

המשיבה המשיבה

LOVE BEYOND OUR
UNDERSTANDING

LOVE BEYOND OUR
DESERVING

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HERALD

DECEMBER 1989
20p

Comment

Season of pine trees with lights
and Santa Claus,
season of buying things to
make us happy,
season when those with money
and power
give gifts and say lovely things
to convince themselves they're
good
and that every thing goes well.
They've come to believe they
own Christmas.

They've stolen it.
But with their artificial snow,
their coloured papers and
ribbons,
they have, in truth, stolen
an empty box.

The contents continue in the
hands of the real owners:
men who can't find a job
or must work hard
for miserable wages,
women who suffer agony every
day
wondering how they'll feed
all the people in their homes,
the elderly and the sick
thrown out like no longer
usable cast-offs,
young people who see their
future cut short because they
can no longer study or find
meaningful work,
children . . .

For them, it is a Gift of God,
that no money can buy
and no power can usurp:
liberation and new life
in Jesus Christ.

Christmas, Nativity, Birth,
it is God who is born among
us,
who becomes a native in our
land,
one of our people,
companion.
Christmas is God Himself
who comes to take on
the suffering of the poor
and their hope.

That is why,
Christmas is a new birth
of our dignity,
the new birth of our love,
which we cherish and give,
the new birth of our
commitment
to struggle for a world of
justice and freedom
the new birth of our faith
in the final victory of love
and of life.

Ronaldo Munoz
Santiago, Chile.

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WHAT

A

CHRISTMAS!

Geoffrey Grose, recently retired as minister of Green Park Baptist Church, Delhi, in India, remembers the one who bothered to come back to say 'thank you'.

One Christmas lunch will always remain in my memory. It followed a morning of continual activity. Two church services crowded to the doors with people overflowing into the small garden outside – the church building being all too small, and the festival times being especially attractive for Indian members. Extra tentage and chairs always had to be arranged for the overflow and extension loudspeakers hung outside on the walls of the church.

After singing Christmas carols lustily in two languages, meeting the children with their new Christmas clothes, and receiving and giving innumerable 'Happy Christmas' greetings, the rush subsided. Three or four single folk had been invited to share our lunch, so my wife whisked up from the ground floor and got busy in the kitchen. So it was that the shouting and excitement had died away and a group of us sat at table and prepared to tuck in.

Halfway through my second potato there was a ring at the doorbell. Muttering 'Happy Christmas' to myself, and clutching a serviette in one hand just to make it obvious that its owner was at lunch, I opened the front door. Two gentlemen stood there and greeted me politely. 'Do you remember me?' asked one.

Now I always cringe when people ask that, for I meet a hundred people a week in India, yet it always seems embarrassing to admit that you don't remember one particular person.

Having replied, 'Well your face is familiar, but your name escapes me,' there was the opportunity for the caller to introduce himself.

'I met you in the Safdarjang Hospital,' he said. 'I was about to have an operation' – and then I remembered.



It was one of those chance meetings. His brother had called at the church for a cross to put under the patient's pillow. Pains in the head had led to the discovery of a growth and an operation had been arranged. As well as making offerings in the temple, the family had decided to invoke the aid of the Christian's God as well.

I confessed that I did not keep a stock of crosses but promised to call in, and this is how I had met the patient. He was in pain, surrounded by anxious family members and preparing for a tricky operation. Explaining that prayer is a link-up with God's power and that we Christians knew, through what Jesus had said and done, that God's intention for us is for wholeness and health, we had prayer round the bedside.

Now after weeks had elapsed, it was Christ's birthday and this patient, having recovered, remembered to give thanks. What rejoicing there was around our table. All of us who were there gave thanks and then the patient, his brother and I went downstairs into the church to kneel and give thanks for healing and wholeness.

I often wonder what happened to that man. Does he still remember to give thanks? Does he read anything more of the Jesus to whom we prayed? Does he believe? I don't know. But God does. I'll always remember the one who came back to give thanks.

CAROL SINGING

– the din of drums and cymbals

Without the traditional deep snow and glowing lanterns, you may be forgiven for not recognising this as a group of carol singers – but that's just what they are!

In Britain, throughout December, you might be heralded of an evening, at your front door, by eager youth groups, bands or choirs, but these carol singers in Bangladesh wait until Christmas Eve before visiting the homes of church members.

Usually the first group arrives about midnight, just after I've filled the kids' stockings and have crept stealthily to bed. The tremendous din of drums, cymbals, harmonium and over-excited voices telling you that 'Christ is born' rouses you to prompt action as you dash to remove the stockings in case the children wake up.

The carol singers continue with manic intensity, singing song after song. There may be as many as six verses with chorus, which, having sung through, they then proceed to sing in reverse – verse six and chorus, then five and chorus – everything getting faster and faster as the frenzy mounts. This continues until you open the door with a smile, wish everyone 'Happy Big Day' and dish out sweets, oranges or money.

This process is repeated at approximately hourly intervals by groups of men and children from various churches, until you decide that it isn't worth going to bed after all. It's time to wake the children who have slept blissfully unaware through the noisy and joyful introduction to another birthday for Jesus.



Roof top carol singers at Chandraghona

CHRISTMAS

... IN ZAIRE

There was nothing to show that it was Christmas here. No Christmas decorations. No brightly lit shops and streets. No parties and endless dinners. No snow and thankfully no need for winter woollies.

It wasn't until the week before Christmas that things began to happen. Every afternoon there was a Christmas-type service in one of the out-lying churches. I managed to go to one of them and we even sang 'Gloria in Excelsis'. That's the bit I understood. The rest was in Bobangi.

Christmas Day dawned bright and early. I had two visitors before 7 am! Santa Claus also visited me and left a stocking outside! I don't have a chimney. Church was (what shall I say?), 'Different' – I think that just about sums it up.

The day before, the church building had

been decorated with Palm fronds and tropical flowers. It looked beautiful. It was much better than the artificial decorations we use. I went early in order to get a seat, which was just as well. Lots of people had to sit outside. Everyone had on something new – myself included. Children, who run around all week in rags and tatters, had been given their new outfit for the year. It was really nice to see the effort that everyone had gone to in order to make the celebration of Christ's birth a special event.

There were choirs, carols, choruses and collections. The missionaries got together and gave a rendition of 'The Virgin Mary had a baby boy' and the calypso carol 'See him lying on a bed of straw'. They had both been translated into Lingala.

Then there was the nativity play. The soldiers were even dressed in real army uniforms and they came and 'killed' all the children under two years of age. The women then went into their traditional wailing! That was interesting. It was also interesting to see how the Zairians interpreted the Christmas story.

Although church didn't finish until 2.15 pm, I left at 12 noon – my excuse was that I had to cook lunch. We weren't at all hard done by. We had roast duck, Christmas pudding and mince pies! We missed out on the fresh cream and potatoes, but Ian Thomas' mum had sent some 'Quality Street' so we munched our way through them as we exchanged gifts. So it turned out to be a very good day.

*Elizabeth Baker, Bolobo,
Christmas 1988*



... IN NEPAL

I wonder why several people have written to us complaining of big queues at the shops, rugby scrums in Sainsbury's, headaches over present buying and arranging children's concerts. From a distance it seems that if you are in a crowd you are responsible for the existence of that crowd.

Perhaps you will think us too casual when we say that our preparations for Christmas dinner began at 5.30 pm. The electricity had been off all day, so at that time, while Heather looked to see what vegetables we had in the cupboard, Richard went to the roast chicken shops on the main road and we were sitting down to the meal by 6.15.

