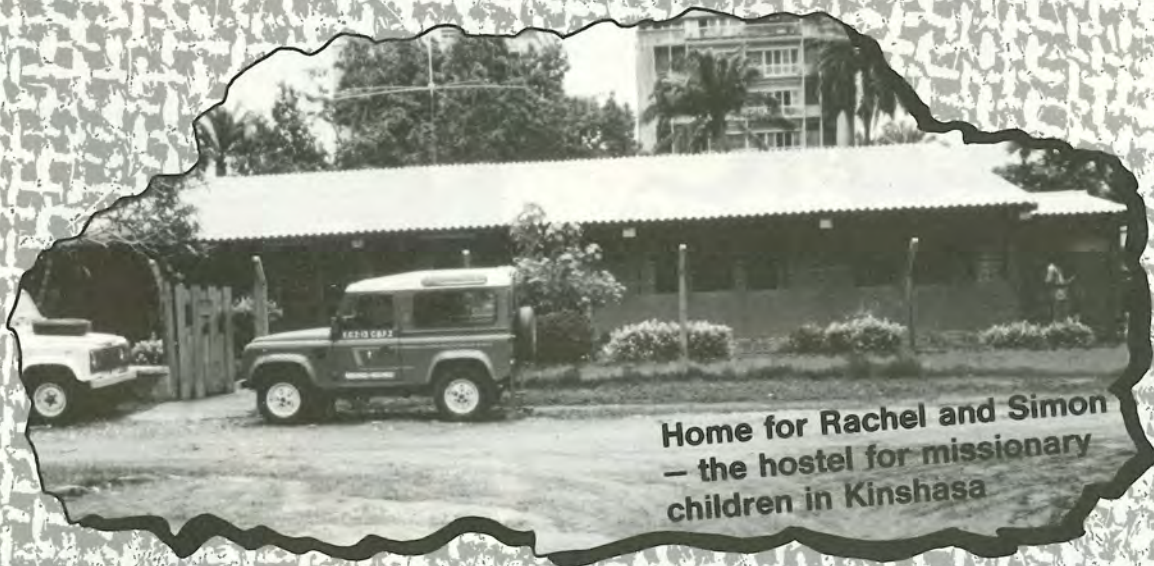
Mission is the distinctive feature of Christianity, which is after all nothing more and nothing less than the following of One sent to seek and to save that which is lost. It is the Church alone which has that understanding of what God is like. And the Church, at her best and most glorious has always been far from content simply to retain and conserve her own comfort and cosiness. This is because she knows that in the economy of God for every Stephen there is a Paul and for every Jerusalem a world.

HOSTEL AND SCHOOL IN KINSHASA

Missionaries are not just individuals, like the rest of us they belong to a family, but living and working overseas they can be separated from other members of the family by great distances.

It is hard to fly away to Africa, Asia or South America and leave children behind to continue their schooling in Britain, however well they are being cared for. The BMS enables children to join their parents overseas during school holidays and those days can be very precious.

Within the countries where our missionaries serve parents can also be separated for a long time and also by great distances. The Hinchliffe family in Zaire is one example. Tim and Angela work at Yakusu, way up the River Zaire, while their children, Rachel and Simon, are 800 or so miles away in Kinshasa.



Home for Rachel and Simon
— the hostel for missionary
children in Kinshasa



Prayer time around the
breakfast table with Alan and
Janice Brown the hostel
parents. Today we are
praying for France. Pictured
on the left, Simon Hinchliffe
and Peter Crane; right and on
the right, Andrew Brown.

