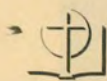
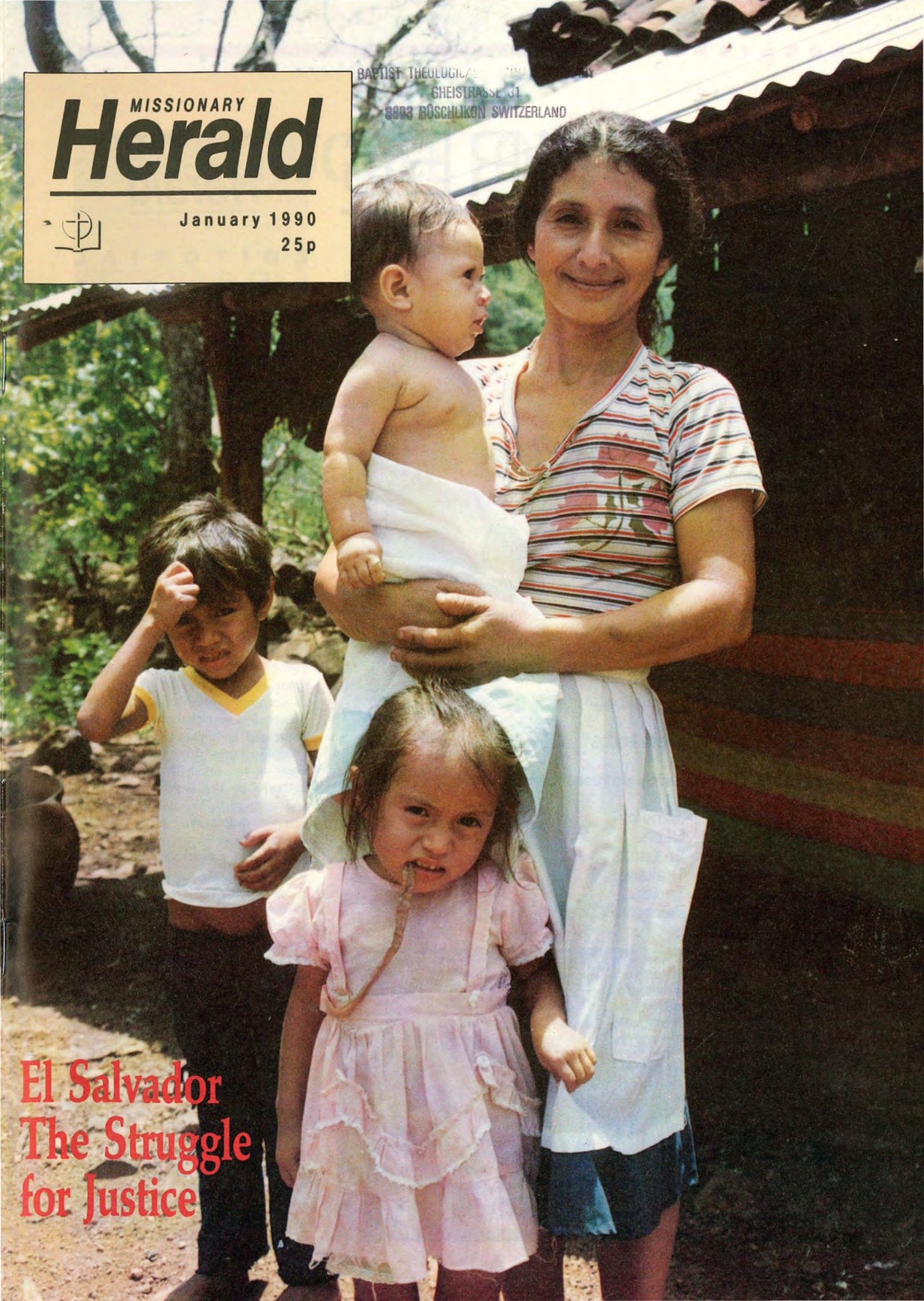


MISSIONARY
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**El Salvador
The Struggle
for Justice**

FEATURES

EL SALVADOR The Struggle for Justice.....	3
WHERE PARABLES COME TO LIFE Working with Honduran 'Campesinos' Psalms of hope, fear, faith, anguish Day of the child Water and power.....	6
WILLIAM CAREY What God achieved through the life of this remarkable man.....	9
GOING OVERSEAS! A profile of new BMS missionaries.....	13
IN VIEW News of the Church in the world	14
A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE A story of two funerals in Kimpese, Zaire.....	16
BOOK REVIEW	18
MISSIONARY MOVEMENTS	19

The BMS shares with partner churches in:

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El Salvador	Thailand
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EDITORIAL COMMENT

The shooting had begun at about seven o'clock that morning. It continued until midday when, perhaps, the air force went home for lunch. I asked the two young people I was with if they were afraid. "No," they said, "it's not close enough. Sometimes it's a lot closer and then we're afraid. But what can we do then? Our stick houses are no protection." We turned back to our amusement at watching two black beetles trying to roll a mud ball, bigger than themselves, up a small slope. While we laughed at their antics, in unnerving juxtaposition the planes continued machine-gunning their unseen targets.'