Similarly our new church only announced two weeks before that they would celebrate Christmas with a day of worship and fellowship, including a common meal – or love feast. The price was to be the equivalent of 45p for adults, 22p for children and free to anyone who could not afford these sums.

About 300 gathered on the day, although it meant taking a day off work and losing pay. It was a great and united celebration of God's great gift.

Please compare your expenditures and the sense of unity and fellowship of believers on that day.

*Richard and Heather Cameron,
Christmas 1988*



We had more of a build-up to Christmas this year than last year, when it crept up on us unawares, without our usual clues of cards and gifts appearing in the shops. This year Simon had just started full-time at school and was immersed in the school nativity play preparations. It's amazing all you have to learn in order to be a convincing sheep! Naomi was most impressed by his public performance.

There were also Christmas parties and carol services in the project and at church. Our church planned an open-air service for Christmas Day, followed by a *boj* – a special *dahl bhat meal*. Christmas Day dawned to grey skies and pouring rain, which wouldn't have taken us by surprise at all in the UK, but here it just doesn't rain in December. The service was delayed for an hour while an alternative venue was found, and we finally began at 12 o'clock in the meeting room above the barn on the UMN farm.

It seemed most appropriate to be watching a nativity play take place within earshot and smell of the water-buffalo and goats downstairs. It was cold and still wet at 2 pm, but everyone enjoyed *dahl bhat* outside on the farm. Nepali Christians keep together for as much of Christmas Day as possible, having taken the day off work especially, and often coming from Hindu families, there wouldn't be much celebration at home and maybe opposition. Besides which, there isn't the present-giving ritual we have in the west. It is purely a religious festival, none-the-less joyful for that and possibly more meaningful.

Things were still going strong by late afternoon when we brought the children home. It's an interesting feeling to be in a curious minority rather than the 'norm'.

*Ruth and Jerry Clewett,
Christmas 1988*



... IN BRAZIL

The letters and good wishes from home helped us not to feel too lonely and forgotten at Christmas. In fact, without them we could easily have overlooked Christmas altogether.

The Baptist Church didn't make a big fuss over Christmas. There were no special carol services or special celebrations.

The weather was hot and wet – high temperatures led to tremendous thunderstorms with torrential rain later in the day.

We got together with Iain and Ann Walker and bought a turkey and Jean made a traditional Christmas cake. So at least we had a very happy Christmas Day.

*David and Jean Perry,
Campinas, Christmas 1988*

YESTERDAY, TODAY AND . . . ?

Chris and Mairi Burnett look at life in Zaire and wonder . . .

My name is Yesterday

I live in a house with all my family, at the edge of a big river. The house is made of sticks with clay pushed into the gaps and smoothed over to form a flat surface. The roof is made of woven leaves and it keeps out the rain although the smoke stays inside. My father has two wives in our house and I have seven other brothers and sisters and another five have already died.

My father is a fisherman. He hunts for

the big fish in the river and then he sells them in the village, or, rather, it's mother who sells them. My mother spends most of her time in the fields that are nearby the house. All sorts of things grow quickly in the earth and we are not often hungry. We have started keeping goats but they eat too much, including the plants in mother's field so I think that we will have to sell them.

When I am ill, I go to the old man at the end of the village who gives me medicine to take and cuts me over the

place where it hurts the most. My younger brother died last month but the old man said it was my aunt who killed him because she is a witch. They danced all night and the old man got one of the goats and now my aunt is no longer a witch.

If I grow up, I want to be a fisherman like my father and catch many big fish. I will be very rich and buy many wives who will give me lots of children. They will work my fields and I will never be hungry. If I grow up. . . .!



Lokeli family at Yakusu

My name is Today

I live in a house with all my family at the edge of a big river. The house is made of bricks that father bought in town. The roof is of tin sheets that he managed to 'find' second hand. If it rains very hard then the water comes in through the holes in the sheets and soaks my bed. I share my house with ten brothers and sisters. Unfortunately one of my brothers died last year. My father says that we can have no more brothers and sisters as my mother is sterile. I think that she is just too old as she is almost 30.

My father spends some time fishing but

it's rare that he catches anything very big but any that he does catch, mother smokes so we can sell it up in the city. I think father uses the money to buy beer because he is often drunk. Lately he has started to smoke as well.

Mother spends all the time in the fields. She has to walk about two miles to get to them and we don't get a lot from the earth. The thieves often steal the whole crop before we can harvest it. It's not nice to be hungry.

When we have enough money, I can go to school and perhaps I will get to go to University in the city. I want to be a

doctor and live in the city like my uncle. Father says that he has a friend who can find me a place in the university but it will cost a lot of money.

When I am ill I go to the local health centre where the nurse gives me an injection. Sometimes mother also takes me to the old man at the end of the village; the injections usually work but mother says that they are too expensive. Sometimes the nurse gives you an injection before you are ill so that we can be strong. This is called vaccination. I have a special card with my name on it. When I am a doctor I will make everyone better and get lots of money. When I grow up. . . .!



Baby clinic at Yakusu

My name is Tomorrow

I live in a hut beside a river. The hut is made of old bricks but I can see daylight through the cracks. The roof is a mixture of old tin sheets and leaves. I live with my older brother and sister. Father left us a long time ago and mother is very ill. She coughs a lot. I'd like to have some more brothers and sisters but mother says that she will not marry again. I think she will die.

The river is small and smells. There is a green slime on the surface. The old people say that there used to be real

fish in the river but the only fish I've seen have been in tins.

The house is often blown down because there are no trees here. Mother and my sister have tried to grow some food in the garden next to the house but the heat and wind soon kill them.

If I grow up I want to be a soldier and travel about in a lorry. We see lots of soldiers here when they come to take away the bad people. We never see the bad people again. My mother says that it would be bad to go to the city because there is no food there but the city sounds exciting and there cannot

be less food than there is here.

If I am ill, I go to the old man in the health centre. He will inject you with some liquid and cut you over where it hurts. Lots of people die after seeing him but he says that is because the evil spirits have killed them.

I play most days in the school yard. There are no classes now since the soldiers came and carried the teachers away. If I was a soldier I would carry away lots of bad people like the old man in the health centre, and bring food for my mother and sister. If I am Tomorrow. . . .?

What's happening in the Church around the World



MISUNDERSTOOD

French Protestants have been discovering what people think of them. According to a survey conducted by the Protestant Federation of France, Protestantism is generally little known or misunderstood and usually ignored by the media. But the French public – nominally Catholic – seems to be interested in Protestant pronouncements which are generally perceived as original and relevant to social questions.

UNFOUNDED REPUTATION

Burning in the Amazon forest has been reduced by 70 per cent since last year, according to Brazil's President José Sarney.

Speaking to the State Institute for the Environment and Renewable Resources, he said: 'Brazil's reputation as a major polluter is unfounded. In my judgement, the "industrialised countries" are mainly responsible for atmospheric pollution. Brazil is responsible for 0.9 per cent of the world's air pollution, while the United States causes 28 per cent and Western Europe 17 per cent.'

West Germany will be giving Brazil \$65.5 million over the next three years in loans for Amazon jungle conservation projects, but Brazil will only need to pay back 30 per cent.

'We recognise the predatory effects provoked by the industrialisation of rich nations and we want to collaborate so that they are not repeated in Brazil,' said Hans Peter Repnik, West German Vice Minister of Economic Aid.