Simon Hinchliffe (right) and Peter Cranefield going to school



A time of praise and worship. Janice Brown, playing the guitar, often writes music and songs for the children to sing



British Association School, Kinshasa



Budding chess master Simon being tutored by BMS teacher David Champion



... play time



assembly



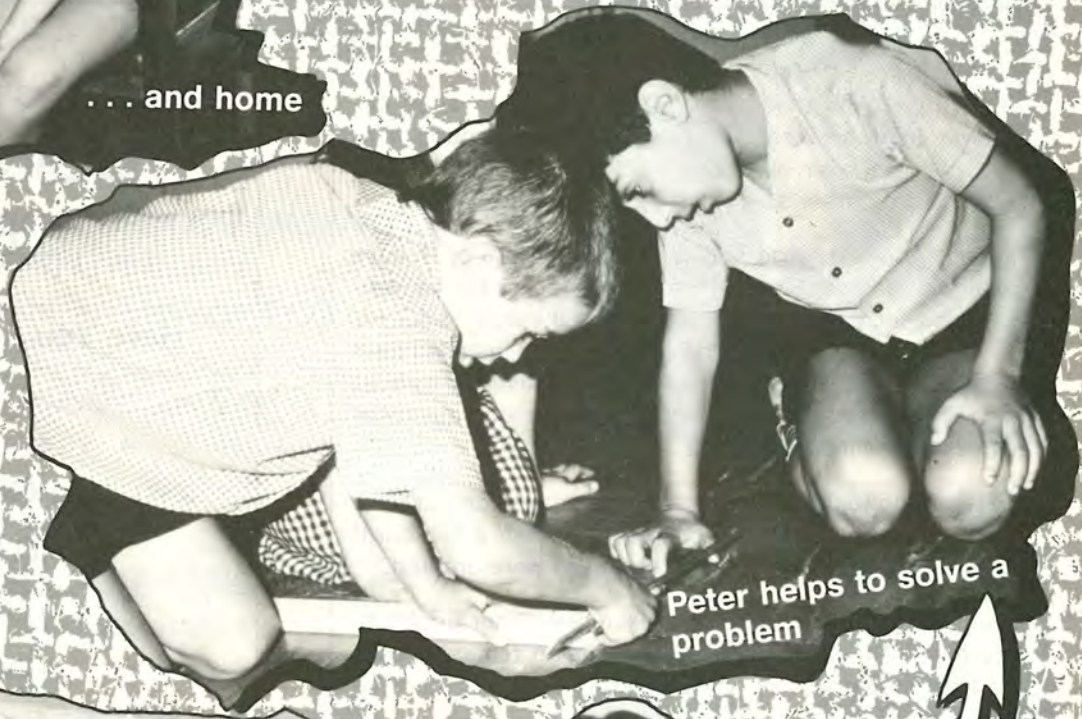
Time for a break



... and home



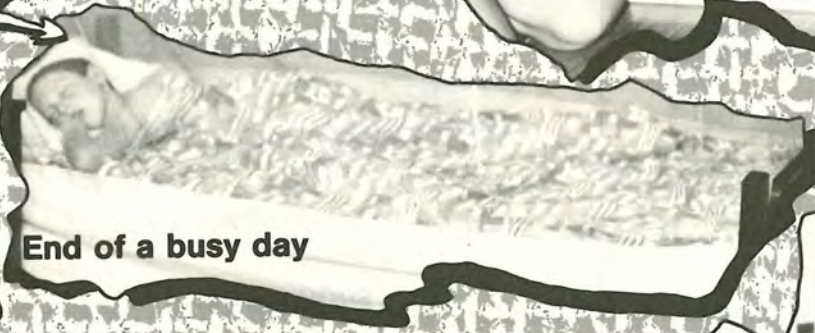
Simon hard at work at school ...



Peter helps to solve a problem



End of a busy day



Ruth Mantacute, the headmistress with Peter Cranefield and friend

MISSIONTALK

MISSIONTALK

MISSIONTALK

MISSIONTALK

A LONG WAIT

'Del' Young, who died at the end of last year aged 88, believed he was called to the mission field as a young man. That call, however, was not fulfilled until after he had completed a career as an electrical engineer.

Retiring from the large Midland industrial firm of Rubery Owen, a manufacturer of motor components, he was accepted for service with the BMS at the age of 68. He served for a year at Upoto in Zaire where he installed their first electrical lighting and power system. Travelling by boat he accompanied the generator and tons of equipment necessary for the installation.

On returning to the UK, Del carried out the electrical work necessary at his own church, Warley, when a fire burnt down an out-building and new premises were erected.