A story from El Salvador in September before the intensification of the ten-year-old civil war on 11 November. At times during the conflict life must seem as meaningless a struggle as that of the beetles, but nevertheless they continue their uphill struggle. In one of the worst affected suburbs of San Salvador, where many of the shanty homes had been flattened by the aerial bombardment and many of the inhabitants had been wounded or lost their lives, within a few days they were busy salvaging charred wood from the wreckage and beginning to rebuild.

Again as Christians gave help and encouragement to people fleeing for safety, whilst bullets ricocheted around them, it was possible for some to walk tall with faith (as well as holding a white flag) where the more usual reaction was to cower in fear.

There is something indomitable about the human spirit and where that spirit is emboldened by faith in Christ's nearness in all circumstances then nothing can ever crush it. And nothing will ever crush those in El Salvador who are working for God's justice and His 'shalom'.

THE STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE

THERE ARE THREE types of illiteracy in our country,' students at the Baptist Seminary of El Salvador told **Jean**

Harrison, Secondary Education Adviser to Christian Aid.

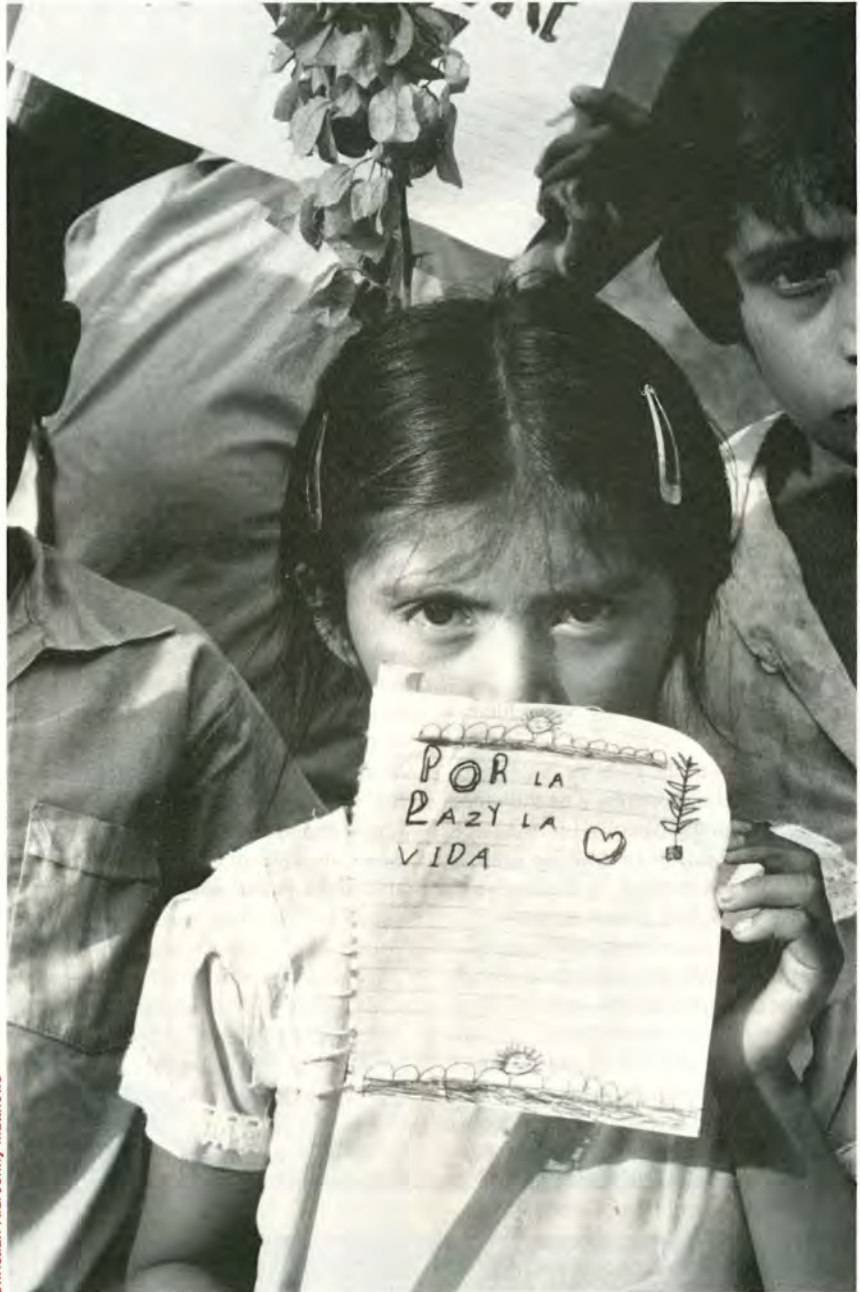
'First, many people cannot read or write. Second is biblical illiteracy. People know the Bible backwards, but they don't understand what it is really saying. Third is political illiteracy — people do not understand the reasons behind social and political decisions. To be Christians, we must understand the realities of life and link the teaching of the Bible to what is happening around us.'