The Brazilian government has already named some projects to be financed with the funding, including the reforestation of jungle areas in the northern state of Pará and the conservation of Atlantic vegetation in the state of São Paulo.

UNNECESSARY DISCRIMINATION

Eighty women from 24 African countries, including Zaire and Angola, met in Ghana at the end of September. It was the first ever convocation of African women in theology.

Mercy Oduyoye, from the World Council of Churches in Geneva, addressed the meeting and called for a new order of theology which liberates all people and does not suppress or discriminate against women.

'Some seminars refuse to admit women on the grounds that there is no accommodation for them. But they manage to have room for the male,' she said. 'This is discrimination.'

'For too long, African women have been subjected to certain rites which surround widowhood and puberty, and which dehumanise and degrade them. Why should a widow be subjected to inhuman and excruciating treatment, all in the name of sacrifice?' she asked. 'This is unnecessary discrimination which must end because we are all created in the image of God.'

She urged African women to refuse to accept old customs that disgrace womanhood. She also encouraged those in theology to document all their thoughts, ideas, sermons, reflections and meditations for publication and study.

Dora Ofori Owusu, the first ordained woman in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, chaired the convocation. She called on African women to stand up and be counted.

A MILLION

The millionth Chinese Bible has been printed by the Amity Printing Company in Nanjing.

WHAT? MY NEIGHBOUR?

Neighbourly attitudes in the United States have recently come under close scrutiny. According to a Gallup poll, 62 per cent of Americans would not like to live near to cult members and 30 per cent would not want to live next door to fundamentalists. Three per cent object to Roman Catholics, five per cent to Protestants or Jews, twelve per cent to blacks and 23 per cent to unmarried couples.

'SUCCESSFUL' SEMINAR

In a course for missionaries on furlough held at Rüschtikon Seminary, Switzerland, there were participants from five Baptist missions, including the BMS, in Europe.

Avelino Ferreira and Tim Bulkeley represented the BMS on the Seminar which studied 'Servanthood in Mission'.

'Through the biblical, theological and practical studies, we dealt with all aspects of servanthood in Mission,' said Dr Earl Martin, director of the Institute for Mission and Evangelism at Rüschtikon. 'In mission we are all servant-messengers. We have a message to bear, and we do it in the context of mission.'

Although the missionaries agreed that it had been 'a great week' there were some criticism. Most of them came from African countries and all of them from developing nations. 'We need to know what mission would be like in a country, for example, like Japan.'

COUNTDOWN TO CELEBRATION

1792 COUNTDOWN TO CELEBRATION 1992

COUNTDOWN TO CELEBRATION

IN PRAISE OF COBBLERS *Continued.*

The country was as big as Europe without Russia, with what was, even then, a vast population with the majority living in villages. There were over 150 languages and dialects used by these teaming millions and in those various tongues they worshipped the gods of Hinduism, of tribal deities or shared in the faith of Islam. Their particular faiths led to cruel practices, such as child cruelty and the burning alive of widows with their dead husbands.

Politically, the land was divided under colonial powers. This was changing when Carey arrived. Portugal held just a few Indian ports while Dutch rule had virtually disappeared. The Danish held two small territories, one at Serampore on the River Hooghly 16 miles north of Calcutta. Britain was the power in the south and in Bengal the British East India Company reigned supreme. As the governing body it was the forerunner of the British Raj and was to influence the whole of Indian life for many years. Europeans in India generally had lax moral standards. The basic charter of the East India Company was against any missionary or religious work that could lead to the conversion of the nationals, which it was felt would be a disaster. So in all that vast land, only the ancient and not very strong Mar Thoma Church, a fairly small Roman Catholic community, and a few committed European individuals stood for the faith of Jesus Christ.

It is important to understand the attitudes and effects of the East India Company towards missionaries. William Carey and John Thomas, when they arrived and settled first in Calcutta and then just outside it were not accepted by the British authorities as missionaries. Later, when Carey took up a

post as manager of an indigo factory it was that work and his subsequent employment as a lecturer and then professor in Indian languages that led to his acceptability within the community.

The next missionaries to travel from England were not free to enter the British held parts of India. The first one going to join Carey did so surreptitiously, but the next group had to land at Serampore and benefit from the Danish acceptance of their missionary role. It was 20 years, in 1813, before the British government changed the charter of the East India Company and missionaries were free to enter. This opened the way for newer activity and greater numbers, but already the centre of effort and patterns of working had been established, based upon Serampore in Danish held territory.

EVANGELISM

To some extent Carey's evangelistic methods were traditional. As soon as it was possible, he began to preach to the people who would listen to him. He would go to the villages, taking his pundits to help with translation and begin by questioning tactfully those who would stay and talk. This then led to a discussion about their Hindu gods and beliefs in which his own interest and knowledge could be shown. Then he would lead on to the message of the Gospel. There was never any problem in attracting groups, even crowds, of folk ready to listen. Indeed, Carey wrote home and said 'Preachers are needed thousand times more than people to preach to.'

Carey's own gift as a linguist was invaluable. He quickly mastered Bengali having begun to learn it from John Thomas on the long voyage from England, and then went on to grasp

other Indian languages. Another key factor was the offering of the Scriptures to the Indian peoples in their own language. Over the years Carey translated the whole Bible into six different languages and part at least of the Scriptures into an additional 29 languages. By 1832 Bibles, New Testaments or separate Books or Scripture had been issued from the Serampore Mission in 44 languages and dialects.

Carey and his colleagues placed great faith in the value of education, for its own sake and as a missionary tool. Fairly early on in the life at Serampore they established boarding schools for the richer expatriate and English speaking peoples. This was followed almost at once, by free schools for the poorer Bengali families and in a remarkably short time nearly 100 schools teaching 10,000 pupils had arisen around Serampore. Indian teachers were trained.

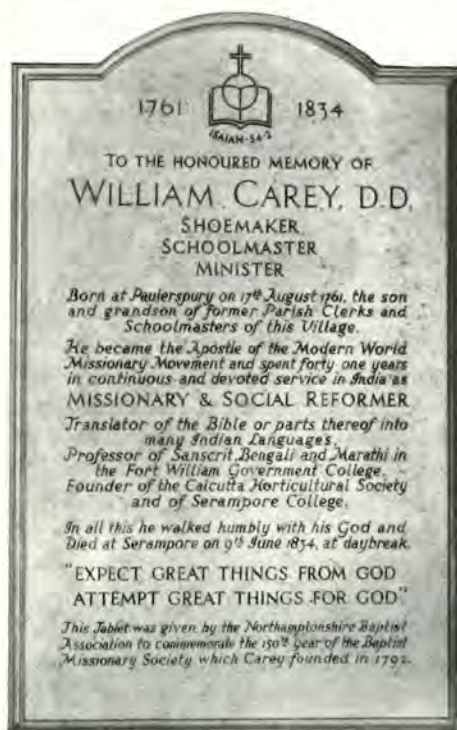
Other work in the community sprang from Carey's deep compassion for the people. He campaigned hard to banish infanticide, particularly of girl babies. Over an even longer period he campaigned for the ending of sati, the practice of burning widows on their husbands' funeral pyres. He was delighted when the law was promulgated and, although it arrived on a Sunday and he was due to preach, he had someone else preach in his place so that he could translate the law into the language of the people and bring to an end as soon as possible this appalling practice.