Conducting his thanksgiving service, Rev Peter Egginton, Secretary of the West Midlands Association, reminded us of the appropriateness of his valedictory text, 'Let there be light.'

COINING IT IN!

Last year the BMS Stamp Bureau had a record year. As a result of its work it was able to send £5,019 to the Society. This figure includes £278 for the sale of a bequeathed collection.

The BMS Stamp Bureau is widening its brief. The Society has given it permission to start a Card Bureau for the sale of postcards, cigarette cards, tea cards and the like, and a Coin Bureau for the sale of coins and bank notes. To begin with they will run under the auspices of the Stamp Bureau until it is seen whether or not they will be viable to run on their own.

So the Stamp Bureau (see ad on this page) is asking for donations of unwanted collections or unwanted spares of the items mentioned. Richard Camp is also anxious to get in touch with collectors of cards and coins.

BAPTIST SUNDAY

5 February is 1989 Baptist World Alliance Sunday. This year's theme is 'Walking in His Light: Discipleship Today'. The BWA is hoping that most of the 130,000 Baptist Churches worldwide, and the 35 million baptised members, will observe the day.

COIN AND CARD BUREAU

Have You Any Unwanted Collections

of

COINS, NOTES
CIGARETTE CARDS
TEA CARDS
POST CARDS?

Why not help the work of the BMS

by

sending them to:

Richard Camp
BMS Stamp Bureau
3 Barnfield Crescent
Wellington, Telford
Shropshire TF1 2ES

Richard Camp would also like to hear from any collectors of the above. Please write to him for details, enclosing a SAE, and state at what level you collect, how long you have been collecting and whether you are a member of a Baptist Church.



DIDCOT

Preparations are now well in hand for moving the BMS and the Baptist Union of Great Britain to Didcot. Architects are finalising plans for the design of the office space and work will soon begin so that the Society and Union can move in, it is hoped, sometime in July.

SOUTH EAST AREA CONFERENCES



Saturday 4 March 1989
10 am to 4 pm

CHURCH PLANTING AND CHURCH GROWTH AT HOME AND OVERSEAS

Rev Geoffrey Reynolds (Southern Area Superintendent)
and
Revd Peter Cousins (Cuiaba, Brazil)
Bicester Methodist Church



Saturday 11 March 1989
10.30 am to 4 pm

RESOURCES FOR MISSIONARY SECRETARIES

Winton Baptist Church, Bournemouth



Saturday 15 April 1989
10.30 am to 4 pm

MISSION UPDATE FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH

Knightrider Street Baptist Church, Maidstone



Details have been circulated to Church Missionary Secretaries in the relevant local areas. Others interested should telephone the Southeast Area Representative
Revd Leslie Gregory 0342 311804



TICKLING THE PALATE

Our new BMS Cookbook is now available. It contains over 150 recipes from BMS related countries and is ideal for preparing special meals for missionary occasions as well as for private culinary purposes.

Copies are £1.99 each, including postage, from
BMS, 93 Gloucester Place, London W1H
4AA.