There are 14 full-time students at the seminary. They, themselves, are academics, but they told Jean, in no uncertain terms, that she should not only visit them. What was important was to go out into the rural area and meet the ordinary people who are struggling for existence. Only then would she be able to understand the importance of bringing together an understanding of the social and political with the Biblical. This is her report.

Originally colonised by Spain, El Salvador is a country whose history is defined by a single crop, coffee, and the 14 or so families whose fortunes were created by its production. Society was polarised into a small group of producers and a mass of impoverished peasants.

In 1931 the price of coffee on the world market slumped from 19 cents to nine cents a pound. The wages of the coffee-pickers were immediately halved and desperation led them to rebel, an action which was violently put down by the National Guard. There have been changes since 1932, but control over the land, source of the oligarchy's power, has remained virtually intact.

After the Second World War new cash crops such as cotton and sugar were introduced to reduce dependence on coffee, but this simply increased the poverty of the peasants as more land was swallowed up by private estates. Manufacturing industry was also encouraged as ways were sought to invest cash-crop profits, but no attempt



Christian Aid/Jenny Matthews

El Salvador, Central America's smallest nation, has a long history of injustice. Many Christians have found that they cannot remain silent. Experience and commitment have brought the Baptist Church to the front line of government repression.



Christian Aid/Jenny Matthews

The Association of Baptist Youth in El Salvador in 1988 opened a Centre for Youth Protection to oppose the forced recruitment of young men into the armed forces. At the opening ceremony, the founders declared that its purpose was grounded in 'a Christian perspective which understands the war as a product of social sin generating conditions contrary to God's plans for creating a New Heaven and a New Earth'.

First Baptist Church, San Salvador, has a team of five pastors. One of them, **Jaime**, is responsible for evangelism. He told me that people often see the church as a refuge from the world outside, but that if we are to take evangelism seriously we must be concerned with the whole person, not just the soul. We must look at every situation in the light of the Bible's teaching. When someone is sick, it is not enough to give medicine. We have to ask what are the underlying causes of the illness. Only then can we deal with the real problem.

The price of such commitment can be very high. On 5 April, 1989, a Baptist teacher, **Maria Cristina Gomez**, was abducted as she left the John F Kennedy School where she taught. Her students watched as she was driven off in a Cherokee van by men in plain clothes. Her body was found an hour later on the outskirts of the city. She had been tortured — there were acid burns on her back and shoulders, her face had been beaten and she had been

◀ was made to redistribute wealth and the benefits did not reach the mass of the people.

Today, the Salvadorean economy is maintained only by US aid. In 1987 total US economic aid was \$480.6 million — over 90 per cent of the Salvadorean government's non-military budget.

The politics of the country have been as unjust as the economy. The military dictatorship of 1932 evolved into a sham democracy. In 1976 an agrarian reform bill was blocked by the land-owners' association. Death squads began to operate in the country in an attempt to curtail opposition and in 1979 the defence minister was overthrown by a military coup.

Hope of peaceful reform faded; the violence of the security forces increased and in 1981 all the groups struggling for change united under the joint names of the FDR-FMLN (Democratic Revolutionary Front and Farabundo Marti Front for National Liberation).

In March 1988 elections were held, but supporters of the FDR-FMLN did not participate because of concern that it would not be a fair election. The extreme right-wing party ARENA won power. ARENA's nominal leader is **Alfredo Cristiani**, but real power lies in the hands of **Robert D'Aubuisson**, the army major accused of being the founder of the death squads and the murder of Archbishop Romero.