He and the other missionary colleagues felt that their life together was itself a demonstration of the Gospel and they shared in a committed community life, holding things in common and bringing the proceeds of their work into the common fund.

ECUMENISM

Already here there was a demonstration of partnership in mission which had its repercussions in later work and now offers insights for the present missionary task. From the days of *The Enquiry* Carey combined an ecumenical idealism with a denominational realism. He was not prepared to wait for a united Church before preaching the Good News of Jesus Christ. On the other hand, as early as 1806 he proposed that 'A general association of all denominations of Christians should meet every ten years or so at the Cape of Good Hope' and he was, in that sense, an ecumenical pioneer. Although this suggestion was dismissed by Andrew Fuller, then General Secretary of the Society, as 'one of brother Carey's pleasing dreams' it is significant that the present ecumenical movement stemmed from world mission endeavours.

Carey was also a pioneer in his attitude to other faiths, where he was ready to admit that both the Hindu Shastras and the Koran contained 'many good observations and rules'. Nevertheless, he and the other missionaries were appalled by the inhumane and disgusting religious practices of the day and were not slow to enter into confrontation with Hindu apologists. This they endeavoured to do with courtesy and grace, recognising 'to insult a man's religion is not the mode best calculated to win his confidence' and yet they felt bound to inform the Indian people of the essential vanity of their religion. A pre-shadowing of the pattern of dialogue with people of other faiths now seen as appropriate for Christian witnesses in many parts of the Church.



TRAINING NATIONALS

Carey's vision was for Christians to share the gospel, rather than the task being dependent on Christians from overseas. Indeed, he said, 'It is only by means of native preachers that we can hope for the universal spread of the gospel through this immense continent.' What converts were following the way of Christ, quickly they were encouraged to share that faith with their fellow Indians. In the early days of this infant Church Petumber Singh and Krishna Pal were despatched as itinerant evangelists. Carey built on his concern for the availability of the Scriptures in using Indian nationals, endeavouring to ensure that the Bible was available in a tongue native not only to the hearers but also to the preachers as well. The European missionaries needed not so much to be pioneer evangelists as to begin the work of Church planting and then to assume the role of apostles or bishops, superintending the work of native evangelists. The original intention was to set up a network of mission stations, each about 100 miles apart. There could be mutual support and encouragement and a growing coverage of the whole of the Indian sub-continent.

To fulfil such a dream involved adequate training of the indigenous leaders and pastors. Carey's concern for education in any case would have pointed in this direction and Serampore College was established precisely as a result of these twin aims — education and theological training. Serampore College was built out of Carey's salary. It was the first institution in India to provide higher (that is university) education. Its very size, with large tall-columned buildings, emphasized the underlying principles. 'No caste, colour or country shall bar anybody from admission into Serampore College' was written into its basis. The education offered was not simply in languages and Scriptures, but also in the arts and the sciences. Hindus and Muslims were admitted to the College for general training. Alongside this broader-based education, though, there was the ardent preparation of men for ministry. Indeed, Serampore and the College became a centre for mission rather than just a home for missionaries and a base for education.

THE HOME BASE

Where did the support for this great volume of work originate? Carey began from the principle of a missionary being self-supporting as soon as possible. He had propounded this in *The Enquiry* and had been delighted to learn from John Thomas even

before travelling to India that a missionary ought to be self-supporting within a few months of arrival. The two took with them goods that could be sold in Calcutta to give them some initial cash for necessities, and while they looked for a trade that would enable them to pay their own way. Carey's work as a manager in the indigo factory and later as a lecturer and professor led not only to the support of his family being covered but also to a total of some £40,000 being contributed to the Society during his lifetime.

When he was first appointed to the factory managership he was delighted to write home to the supporters, 'So now I inform the Society that I can subsist without any further monetary assistance from them. I sincerely thank them for the exertions they have made and hope that what was intended to supply my wants may be appropriated to some other mission.'

It was this very independence that later led to some disaffection from the committee in London, where the members of the Society were very concerned that the missionaries in India might become too prone to the 'deceitfulness of riches'. When the land and properties at Serampore were under discussion there was difference of opinion as to how they should be supervised, whether from within the Serampore and the missionary community or by the committee based in London. Eventually there was a sad split and for too many years Serampore was an independent agency separated from the British base of the Missionary Society. Thankfully, there was an eventual reuniting of the two but some damage had been caused to the task of mission by this misunderstanding. Even throughout this period, though, Carey and his colleagues had looked to the supporting body at home for the encouragement of prayer, of correspondence (many, many letters were written in both directions, despite the long time for delivery) and in the provision of additional missionaries to share in the task. The link with home was for Carey an essential one and outworked another aspect of the partnership in mission which he felt was important.

ONGOING LEGACY

The ongoing legacy of Carey's work may still be seen, not only within India but in the whole of the world Church. Reference has already been made to fellowship between different communions as expressed within the Ecumenical Movement. Within India this has had special outworking in the establishment

of the Church of South India and the Church of North India. Baptist Churches were some of the founder members of the CNI.

The attitude of the Indian government over the last 40 years parallels very well the attitude of the British East India Company in that expatriate missionaries are not welcomed and there is pressure upon the Christian Church from Hindu fundamentalists and political activists. But the pattern of participation within the community and yet a continuing commitment to Christ is one that is still being followed. Serampore College, with other places of higher education now linked to its

Council, has an outstanding influence in the life of India as a whole, with Church leaders serving throughout the sub-continent and in other parts of Asia following their training there and many leaders in the secular world gaining their degrees at the University.

Evangelistic outreach is something that has continued with keen commitment on the part of many Indian peoples, for instance in Mizoram they have their own Baptist Missionary Society and the Indian Sub-continent as a whole now provides many cross-cultural Christian missionaries. Some of the institutions that were established in the early days of the Mission now cause financial

problems for a Church that is basically a poor one, but there is a continuing effort to achieve self-sufficiency rather than a lingering dependence on the overseas Church. The concept of Christian community being an essential part of the Gospel is one that has not been followed through as fully as Carey would have wished, in fact this was true even during his lifetime. What is emerging on the world scene, however, by way of partnership in Mission is something that would have gladdened his heart and lifted his eyes to the horizon and the fulfilled vision of the whole world won for his Lord and Master.

Reg Harvey

‘Community Spirituality’

A Dynamic For Mission

If it is true that faith is caught, like a good infection, then the state of spiritual ‘health’ of any Christian community will be important. It will either be a hindrance or a help to the spread of faith.

The Missionary Influence of the Moravian Communities

In 1722 Count Nikolaus von Zinzendorf opened up one of his estates near the Saxon village of Herrnhut to Protestant groups from Austria, including the Bohemian Brethren. The roots of this group went back to the work of John Huss (1369-1415) and Jerome of Prague (1370-1416). Both men had been reformers before the Reformation and had suffered martyrdom. Their followers were almost eliminated during the Counter Reformation. The survivors and their descendants led a precarious existence in Bohemia.

Carey's house (right), Serampore



Zinzendorf believed that the mark of true Christianity is a simple childlike faith. He was a man of deeply emotional temperament. His was a religion of the heart with love as a warm emotional glow at the very centre of his religious life.

Real Christian love is more than a warm emotional glow. The glow can fade, but the real thing involves not only the emotions, but the intellect and the will. The stress which some of the pietists placed on the inwardness of the Christian experience, at times, is subjective with an unhealthy emphasis on feelings. But the infusion of the discipline and even asceticism of the Bohemian Brethren saved Zinzendorf and the Herrnhut Community from that danger. They stressed Christian discipline and stood for the simple unworldly Christianity which had seen them through the hard years of persecution.