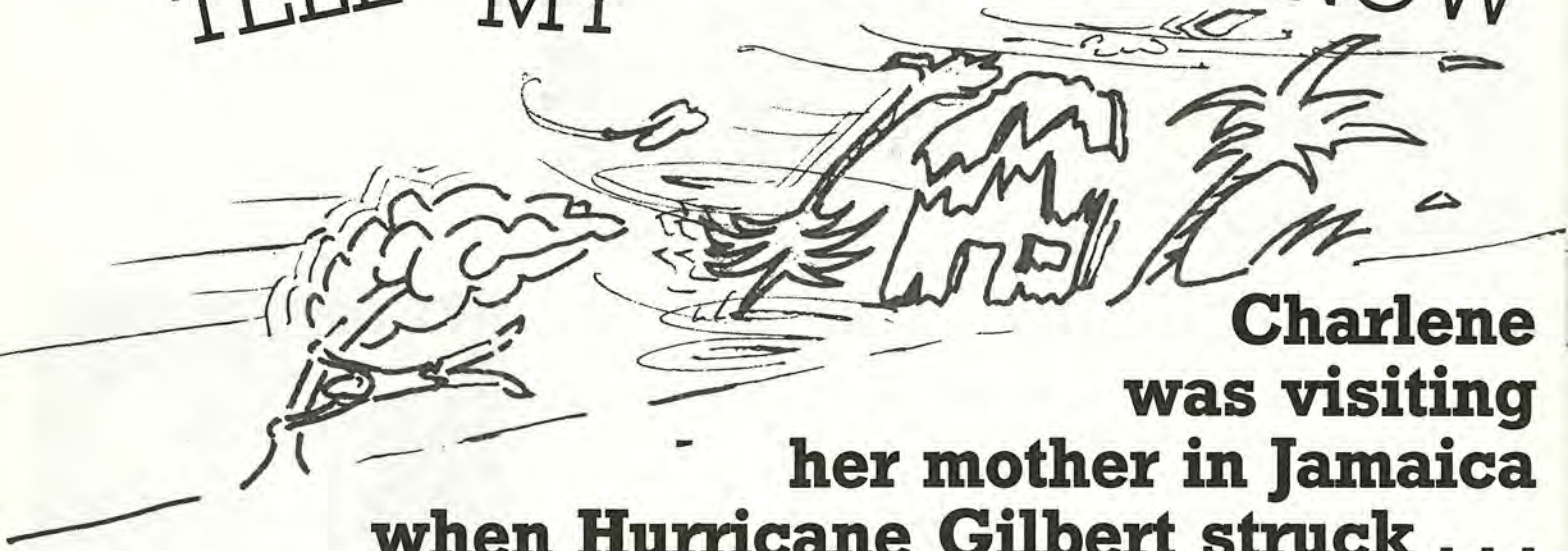
MISSIONTALK

MISSIONTALK

MISSIONTALK

MISSIONTALK

I'VE GOT SOMETHING TO TELL MY GRANDKIDS NOW



Charlene was visiting her mother in Jamaica when Hurricane Gilbert struck . . .

I flew in to Jamaica from the USA on the 'night bird' on Friday 9 September. There had been no mention of a hurricane.

On Saturday we went out to a friend's house. He was having a 'set-up' — that is, someone had died and people were paying their last respects. Outside it was cool. We were high up in the hills.

As we were walking along I overheard one man asking, 'Do you really think the storm will come?'

Another answered, 'No,' which just about summed up the general mood of the people.

News reports said that 'Hurricane Gilbert' was heading towards the island, but then so many hurricanes had threatened the island since the last one 30 years ago. None of them had actually hit the island and there was no reason to think differently about this one.

On Sunday, talk of the hurricane increased. It was still heading towards the island, but life continued as normal. As the day progressed, however, some people began to get a little anxious. They began to stock up durable foods, because if it did come it would destroy many of the island's crops and food prices would rocket. The stores were selling out fast. But still people did not know whether they should take it seriously or not.

That night, watching the TV, we were told it was almost definitely going to hit us. 'People should stock up on candles, batteries and the like and stay indoors; and if your house isn't safe go to some place that is — a school or church.'

Earlier my aunt had warned us: 'If the hurricane comes, they will cut off the light and the water.'

That night the lights went out — came on — went off — came on and then went off for good.

On Monday, 12 September, at around 12 p.m. Spanish Town began to experience the hurricane. It had entered the island in St Thomas earlier that day. At first the rain got heavier and heavier. Then the winds started. Huge coconut trees bent over to kiss the ground. Bits of roofs began to rip loose and strips of zinc metal flew through the air.

'A sheet of metal, flying at those speeds could take someone's head off,' the radio warned those still in the streets.

We thought our house was relatively safe, until we noticed a tree, up against the side of the house, lifting off the kitchen roof. In the strong winds, my mother and a young man from next door tried to cut off the offending branch, but it was too late. With the help of gusts in excess of 110 mph that part of the roof went.


The winds continued and the awning across the front of the house began to come loose. We managed to prop it up with a piece of wood that had blown in.