The churches, including the Baptists, have united to oppose the injustice of their society. One organisation,

Diaconia, founded in 1983, supports those working to improve their lives. Its activities include providing education, basic health care, family welfare, shelter and employment for refugees and others displaced by the war. Diaconia's office has been harassed and the leadership received death threats. **Carlos Sanchez**, a leading Baptist, is at the forefront of this work and for several years was forced to live in exile, returning only when the lead-up to the elections afforded a partial amnesty.



Christian Aid/Jenny Matthews

shot four times. Her crime? She was a leading member of a women's group (the Comadres) which cared for those whose sons and husbands had disappeared without trace.

The young Baptists of El Salvador have much to teach us in Britain. The way they face the horrors of their situation and the level of their

commitment to work against such injustices make me ashamed of my apathy and indifference. Because of the work of dedicated Christians in the past, we in Britain do not have the same extremes of political and social policy. But there are situations here which could benefit from careful Christian thought and action. We are

unlikely to be arrested, tortured or killed, yet so often we cannot be bothered even to sign a petition or write a letter of protest.

Are we not prime candidates for the condemnation of the King in Matthew 25:45, 'I tell you, whenever you refused to help one of these least important ones, you refused to help me?'

WHERE ARE THEY?

*We have the facts
their fingerprints,
a glimpse of a child
who once smiled,
perhaps a sock
left behind.*

*But where
is the rest of them?*

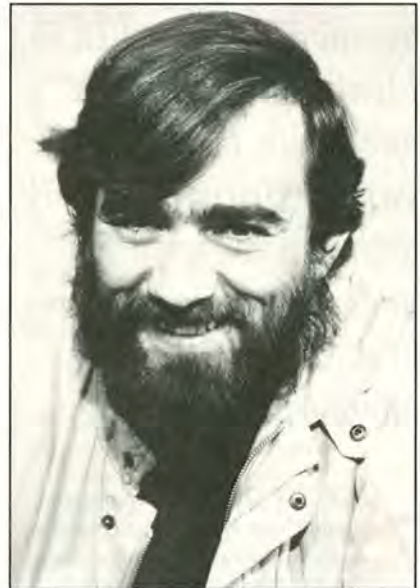
*Where is the foot
that fits the shoe,
the hand the glove,
where is the flesh
of the face behind
the photograph,
the bone, the ash,
the proof
that they are or were
alive dead,
substance
and not shadow
unburied rattling
the night
with the loneliness
they've left us for supper,
an empty place
set at a solitary table
for the ones
who never come back
or forwards,
the disappeared,
LOS DESAPARECIDOS,
where are they?
John Ross*

El Salvador

El Salvador, the smallest country in Central America, won its independence from Spain in 1821 after 25 years of rebellion. In all the years since then most people have become poorer as the land became more and more concentrated in the hands of the wealthy landowners. Whenever the **campesinos** tried to change their circumstances they were put down in the most brutal fashion.

They remain poor to this day. Generally more than half the workforce is **underemployed** and in rural areas this is more than 70 per cent. Again half of the five million population, does not have adequate housing and 250,000 children between the ages of 7 and 15 have no opportunity to go to school. Medical care is unavailable to only 34 per cent and 75 infants out of every 1,000 born die before they are one year old.

Churches and groups which try to change this situation are regarded with deep suspicion and become the focus of attention by the police and the military. This 'attention' intensified towards the end of 1989 when the ten-year-old civil war, which has claimed over 70,000 lives (mainly civilians) hotted-up.



It is only recently that the BMS entered into a partnership with the El Salvador Baptist Association and made that partnership real by sending **David Mee** to work in that country.

David, who was the minister of Darkhouse Baptist Church, Coseley in the West Midlands, for six years went to El Salvador in 1988 and is based in the East of the country at **Sensuntepeque**. The following stories have emerged from his experience of working with the people there.

Christian Aid/Jenny Matthews



Christian Aid/Jenny Matthews

Old Parables Came to Life

A group of nine campesinos and three agronomists travelled to Honduras to spend a week with Honduran campesinos who work with soil conservation and organic agriculture projects — methods of appropriate technology.

A GROUP OF NINE *campesinos* and three agronomists travelled to Honduras to spend a week with Honduran *campesinos* who work with soil conservation and organic agriculture projects — methods of appropriate technology.