This fusion of the Pietism which Zinzendorf brought to the older disciplined tradition of the Bohemian Brethren, with its deep sense of community responsibility, resulted in an explosion of missionary concern and outreach. The zeal for mission amongst these Moravians, as they soon came to be called, has been outstanding. It grew out of their prayer life and their study of the New Testament Church. They preached a religion of the heart which was based on a close fellowship with their Saviour and with each other.

Their missionary efforts took them to America to evangelise the Indians, to the West Indies to work amongst slaves, it is said, that some even became slaves themselves in order to do this more effectively. They went to evangelise the Eskimos in Greenland and Labrador. They were a great inspiration to many other Christians including John and Charles Wesley and William Carey who told of their work in this 'Enquiry'.

The Serampore Community Venture

It was in the first years of the nineteenth century that the Baptist missionaries in India started their first experiment in mission community. Because of his admiration for the work of the Moravians it is not surprising that Carey and his colleagues drew on the Moravian experience of 'Community Spirituality' as a pattern for their own.

Carey had already been in India for six very difficult years before new missionaries arrived

from England. John Fountain was the first and after spending some time with Carey moved on to work in Dinajpur. Then on 5 October 1799 a new group arrived which included William Ward, a printer and newspaper editor from Hull, and Joshua and Hannah Marshman, experienced teachers, who became key partners with Carey.

The new arrivals were not allowed to land in Calcutta but the Danish Governor of Serampore welcomed them and urged them to make their base there. So the Serampore venture started in 1800.

They planned on a big scale being determined to make Serampore a really worthwhile centre for the spread of the Gospel. It was to be a self-supporting mission station with a school, college, student hostel, a paper mill and a printing press, and a chapel for worship and preaching at its heart. To make it work the community needed rules for there had been friction amongst the newcomers on the voyage to India and during Carey's first week at Serampore two of the men had almost come to blows.

The Rules of the Serampore Community

- 1 They agreed to live together devoted to the work in brotherhood, similar to the Moravian pattern.
- 2 The work of the mission was to be divided according to their individual ability. Carey became treasurer, Ward took charge of the printing press and the Marshmans ran the school.
- 3 Each in turn was to superintend 'family' affairs for a month and preach and pray at their worship services.
- 4 All money coming in was to be devoted entirely to the mission.
- 5 Community meetings were held every Saturday evening to adjust differences. They took very seriously the teaching in (1 Corinthians 11:25-30) 'a man must test himself before eating his share of the bread and drinking from the cup'. It became a point of honour never to carry any grievance over from that meeting to the Sunday.

The Serampore Community differed from the Moravian mission communities in one important respect. In *The Instructions*, the rule

book for Moravian missions written by Bishop Spangenberg and published in English in 1788, it was required for each mission group to appoint a 'Head' or 'Housefather' to whom the rest 'should in love be subject'. The role of the 'Housefather' was to be leader and he was expected to 'suppress dissensions at their first appearance, or to settle them, should they break out'. Carey and his friends deliberately rejected this, so that Serampore was founded on 'equality for each, pre-eminence for none, rule by majority, submission to that rule, allocation of function by collective vote, superintendence by each in monthly rotation'. 'One only was their Master, even Jesus Christ,' and their submission was to Him.

For them it worked. They had their early differences and problems but these were overcome successfully, so that towards the end of the second year Carey could write; 'We have not had a complaint for several months. Should one be made, it is sure to be settled amicably.'

They showed real maturity and wisdom in their decision. They recognised how vulnerable Christian groups can be. Many of us have seen, in recent years, churches and fellowships which have suffered and their witness seriously hindered by the destructive influence of people who want to dominate. People who have mistaken their own lust for power for a call to leadership. Such people seem to have an uncontrollable urge to rule over other people's hearts and minds, unscrupulously playing on their feelings to establish power over them.

A sad characteristic of too many independent groups with self-appointed leadership is a contempt for election procedures. Frequently a pattern develops of even using the Bible in such groups to justify the power and authority of the leadership position. Much mental agony is inflicted on individual Christians, and intolerable tensions built up within communities and congregations, so that mission is neglected and the quality of the witness is diminished.

The Serampore group would have none of that. Their community was based on loving obedience to their Master Christ, and a loving respect for each other.

That would seem to be the secret of true spirituality and to be essential for any real 'Spirituality of Community'. The Serampore group proved that where it is found it provides a Spiritual Dynamic for Mission.

Jim Grenfell

PREPARED TO SERVE

Edited by Derek Williams
Published by Scripture Union

This book describes itself as *A Practical Guide to Christian Service Overseas*, and it certainly is that. A thought-provoking manual, full of information and advice given in an interesting and often humorous way by a variety of people, who have had experience of overseas work. The drawings are funny and to the point.

It looks at the New Testament challenge to World Mission, and sets the goal of *living like Jesus* in the world alongside our human struggle and weakness, particularly in an unfamiliar culture. The section on *What to expect and how to cope*, looks not only at Christians overseas, but at the reactions of those they hope to serve. When do you give out food to the hungry, and when do you preach to them? What would Jesus have done?

We are introduced to culture shock, and the need for sensitivity on being faced with unfamiliar customs, when the newcomer is reduced by lack of language to the level of a bewildered child. Advice is given on setting realistic goals, being prepared to be ministered to by national Christians, and coping with the constant demands and overwhelming generosity of those around. The view of the national church is presented in a refreshing and challenging way. Experts deal with questions of health, stress, marriage and singleness overseas in helpful ways, and the unexpected shocks of the return to the home country.

Recommended – for those preparing to 'go into all the world', those just wondering about it, and for supporting churches, friends and families, in the helpful insights it gives. It's most enjoyable too.

Joan Maple
BMS Personnel Secretary

WHY DO MISSIONARIES LEAVE?

September's *Herald* had some good stuff in it, but I read with special concern the little rubric, *Why Do Missionaries Leave?*

In response to that pressing question, and in view of the debate which will indubitably issue from it, I feel that one or two things are worth stating. What has to be first appreciated is that not all missionaries do leave. Indeed, three of the people who wrote for September's *Herald* have been here in Zaire for a considerable time. But the reason why at least some leave is surely because they have lost a sense of the call of God upon their life and work and hence their way? Yet again, I am sure that it is precisely because so many people pooh-pooh even the very notion that God can speak to them directly, that so few are actually hearing, with real conviction, God's call to service.

My wife and I have just finished a study of Galatians Chapter 1, and if any working group was to be set up to look into the matter-in-hand I would recommend that they begin just there. For the Apostle, as for so many after him, the call to missionary work was not something dreamed-up or worked-out. It wasn't simply expediency which directed the course of his career. That element is there, of course, but the real driving-force was his clear-cut sense of what God had given him to do.

All of us have our ups-and-downs, and missionaries are no exception! Sometimes we even wonder what on earth we're doing here at all! But then, if we look at Paul's missionary career, it was hardly a bundle of laughs was it? Assailed by doubts, or *fightings within*, as he put it somewhere, I am sure that it was only his conviction that God himself had already given him his life's work which brought him through.

So before any working group thinks of looking elsewhere for reasons of *démision*, perhaps they should consider the kind of teaching that is being dished-out in our home churches. They should consider whether it is sufficiently provocative and challenging. They should also consider whether it tallies with the God-given sense of purpose and direction which shines in the Scriptures – when the Church actually thought about winning the world for Christ – and also in our modern missionary pioneers, who were inspired by the same vision.