I listened to the radio on an abandoned personal stereo. It was the only thing we had batteries for. I took them out of my camera and had some spares as well. I waited eagerly for the 'eye of the hurricane' to come. This is a calm period which lasts for about an hour half way through the hurricane. After that the rain and wind come back with renewed vigour, but blowing in a different direction.


After my mother and the neighbour had cut down the offending branch, they couldn't get back into the house for all the debris flying around. They spent some time backed up against one wall of the house on the other side, unable to move.

Meanwhile I took a peep out of the back door to keep an eye on them but slammed it shut when I saw a sheet of zinc flying towards me at incredible speed. Then, tentatively, I opened it to check on the two outside.

The winds began to slow down, although still rapid. I walked through the house and noticed a hole in the kitchen roof where a piece of wood had pierced through. There was a similar hole in the front room ceiling — outside my mother had watched a piece of zinc from next door crash onto the roof.




The 'eye' thankfully, mercifully came. All of a sudden people seemed to come from everywhere clad in wellies and armed with hammers ready to repair what they could of the roof before the storm began again. This is when I first noticed the true crisis spirit, when all over the island people were rushing around in the limited time they had to check on family, friends and neighbours. People were working on our roof right up until the hurricane winds returned.




In the latter part of the hurricane, more damage was done to our house. The gutter along one of the bedrooms broke and water flooded in. Pots, pans and bowls were placed all over the house to catch the leaks and bits of plastic covered most of the furniture in the bedroom.

About one foot from where my mum had been standing in the first part of the hurricane a tree crashed to the ground.




At about 4 p.m. the hurricane finally ended and the assessment and repair of damage began. Gilbert had left us in St Catherine but, of course, he was still raging in the rest of the island.

Night came and there was no running water and no electricity. The tail of the hurricane was still hanging around. That was a period of heavy rain which didn't really ease up until a couple of days later.




Over the radio people were sending out desperate messages trying to get information about family and friends. The roads were blocked by fallen trees, poles and floods. Telephones had been cut off.

People had been moved into schools and halls, because their homes had either been flooded or blown away. Many poorer people live in houses no better than sheds. The figure of the homeless was increasing, yet I was surprised, though thankful, at the low number of fatalities.




We drove around the streets two days after the hurricane. The biggest trees were sprawled across the streets, and telephone and electricity poles had fallen in the prettiest of patterns. Houses all around had lost their roofs.




I didn't see any demolished houses until I drove through Kingston on my way to the airport. Areas where people had lived were now just piles of rubble.


I wandered around a house where the roof had come off. Two days after the hurricane they were still bailing out the water. Most things in the house were ruined and what wasn't ruined was taken to friends' houses for safe-keeping – clothes, sheets and carpets were hanging all over drying out.



One of the worst things was the lack of electricity and water. We did everything in rain water for a couple of days or so. Whenever it rained the bowls went out to fill up the bath and everything else we could find. The water trucks began to do their rounds. Trying to get some of the water was a rough business.




We ate by candlelight and torch and instead of TV we chatted on the verandah. Mother said that watching the traffic was our TV, although that was non-eventful. There was a curfew from 7 p.m. until 6 a.m. No one was allowed on the streets except for people like hospital workers who had to carry a pass. This was to prevent looting.



I didn't get away, as planned, on the 16th. During the hurricane planes had been removed to Miami, which was just as well. At the airport I saw a light aircraft hitched up a tree. There was a massive back-log of flights. Planes only began to fly again commercially on the Thursday from Montego Bay, not Kingston.

The only means of communication with the outside world was the radio, although at times we lost that. There were still reports of people bending over backwards to help their neighbour and this was highly impressive and admirable. It was the thing that shone through most of all. Everyone pulled out the stops to help each other by providing food, finding shelter, repairing homes and cleaning up debris.

I left the island on Saturday 17 September, only one day late, after hearing about the flight from the car radio and the walkman.



It wasn't much of a holiday, but I have no regrets. I maintain I was where I should have been, with my mum, and that's what mattered. I've got something to tell my grandkids now!