Amongst the Salvadoreans were José Arturo from Sensuntepeque and Arcenio from Niqueresque. They both rent land on steep hillsides — all that is available to them — where they attempt to grow maize and beans. Due to soil erosion and soil exhaustion they have been drawn to using more and more artificial methods to get even the poor results they need to enable their families to survive.

The methods they were studying in Honduras would, over a number of years, enable them to gain more from the soil by caring for it in different ways. They were learning simple methods of preventing soil erosion, of slowly exchanging destructive chemicals for organic fertilizers and therefore of, ultimately, freeing themselves from crippling bank loans and an imposed dependency on outside chemical products.

To understand José Arturo's excitement and enthusiasm for the methods he saw practised in Honduras it would help to know just how difficult it usually seems to him, and many others here, to change anything, no matter how small.



His experience in Honduras was not only to do with farming methods, it was seeing the new power those *campesinos* have to determine more and more of their lives, working *with* the land instead of forcing it to yield its ever-decreasing fruits. It was seeing groups of people working together in teams and releasing enough energy to work with others, teaching neighbours, encouraging, empowering — and seeing all that fed by and feeding the images of his faith. Old parables came to life and new ones have since been shared in the Sunday morning services. A promising beginning . . .

Campesino = country person (peasant)

Psalms of Hope, Fear, Faith, Anguish . . .

EIGHT OF US from Sensuntepeque went to a music workshop for a couple of days to learn some of the hymns in a

new hymnbook produced for the communities served by the Baptist churches.

Amongst the 150 hymns are many which have grown out of the Roman Catholic Base Communities here and elsewhere in Latin America, and others written with the Salvadorean Baptist community.

The tunes and rhythms alone mark out most of the hymns as being Latin American, but the theology implicit in the work is profoundly different from that of most of those 'borrowed' from the USA and British missionary backgrounds. With certain exceptions, most of those have been as appropriate for a developing faith in this context as a **skateboard** in a jungle.

In this new collection, each hymn is a creative opportunity for reflection on the richness of the Christian faith in a realistic context. They relate to the reality of the Salvadorean people and the theological lessons being learned in their day to day pilgrimage. They are genuine psalms of hope, fear, faith, anguish, anger and celebration, as honest as those on the pages of the Bible and about the Holiness of God who accompanies the people and lives alongside them in their daily struggles.

Without simplistically rejecting the old but rather seeing the greater possibilities opened up in the new, we talked and sang our way through a couple of days reflection on the Salvadorean journey. Given the importance of **hymnology** in thinking about and learning our faith, it is a delight — relief! — to see the immediate acceptance of the book by the group in Sensuntepeque and Niqueresque.

Sharing the Pain and Suffering

IN THE LIFE and death of Carmen, a young girl from a displaced family, we were all caught up again in the confused tangle of tragedy and hope.

I first met Carmen in the depressingly filthy, decrepit, state-run Hospital **Rosales**, in San Salvador. Her family, my neighbours, asked me to take some photographs of her to send to her father in the US in a financial plea that might enable them to buy basic medicines not supplied by the hospitals. The money never came.

She was 13 and bravely, typically, facing a deal of pain from a rapidly spreading tumour in her foot and leg. Having already spent five months in the hospital, while the medical staff failed to find a treatment they could or would offer for Carmen's illness, her health deteriorated until her family were bluntly told she was merely taking up needed space in the hospital and should go home to die.

For two further months, she suffered increasing pain and rapid weight loss. The effects of the cancer, by then beyond control, cut off all feeling from her waist down and eventually reached her chest.

Attended and loved by her family and friends, Carmen lived her last weeks in the tiny house of her 17-year-old sister, the wife of a soldier usually drunk on leave. She was only there because her own family home lacked even the simplest resources, like water and electricity, which her sister could offer.

We celebrated her 14th birthday with cake and balloons, less than a fortnight before she died. **Cipriana**, her mother, who had remained with her constantly, then, with the help of her neighbours, dressed Carmen's body, placed her in the coffin and decorated it with the flowers brought by those who came to keep the wake.

The funeral, held the following day, was cold and impersonal. It was shared with another family, who brought the body of 17-year-old **Juan Roberto**. He had served five months with the National Guard before he was killed by



shrapnel from a bomb, which may well have been the army's own. Cold irony that **Juan Roberto** and Carmen would be side by side in that funeral, both victims of a war that is not their own — Carmen because appropriate health care was stolen from her to pay for the toys of war that killed **Juan Roberto**.

It was a bitter tragedy and many tears were shed. Yet even this tale has woven into it threads of a gentle and dignified spirit, which, if strengthened, could offer creative defiance to this continuing painful nonsense.