After all, it should be quite easy to find out why some missionaries leave: I could personally furnish you with a number of fairly good *reasons* why I should leave. But surely, a more profitable line would be to find out why others have not left and will not leave?

Ian Thomas
Bolobo, Zaire

DO IT YOURSELF!

I refer to your interesting item in the June *Herald* on 'DIY in India', and to the excellent system of finding skilled workmen described therein.

I do not find it at all strange that DIY is uncommon and perhaps we in the UK would do well to learn from this! We live in a house which is a testimony to 90 years of 'bodged' DIY and we have spent the last three years rectifying the

DIY disasters of previous enthusiastic owners by using the services of the skilled professionals, who should have been employed in the first place.

DIY not only creates a dangerous environment, but also deprives skilled workers of the chance to exercise their craft and earn a living.

A E Lucas (Mrs)
Harborne, Birmingham

PUT SOME HUMANITY INTO OUR PARTNERSHIP!

Sheldon Dewsbury is minister of the Fourth Company Baptist Church in Trinidad. At the moment he is studying church planting and evangelism at Spurgeon's Baptist College. He is also helping with the BMS deputation programme. The following is taken from an interview at Histon Baptist Church, Cambridge.



Sheldon Dewsbury talking to former BMS missionary Sheila Bull and a current member of the General Committee, at Histon Baptist Church, Cambridge

Baptist work in Trinidad was started by black men who had fought on the British side during the American War of Independence. Britain felt she had an obligation to these men, who no longer felt comfortable in America, and they were taken to the Caribbean colonies. They were settled by army companies.

The first to be settled was the Fifth Company – why the Fifth Company was settled before the first, second, third and fourth, I don't know! In the Fifth Company was a man called George Hamilton. Apparently he was a man of rank in the army and even in civilian life he received the same kind of respect that he'd received as a soldier.

But he was also a Baptist, who not only looked after the Baptists who had settled in Trinidad with him, but also founded a work in the Fifth Company.

So that's how Baptist work in Trinidad began. Today, the Baptist Union of Trinidad and Tobago is not what you might call strong. We have 21 churches with a membership of around 3,000 people.

Other Baptists

There are other Baptist groups in the island, but a little over two years ago we started the Trinidad and Tobago Baptist Fellowship. The aim is to create a sort of umbrella under which we can all meet and where we can each strengthen our own ministries of evangelism and teaching. We have had a reasonable amount of success, although there is nothing much to shout about, but it is early on in the game.

Our particular link, in the BUTT, is with the Baptist Missionary Society, a link which goes back over 150 years. Today you have just one couple working with us, Sheila and Peter Brewer.

You have, of course, been working yourself out of a job. The BMS has been offering scholarships to the BUTT to train men and women who feel the call of God to the ministry. This started somewhere in the mid-1960's when our first candidate went to the United Theological College of the West Indies, in Jamaica. Since then Ken Cadette, the General Secretary of the BUTT, myself, Michael Friday, and another who graduated quite recently, have all been trained there. So more and more we are having local people fully trained to assume leadership and take on responsibility.

The vast majority of our pastors are untrained. Some are retired, but others have another job. However, now that we have a growing number of trained pastors, we are feeling the need for a professional framework within which they can do what they are capable of doing. There is a tension. Because of the presence of a large number of part-time pastors, churches are not recognising the need for a fully-trained ministry.

Church Planting

In terms of the particular ministry of the BUTT, I think that we need to move away from more traditional areas and think very seriously about this whole business of church planting. That is one of the reasons why I am studying at Spurgeon's College. I

am trying to catch-up on some of the very fascinating church growth material.

We really need to get out of the more traditional Baptist areas like the Companies to reach other people. But in order to do that we need to see the gospel for what it is. I do not believe in a social gospel over against a spiritual gospel. For me, as I read the New Testament, the gospel I see is one that encompasses every aspect of a person's life. I am concerned that we don't separate the two.

Our particular need in the Baptist Union of Trinidad and Tobago is to strengthen the hand of the leadership. This is one of the best ways in which the BMS can help us. You can't isolate a programme from those who have to run it. If you haven't got people who are committed to it, people who enthuse about it, people who have the resources, you might as well not bother with that programme and the planning.

Take our training programme. When we have a missionary on the scene and involved in the training, a tremendous job is done. But once the missionary leaves, the programme falters because the few of us who are trained are so busy doing other things. Sheila and Peter Brewer have once again picked up the pieces and restarted the training programme. Assuming that they will be with us for four years, we need to plan ahead. What happens when they leave? How can the BMS help us to continue our training programme?

Partners

There is something else I would like to say to Baptists in Britain, to the people who have been sending money to us and praying for us. I would like to see you put some humanity into our partnership. Apart from the BMS personnel who come to work with us for two or three years, it would be a nice thing if some of your British pastors could take a two or three month break from their churches and come to share the life of our Trinidad churches. Come over and see what you've been spending your money on all these years. Come and be with us, live in our homes, see what we are doing.

That of course is only one way and for some of your young people it could be very expensive. But if we believe this kind of partnership is right, and become committed to it, then a way will be found. It would all need long-range planning, but I can see tremendous benefits.



Outside the headquarters of the Baptist Union of Trinidad and Tobago

SOME TRINIDAD FACTS

POPULATION: 1.2 million made up of two major ethnic groups – the descendants of African slaves and of Indians brought into work the sugarcane after the freeing of the slaves. There are smaller groups made up of Lebanese, Chinese, Syrians and local whites.

GOVERNMENT: We have an open system of democratic government based on Westminster. We have recently democratically removed a party who have served for many years.

ETHNIC MIX: We are known as a multi-racial, multi-religious, multi-cultural society – the Rainbow! – that's how we advertise ourselves.

INDUSTRY: We were an oil economy. We didn't need anybody's money. So we enjoyed ourselves and spent money like it was going out of style. But now that is finished. The oil price went down and so did the oil production. We had double-trouble. So now we are emphasising tourism.



Peter and Sheila Brewer, helping in the training programme



What did people think of 28:19 The Tour? Here are just a few of the impressions the recent multi-media mission presentation made.

As someone who has been involved in Young People's work and as a regular 'Spring Harvester', the music and drama of 28:19 appealed tremendously to me. These days the youngsters would say 'It was brilliant'. That takes nothing away from the spoken word – Steve Chalke put the call to mission with direct and often startling clarity.

Now as someone whose job is specifically to enthuse and educate for mission, there was just a tinge of regret that I hadn't the buoyancy of youth to use the up-to-date channels of communication that appeal to today's young people. After 40 years of Christian work, during which I have seen many young people make a personal commitment to Jesus Christ and take up Christian ministry, there is still a strong and compelling desire to direct the young's enthusiasm towards Him and into His Church.

And really that was the highlight of THE TOUR – to see the response to rejoice in the 'Yes' to Jesus so many made. We hadn't looked for first time commitments, but they were there too. God honoured the Gospel declaration as well as the declaration of its implications to 'Go and make disciples. . . .'

To talk briefly to those whom God touched was a thrill. That will be continued in further personal discussion with those who go forward from the initial response to seek God's will for them in ministry overseas.

But what else lies ahead? There is now a band of young people in our Churches who having seen the vision must be helped to communicate it. Preparing and presenting their own 'TOUR' or 'Mission Roadshow' on a more local level could

deepen their own commitment and enthuse their peers. And I am glad to be in the wings to help with resources and organisation, now it is no longer my scene to be up front in drama and with a guitar!