Charlene Bernard, from Nottingham, is the East Midland representative on the Alliance of Baptist Youth.



ARMY REJECTS

Forty per cent of the 701,000 young men called up for military service in Brazil last year were rejected on health grounds according to the army's annual report.

Twenty-six per cent were turned away because of dental problems and nine per cent for insufficient weight or height.

Brigadier Waldyr de Vasconcelos, commander in chief of the armed forces, said, 'The high rejection rate shows that the quality of life in Brazil is bad and has not improved.'

AIDS ON THE INCREASE

Seven hundred of the 3,000 children being cared for by the Children's Welfare Foundation in São Paulo, Brazil are carrying the AIDS virus.

A medical study has discovered that 95 per cent of the children with AIDS had contracted the disease by injecting drugs.

In 1987 521 people in São Paulo died of AIDS. In the first ten months of 1988 680 died of the disease.

FRENCH BIBLES

At an ecumenical service held recently in Geneva to mark the completion of the revised edition of the TOB French language translation of the Bible, the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches formerly accepted 10,000 copies of the new edition for the clergy and theological students in the Third World. The Bibles were given by the Ecumenical Association for Biblical Research.

NEW NAME

On 1 January, the Bible and Medical Missionary Fellowship (BMMF) changed its name to Interserve. The mission was founded in 1852 working with women in the Zenanas of India.

It is today an international mission with eleven standing councils, 400 partners, and involved in 25 different areas of work including evangelism, engineering, Bible teaching, building, medicine and maintenance.

What's happening in the Church around the World

ASIAN SPIRITUALITY

We each use images that we know when describing our faith to others. In Asia, according to Sam Amirtham from Indonesia, the images are often taken from plant life. Here are some examples.

The red gum tree which has roots deep enough to survive drought and fire.

The coconut tree which grows so straight and single-mindedly to heaven and gives every part of itself to the benefit of humankind.

The pul-grass, which is trampled by people, survives any storm, provides softness to human legs and beauty to the eyes.

The banyan tree which grows out of a tiny seed, protects many and sends roots into the air for nourishment.

The rubber tree which bleeds every day, gives of itself to paste, unites things.

The bamboo tree which grows together, provides food and beauty, when pierced becomes 'channels' of water.

Rice which, when heavy with paddy, bends low; the fruitful become lowly. 'God is rice' in Asia.

AFRICAN FISH FOR THAILAND

In the Karen and Lahu villages of Thailand, there is a great need for high protein food. In an effort to provide protein the villagers tried to raise fish in fresh water ponds but the experiment proved to be a failure.

In 1987, Russell Goulin from the Heifer Project International went to work with the Karen Baptist Convention especially to develop fish ponds and to provide education on agriculture to villagers and students at the Centre for the Uplift of the Hill Tribes. Russell has previous experience of work in Zaire and Pakistan. He quickly became known as 'Acharn Pla', which means Fish Professor in Thai.

He and his workers first of all developed demonstration teaching ponds. They then began to impart fish raising knowledge to

the villagers. There are 28 families now involved and a great deal of interest has been shown.

Russell is recommending Tilapia, a fish of African origin. The ponds are stocked at a rate of one fingerling per square metre. They are harvested after six months weighing from 150 to 200 grams. They will in fact grow much larger, but it is not economical to do so since the growth rate slows down in older fish.

The main problem with the fish is that they reproduce very rapidly. They start to lay eggs at the age of three months, so ponds can quickly become overcrowded. One solution is net the small fish, fry them until they are crisp and then eat them whole?



Everyone who read 'From drugs and despair to fullness of life' (November *Herald*) must have been moved by the Myhill's account of the spiritual pilgrimage of their son, Gerald. We rejoice that he and his wife found peace and joyful activity in Christ.

This letter is in no way a criticism of the Myhill family, who followed their own chosen course with fortitude and tact; that way they did, in fact, end happily. Rather, this letter is by way of sketching in the wide range of facilities open to missionary families, through the arrangements which the Baptist Missionary Society has made for the welfare of their children.