Two minutes before the funeral, the priest sent out to ask the name of 'the girl' who had died. At the close he disappeared and there was no contact with either family.

In contrast, and in spite of the priest's words from the pulpit on other occasions about the '**idle superstition of Protestantism**', three families from the small Baptist congregation were represented at the Mass.

On the long and hot walk to the cemetery, **José Arturo**, the church's President, helped shoulder Carmen's coffin. Various members had come to the wake, brought flowers and left small gifts of money for the family's expenses. They had visited Carmen during her sickness and had prayed for her regularly in our worship services although, in the beginning, they had not known her personally.

In spite of the less than helpful 'involvement' of the priests and, on the other side, no shortage of 'Baptists' and other Evangelicals with loud shrill voices constantly accusing Roman

Catholics of worshipping idols, or involvement in politics, the Baptist congregation and Carmen's Roman Catholic relatives and friends showed that none of that was of any account when it came to sharing the pain of suffering of a young girl and her family.

Day of the Child

ON 1 OCTOBER we celebrated the Salvadorean '**Day of the Child**', in the church at **Niqueresque**, with the birthday of a four-year-old boy. **Joel** had almost died some months earlier of parasitic infections.

The joy in the face of the mother as she sang in the worship was a genuine thanksgiving. However, the reality of all those children who do not even live to celebrate their first birthday and others whose paths to adulthood are littered with the obstacles of war, and its roots in poverty and oppression, made for a very reflective service.

Just a few days before, in another rebel attack on the prison in **Sensuntepeque**, an army grenade had fallen into a small home, killing a small child and badly wounding her mother.





Water and Power

ONE FAMILY LIVES in a cluttered community of mud and stick houses in front of the prison in **Sensuntepeque**. Eight-year-old Oscar and his parents, Linda and Lolo, have all suffered the customary parasites and intestinal infections that is the common lot of all in their position. The El Salvador Baptist Association has supplied some emergency stop-gap medicine, which can only alleviate the immediate problem, but not change the long-term reality.

We talked about why the people were always sick. They began to explain to me that the only time the

community has access to clean water is on **Thursday mornings** when water is supplied to the cattle and pigs and sold next door for a few short hours. In that time, everybody fills up all the containers they can carry. They wash clothes, and themselves, and know that what they drink is, relatively, safe.

When the cattle go the water is turned off and for the rest of the week people have to buy their water from a couple of local sources. The cheapest water is not drinking water and since resources don't allow for higher priced clean water, related diseases abound.

With three or four families, and, initially at least, through church connections, conversations began about all the advantages that would be experienced by the community if they had clean water on tap all week.

From that, we began exploring ideas

about how we might get to that stage. Slowly, other families joined us and we were almost ready to have some kind of general meeting to plan what could happen next when the accusations began.

One family accused Linda and Lolo — and some others from the church — of 'organising people' and therefore being guerrillas. The accusations grew more serious until the belligerent family began to make death threats against Lolo and were seen by his house with pistols.

When the cattle go the water is turned off and for the rest of the week people have to buy their water from a couple of local sources.

In the church, as Linda cried through her story, others, knowing their innocence, promised to be with them and support them and as well as more frequent visits to the family, the weekly Bible study was to be held in Linda and Lolo's house.

Eventually, the other family left the community and now live elsewhere, although still close by. Conversations have started again for people still got sick and the water is still only turned on for the cattle market. One tap supplying drinking water would, in this case, transform the lives of about 25 families.

Because of the civil war, the manipulation of fear is often sufficient to slow down or halt the natural development process in communities such as these. A seemingly straightforward conversation about clean water is actually about power, who holds it and how it is used and abused. It is no small sign of courage, patience and dignity that their plans to bring water to the site continue.

Linda and Lolo and Oscar have just had an electric wire led over to their house from another house nearby. On the end of the wire dangles an electric light, the first they have ever had.

'How have things changed now you have the light?' I asked them.

'Terrible,' Linda said, 'we can't get to sleep now for contemplating the bulb. We keep asking Oscar to blow it out!'

Just in case there was a danger of my believing what she said, they all burst out laughing.

SAY NOTHING ABOUT DR CAREY

A brief account of what God achieved through the life of William Carey,
by **Lesley Rowe**

Introduction

WHEN WILLIAM CAREY was suffering his final illness, he was visited by Alexander Duff, a young Scottish missionary. Duff was eager to learn more of Carey's experiences. After praying together, Duff had got as far as the door, when the old man whispered his name.