Leslie Gregory,
BMS Area Representative

28:19 gave thousands of young Baptists a new image of mission work, missionaries and the BMS; challenge them to have a world vision; and commit themselves to Christian Service.

Can the denomination cope? How will the BMS use the young people in short or long term service; can the Unions provide more opportunities for service; and how can churches cope with young people motivated for mission?

For God's Sake let's not tell them to 'sit young down. . . .!'

Paul Montacute,
BUGB Youth Secretary

SCOTLAND THE WHAT?

The 28:19 TOUR hit Glasgow for its only Scottish date on Saturday, 7 October. The Pavilion Theatre in Glasgow city centre was filled to capacity, with a crowd of around 1,400 mainly young people.

Seeing such a large crowd provoked a number of responses in my mind. The first, to be honest, was relief! No matter how much advance publicity has been put into an event, it's always difficult to

assess whether or not it's going to catch the imagination (and attendance) of young people.

Secondly, there was a feeling of encouragement. A good crowd always 'lifts' the atmosphere of an event. There was a tremendous 'buzz' in the theatre. People seeing and greeting old friends, others making new friends. Many just overwhelmed by seeing so many young Christians together in one place. I'm sure those 'on stage' that night were also aware of that 'buzz' of excitement.

Thirdly (this is ending up like a sermon!) there was a big question mark in my mind. Everyone seemed to have enjoyed the evening, some were profoundly challenged as God spoke to them that night, but what would there be to show for it all in three weeks, three months, three years?

Scotland the brave has become Scotland the timid when it comes to mission, or worse still, Scotland the apathetic! The 'passion' for winning converts and making disciples has largely been lost from the Christian community in Scotland. Young people and especially young Christians are so easily contaminated by this 'passive' attitude within the Church and grow up into a stunted form of Christian adulthood.

The real fruit of the 28:19 TOUR will only be known in eternity, but that fruit depends on the total, perhaps sacrificial, obedience of those young people whom God has spoken to. Will my Christian life, or yours, or the general example of your Church act as a 'springboard' or a 'barrier' for those young people?

The challenge of the 28:19 TOUR was directed at young people. The out-working

response is as much a challenge to the Churches as it is to the young people.

Derek Clark
*National youth worker,
Baptist Union of Scotland*

28:19 THE TOUR – at least I had it worked out before I got to the London venue – 'To go in to all the world and make disciples'.

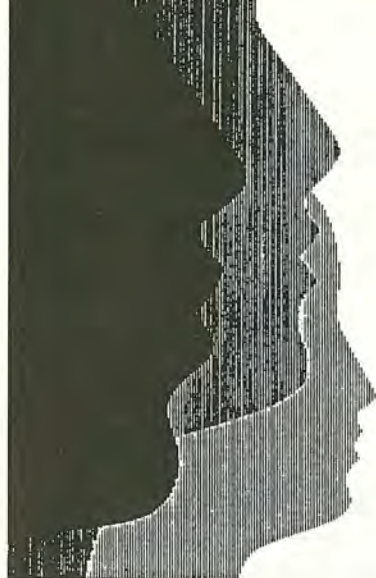
What better theme would there be for an evening designed to make young people in particular stop and think about their contribution to world mission?

This was no evening's entertainment loosely hung on that theme either – we were reminded time and time again of our responsibilities so far as the great commission is concerned and I for one left the hall determined to examine my own stance – afresh.

Of the 'Performance' itself, I was particularly impressed by the variety of approaches that were made to us the audience; firstly by a sketch hitting very close to home by mimicking a 'typical' missionary evening (slides, unimaginative use of a chorus or two, etc . . .). Through the 'street cred' messages of Steve Chalke and the excellent songs of Martyn Joseph to the very pointed yet humorous sketches performed later by SHOUT theatre company. With the net being cast so wide to encompass so many different tastes I have yet to meet anyone who went along who did not feel challenged by at least one aspect of 'THE TOUR'. Those who didn't go because they thought maybe it was 'not for them' not only missed a thoroughly enjoyable evening, but also the chance, once more, to reflect upon how they might more effectively 'Go into all the world' themselves.

It is my hope and prayer that the BMS will follow up this success as we go on towards our Bi-Centenary year and that the promotions team are actively encouraged in other such projects, as I believe they are vital to the work of the Society amongst our young people.

Nick Lingard
General Committee Member



• P R A Y E R C A L L •

JANUARY – FEBRUARY 1990

**31 DECEMBER –
6 JANUARY**

Together in Christ

This is the theme for the 1990 BMS Prayer Guide – a reminder that we are part of a growing worldwide Church. Not only have we much to offer to the life and witness of the world Church from the treasures of our own tradition and experience, there is also much to receive. As the new and indigenous churches learn to express their faith within their own cultures new ways of worshipping become available to the whole church community. Then there is the challenge to examine our Christian witness in the light of all that our fellow Christians are suffering in places like Central America or South Africa. In what real and meaningful ways can we stand alongside the poor and oppressed? Can it be more than in mere sympathetic noises and pious phrases?

*O God
your steadfast love
embraces every race
in every period and place.*

*As you sent your Son
to recreate a fallen world
so may we hear his word of power:
'So send I you.'*

*Lord,
our mission
is in the way we talk with others
the way we care for our fellow
human-beings
the way we show your Spirit.*

*Give us the outgoing gifts
of caring and speech
wherever we live and work.*

7-13 JANUARY

Prayer for Africa

Overall, the continent of Africa still has more than its fair share of war and civil strife and contains the largest proportion of the world's refugees. Although potentially very rich, with a wide variety of natural and human resources, the world's economic system and recent climatic changes have brought about much poverty. Within this situation the church is experiencing considerable growth. The rate of increase is faster than the population. This brings with it several problems. There is an urgent need to train more church workers to take on leadership roles as the church searches for a true African identity and pursues its concern for the whole person in body, mind and spirit.

14-20 JANUARY

Brazil: São Paulo and Rio Grande do Sul

Most of our BMS missionaries in Brazil begin their work in Campinas, São Paulo state, where the language school is located. 'It is challenging, demanding, stimulating, at times funny and other times frustrating,' write Roger and Angela Collinson. 'It's like

being a child again and at our age that's somewhat unusual. However, "No language – no good".'

The BMS Overseas Representative for Brazil, Central America and the Caribbean, John Clark, is located in São Paulo, 'where shacks, serving as houses, are built alongside shopping centres that resemble Aladdin's cave'. Also in São Paulo is the Hostel for missionaries' children. Arfon and Janet Thomas will soon be taking over responsibility for the children from Mike and Jean Gardiner.

The most southern of Brazil's states is Rio Grande do Sul. Here, at Porto Alegre, Roy and Margaret Deller are teaching at the Seminary and involved in church work. One group of students has recently graduated. 'Several of them have accepted invitations to churches in Rio Grande do Sul. Some of them will be in pioneer situations working with the Home Mission Board of the Brazilian Baptist Convention,' says Roy.

21-27 JANUARY

Community Involvement in Bangladesh

'Because of a drought last year many people in the north of Bangladesh lost one crop then a second in the big May storm,' writes Suzanne Roberts from Ruheha. 'Now some people have run out of food altogether. Our Sunday School organiser only has enough to feed his family but cannot bear to turn away those who may not have eaten for two or three days. Even so, there are always extra

people with them for meals. Two small children, brought to the clinic, had not put on any weight for a whole year, a result of long-term food shortage. Their God-given physical and mental potential have become as wasted as their bodies.'