The Baptist Missionary Society makes very careful provision for the children of its missionaries. Schools on the field can be followed, in the UK by a sound Christian education in schools for the sons and daughters of missionaries at Walthamstow Hall, Sevenoaks, and at Eltham College in South London, which the BMS sponsors.

These schools have long experience in the care and education of missionaries' children. Christian worship is held in

both schools at the beginning of the day. Religious Studies, from the Christian viewpoint, are compulsory; one period per week being taught to all age groups up to 16. Every child has the opportunity of a GCSE course in Religious Studies, entailing three periods per week. Missionary boarders are welcomed into a family setting in the boarding house.

Missionaries' children have the responsibility to attend church on Sunday. At Eltham College that church is most likely to be Eltham Park Baptist Church, whose minister is the Rev David Doonan. Readers of the article in question will recollect that David Doonan was instrumental in the conversion of Raimunda, Gerald Myhill's wife, and, through her, of Gerald himself.

As Chaplain of Eltham College, my wife and I have pleasure in welcoming any and every missionary son into our home, and I know the same is true of David and Doris Doonan. In Sevenoaks, missionary daughters are linked up with the local Vine Baptist Church through specially chosen 'church friends'.

It should also be mentioned that the Baptist Missionary Society arranged for missionaries' children to visit their parents on the field every Christmas and Summer holidays. There is no need for any family to be separated for longer than six months.

Nor is this the limit of the BMS's care and provision. For those families who wish it (and boarding schools are not everyone's 'cup of tea'), children can live with relatives or friends in this country and attend local schools and colleges. This was the option taken up by the Rev and Mrs Gwyn Lewis (then working in Bangladesh) for their daughters. Such families still have the opportunity of their children coming out to see them twice a year.

I trust that the above gives some idea of the wide range of educational opportunities open to missionaries' children.

Frank Wells,
Chaplain: Eltham College

MISSIONARY MOVEMENTS

Departures

Mr and Mrs G McBain on 7 December to Kinshasa, Zaire.
Miss K Norris on 8 December to Amp Pipal, Nepal.
Miss C Preston on 15 December to Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Arrivals

Miss K Norris on 3 November from Amp Pipal, Nepal (compassionate leave).
Mrs P Seymour on 25 November from Tondo, Zaire (sick leave).
Miss C Preston on 26 November from Dhaka, Bangladesh (official BMS visit).
Miss J Pullin on 26 November from Chandraghona, Bangladesh.
Mrs N Clark on 2 December from São Paulo, Brazil.
Rev and Mrs K Hodges on 3 December from Curitiba, Brazil.
Rev and Mrs R Deller on 12 December from Porto Alegre, Brazil.
Rev K Riglin on 17 December from Kingston, Jamaica (compassionate leave).
Rev and Mrs M Gardiner on 19 December from Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Births

On 11 November, in Brazil, to **Rev and Mrs D Perry**, a son, Eduardo John
On 16 November, in Brazil, to **Rev and Mrs M Hewitt**, a son, Aiden Martin

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Secretaries acknowledge with grateful thanks the following legacies and anonymous gifts. (To 23 December 1988.)

	£
Mrs G Ager	200.00
Mr W A Buck	500.00
Miss O R Dolbear	100.00
Miss E M Fieldsend	8,507.54
Miss A F Garner	2,350.41
Miss E M Hannaford	1,687.31
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Mrs D Morgan	50.00
Miss G H Newell	138.15
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Miss E M Thomas	50.00
Mrs E C Young	625.88

General Work

Anon: £300.00; FAE Aberdeen: £35.00; Anon: £1.75; Anon Durham: £57.00

Relief Fund

Anon: £50.00

Bangladesh Relief Fund

Anon: £220.00 (not £200.00)

Agriculture

Anon: £350.00

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- 1 – 15 June, Rome/Sperlonga – Rev Michael Banfield**
- 10 – 24 June, Switzerland – Rev Charles Couldridge**
- 24 July – 3 August, EBF Congress & Vienna – Rev Arthur Bonser**
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Baptist Missionary Society
93 Gloucester Place, London W1H 4AA