'Mr Duff, you have been speaking about Dr Carey, Dr Carey. When I am gone, say nothing about Dr Carey — speak about Dr Carey's Saviour.'

William Carey wanted Christ, not himself, to be in the spotlight: this was the secret of his greatness and his usefulness to God. He had achieved amazing things for God, but he knew that he could not claim the credit. His deep sense of his own sinful heart was no mere platitude but a life-long reality, as was his absolute trust in the Sovereign God.

On his tomb he ordered the inscription,
'A wretched, poor and helpless worm
On Thy kind arms I fall.'

Growing Up

WILLIAM CAREY WAS BORN on 17 August 1761 in the little Northamptonshire village of Paulerspury, the eldest son of Elizabeth and Edmund Carey, a poor weaver who later became village schoolmaster and parish clerk.

William was an energetic boy, full of determination, who continued to climb trees despite suffering bad falls. His qualities of persistence, a desire for knowledge, and an exceptional memory were already apparent. At the age of twelve he memorised 60 pages of Latin grammar!

His particular interest was in botany and natural history. He cultivated his father's garden and collected specimens of plants and insects, all carefully classified, which he kept in his bedroom. Travel stories fascinated him and he loved to hear the tales told by his Uncle Peter, who had been a soldier in Canada. Already his mind was reaching far beyond the confines of village life: 'I chose to read books of science, history, voyages etc. more than any other,' he recalled.

When William left school at about the age of **twelve**, he hoped to become a gardener, but his skin became inflamed with constant outdoor work. And so he was apprenticed to a cordwainer, or master shoe-maker.

There was another apprentice, a Dissenter named John Warr, in Mr Clarke Nicholls' workshop at **Piddington**. At that time anyone who did not belong to the Church of England was

regarded with contempt and prevented from holding many official positions. William had regularly attended the local parish Church, but had not shown any particular religious interest. Now he became involved in heated discussions with Warr, in which he often won the argument on behalf of the established Church, but was left feeling that Warr possessed something he did not.

The spiritual crisis in William's life came to a head one Christmas, when he was involved in an attempt to deceive his master by passing off a counterfeit shilling. Mr Nicholls discovered the crime to Carey's great remorse. The realisation that he was a sinner, not only in men's eyes but in God's, led to his conversion in February 1779. He began to attend the Independent (Congregational) Meeting House at Hackleton with Warr. His later reading, especially of Scripture, led him to a Baptist and Calvinistic position.

On 5 October 1783, he was baptised in the river at Northampton by **John Ryland**, who later became his close associate in the missionary cause.

In 1781 Carey married his new master's sister-in-law, **Dorothy Plackett**. She was nearly six years older than William and was typical of many village girls of the period, unable even to write her name. It became obvious as the years went by that there was a disparity not only in intelligence but also in spiritual vision. It must have been hard for a shoe-maker's wife to discover that her husband had missionary aspirations.

Their first years together were a time of grinding poverty. In 1783, their baby daughter, Ann, died of a fever, and William himself became critically ill. He recovered, but at the age of 22 was left almost completely bald and had to wear a wig, a fashion he discarded in the heat of India.

The Northamptonshire Pastor

IN 1785 THE STRUGGLING Baptist fellowship in nearby Moulton, with only a handful of members and a building in a state of disrepair, asked Carey to be their Pastor. Under his ministry the Church grew, but they could pay him very little. So William ran a school and continued **shoe-making** to make enough money to support his family. A huge wall map of the world, indebted to Captain Cook's **Voyages** for its information, showed that his early enthusiasm for the subject had not evaporated. The generosity of a Kettering shoe-manufacturer, Thomas Gotch, enabled him to continue his study of languages: he taught himself French and Dutch, to add to the Greek he had already mastered.

Carey was not ordained as minister within the Particular Baptist (Calvinistic) denomination until 1787. His fellowship within the local ministers' fraternal caused missionary issues to be prayed about and discussed. **Andrew Fuller** of Kettering, by his powerful written attacks on the hyper-calvinism which was currently paralysing the denomination, had paved the way for Carey's views that the gospel should be preached to the heathen. Even so, they were not always well-received.

In 1792, Carey by now the pastor of the **Harvey Lane Church** in Leicester, was persuaded to publish his pamphlet entitled '**An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens.**' It contained a comprehensive survey of the World's countries and their populations, and referred to earlier missionary endeavours. It was an urgent challenge to Christians to take Christ's Great Commission seriously and became very influential.