In this kind of situation the Bangladesh Baptist Sangha (Union), through its Social, Health, Education and Development Board, is trying to show the relevance of the gospel in very practical ways by promoting agriculture and development work.

*Lord,
we know that much is expected
of those who possess much.
If we,
as partners with the church in
Bangladesh
are we truly doing your will,
help us to give the support they need
in prayer
in personnel
in money.
May the help we offer
build dignity and self-reliance
rather than perpetuate dependence.
All things come from you
and it is of your own that we give.*

28 JANUARY — 3 FEBRUARY

Fellowship Visits and Scholarships

Each year, the Baptist Missionary Society helps overseas Christian leaders and workers to study or make visits outside their own countries. Some of them come to Britain and have an opportunity to visit our churches. How do we welcome them and what do they make of us?

*Father of us all
we pray for all visitors from overseas
some alone and insecure
some amazed at our affluence
some made cynical by our materialism.*

*May they receive the best
from our universities and colleges
from our churches and communities
and by the skill and experience they
gain
may they, in time,
serve their own people well.*

*May they find friendship
from those they meet,
a welcome in our homes,
and a place in our churches.*

*May they make a full contribution
to the life of British churches*

*and may bonds be formed
that will lead to understanding
and to the growth of the church
at home and overseas.*

4-10 FEBRUARY

Education in India

As in many areas of the world, education in India is not free and families have a considerable financial burden to face if they are to keep their children in school. This means that many children from poorer families never have the opportunity for education.

Christian schools have a reputation for maintaining high standards, but there is a shortage of Christian teachers. Please pray that there will be committed Christians who see teaching as a vocation, even if this means foregoing career advancement.

11-17 FEBRUARY

Pastoral Training in Zaire

As the Baptist Community of the River Zaire grows – both in numbers and in the understanding of its role as an African church – so the need for more theologically trained leaders becomes apparent. Sharing in pastoral training at all levels is a major part of BMS partnership with the CBFZ.

Pam Bryan teaches Old Testament and English at the Higher Institute of Theology in Kinshasa. It is not easy for her: 'I find that working with all men and across a culture can at times be impossible. I need to have God's wisdom to know what is simply cultural and what is Christian.'

At the Protestant Faculty in Kinshasa, Tim Bulkeley is Vice Principal. Apart from teaching, he is involved in preparing text books. 'He has expanded and improved his course notes on Amos and they are being printed as a book and the text-book on which he has been working for several years is to be finished soon. . . . Feed the Minds are providing funds for printing. . . . This especially satisfying for one of Tim's jobs as Vice Principal is to publish them.'

*O God of all truth
we pray for those training to be pastors
in Zaire
who will serve in the name of Christ
who will read and interpret the stories
of the Bible.
May they be good students
asking questions
working hard*

*not concerned with their own
advancement
always growing and learning.
So may they be prepared to be leaders in
your church;
equip them
to speak your word to people today
to foster that encounter with truth
which will set men and women free
to minister as the body of Christ.*

18-24 FEBRUARY

Christian Education in Bangladesh

In Dhaka, the College of Christian Theology provides pastoral training for several of the Christian communities in Bangladesh through both residential courses for ministerial students and extension courses for lay leaders.

The whole of Christian education is heavily dependent on literature and correspondence courses, often promoted through small bookshops in each of the Baptist Sangha (union) districts.

Because many Christians in Bangladesh live in isolated rural areas, leadership training is vitally important to the life of the village churches.

25 FEBRUARY — 3 MARCH

Paraná

This is the area where BMS involvement began in Brazil over 30 years ago. It was then an area of growth and prosperity with churches being planted in the many new towns which were springing up. This has all changed. The climate has pushed coffee production to warmer areas further north and the population has moved as well to the large cities and to other states. Parana is still rich but there are many social needs to which the church is trying to respond. 'During our annual church meeting,' write David and Sue Jackson, from Realeza, 'we made plans for the coming year. . . The whole venture is to reach out to the community at all levels in order to see the needs and in some measure to meet them. . . A Mums' and Toddlers' group . . . Basic Dressmaking course to help poorer people to make simple basic necessities . . . Handicrafts where church members will teach basic skills . . . a system of support for children and teenagers in their schooling.'

MISSIONARY MOVEMENTS

Arrivals

Miss J Adhikari on 19 September from Dhaka, Bangladesh.
Miss M Philpott on 6 October from Kisangani, Zaire.

Departures

Mrs A Hinchliffe and Master S Hinchliffe on 13 September to Yakusu, Zaire.
Rev and Mrs D Punched on 14 September to Curitiba, Brazil.
Mr and Mrs J Clewett and family on 19 September to Pokhara, Nepal.
Miss P Commons on 21 September to Dhaka, Bangladesh.
Miss P Woolhouse on 21 September to Kimpese, Zaire.

Rev and Mrs J Clark on 27 September to São Paulo, Brazil.
Dr A Hopkins on 27 September to Pimu, Zaire.
Rev and Mrs R G S Harvey on 6 October to São Paulo, Brazil.
Miss J Knapman on 9 October to Colombo, Sri Lanka.

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Mrs Edith F Freeman | 593.92 |
| Grace Owen | 1,000.00 |
| Grace V Smith | 24,000.00 |
| Clarissa Gowland | 2,000.00 |
| Vera Hunt | 750.00 |
| Harold Swinglehurst Westnott | 50.00 |
| Grace Hield | 200.00 |
| Mrs M A E Berrett | 7,200.00 |
| A E Evans | 385.79 |

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Secretaries acknowledge with grateful thanks the following legacies and anonymous gifts (to 31 October 1989).

| Legacies | £ |
|-----------------|--------|
| Rev A E Oakeley | 500.00 |
| V M Mackensie | 83.69 |

General Work

Aberdeen: £220.00; via New Tribes Mission: £20.00; Bolobo from 'Mustard Seed': £230.00; Warley Pensioner: £5.00; Darlington: £20.00; Wales: £15.00; Darlington: £100.00; CAF Voucher: £100.00; via London Baptist Property Board: £16.67; Andover: £10.00; 'Smith': £34.50; Girobank: £10.00.

GENERAL COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS

Who are the members of the BMS General Committee? Quite literally those who are nominated and elected by the churches.

This is the time of the year to send in your nomination for someone in your association to serve on the General Committee. Nominations can be sent in by members of the Society, contributing churches, auxiliaries of the Society, Baptist Unions and Baptist Associations. But they must be in by 31 December, 1989, if the names are to

appear on the ballot forms.

Please don't think that this is just another bureaucratic chore. It is important that we have a representative, thinking General Committee which is aware of today's mission opportunities and needs.

Nominations in writing should be sent to Michael Quantick, Administration Secretary, Baptist Missionary Society, PO Box 49, Baptist House, 129 Broadway, Didcot, Oxon. OX11 8XA.

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BRAZIL

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For further information write to:
The Personnel Secretary, Baptist Missionary Society, PO Box 49, Baptist House, 129 Broadway, Didcot, OXON OX11 8XA

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- 'SO I SEND YOU' - What to do if you think God is calling you to serve overseas.
- 'HAPPY BIRTHDAY' - About the BMS Birthday Scheme

For any of the above write to:
Baptist Missionary Society
PO Box 49, Baptist House
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OX11 8XA