As a result, Carey was invited to preach at the next Northamptonshire Baptist Association meeting on 30 May 1792. His text came from Isaiah 54:2-3 (Enlarge the place of thy tent...)

and his style, simple and direct, was a reflection of his personality. A perfect illustration of his balanced theology was given in the memorable sub-divisions of his sermon; 'Expect great things from God: attempt great things for God.'

Those listening were obviously moved, but it looked as if, once again, no positive action would be taken until Fuller, at Carey's urging, put forward a resolution that a plan for forming a missionary society be considered at the next ministers' meeting in Kettering.



William Carey's Cottage at Hackleton

Five months later, on 2 October 1792, 14 men, mostly village pastors, gathered in the back parlour of **Widow Wallis' house** in Kettering and resolved to form 'the Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the heathen'. The first Protestant Missionary Society had been born. Andrew Fuller was appointed the first Secretary, Reynold Hogg Treasurer, with Carey, Ryland and Sutcliff making up the rest of the executive committee. The subscriptions promised on that evening of £13.2s.6d., from a group of largely poor men, were sacrificial.

Attention was now turned to finding a location in which the new mission should operate.

In November 1792, Carey was contacted by **Dr John Thomas**, a former naval surgeon who had been in India, and both he, and later the Society, were won over by his account of the possibilities for evangelism there. Thomas was enthusiastic for the gospel and impulsive, but also unreliable and disastrous at handling money. He had developed a real affection for the **Bengali** people and had translated parts of the New Testament into their language. When Carey volunteered to go to India Thomas took him in his arms and embraced him.

It was a 'painful sacrifice' for the Harvey Lane Church to relinquish their beloved pastor, but they recognised that 'his heart had long since been set' upon the work overseas. In an emotional valedictory service, those remaining at home pledged their loyalty in prayer and promised to 'hold the ropes' as Carey descended the deep, unknown mine of India.

There were difficulties to be overcome before they could leave England. Carey's wife, nearing the end of another pregnancy, refused to sail with him. Her refusal caused William much anguish, but he felt that his conscience could not answer to God if he remained at home. However, what seemed disastrous delays in getting a ship's passage to India, were in fact providential. Dorothy Carey gave birth to a baby son, Jabez, and was at last persuaded to accompany her husband if her sister Kitty could come too.

A passage was obtained on a Danish ship, the '**Kron Princess Maria**'. On 13 June 1793, the Thomas family, along with William and Dorothy Carey, their four young sons and Kitty Plackett set sail from Dover bound for India. The long and difficult voyage lasted five months but Carey put the time to good use by studying Bengali with Thomas. Finally the ship made port in **Calcutta on 14 November 1793**. Setting foot on Indian soil at the age of 32, William Carey never again left.

India, the early years

INDIA IN 1793 was largely a Hindu country, dominated by the ceremonies and superstitions of that religion, and rigidly divided by a caste system into which a person was born and could not escape. Horrific customs such as 'sati,' where a widow was burned alive on her husband's funeral pyre, were not uncommon.

In contrast to the terrible poverty of the majority, the European elite, who were there for commercial purposes, often lived in luxury. India was divided between various European nations vying for supremacy. The British East India Company, the most powerful of these trading bodies, was largely opposed to the idea of missionary work, fearing that it might cause hostility among the natives, and thus disrupt its trade. It did, however, contain a number of individual Christians within its ranks.

The first six months in India were catastrophic for the Careys. Within three months in Calcutta, all their money to last a year had gone. Thomas, who was in charge of the money, had greatly underestimated the cost of living, and had also lived in a style far beyond his means. The desperate Carey family had to rely on a house provided by a Bengali moneylender to save them from destitution. But despite this and the sickness of his family, William pressed on with his study of Bengali, with a native teacher or '*munshi*,' named **Ram Basu**.

Then came an offer of land in the swampy jungle area 40 miles to the east of Calcutta, known as the Sundurbans. Carey set to work clearing the jungle and erecting a little bamboo hut, with fences to keep out the tigers. His aim was to grow enough food to support his family.

Even in his darkest moments of discouragement, when he was distressed both, by his circumstances and by his own seeming lack of spirituality, he clung to his faith in God's providence. He wrote, '*Well, I have God, and His Word is sure.*'

The jungle hut was never lived in because William was offered the managership of a new Indigo (dye) works by an old friend of Thomas's, George Udny. The factory was up in the north, at a place called **Mudnabarti**. Despite concern in Britain that engaging in trade might distract him from his main task of preaching the gospel, Carey argued that it gave him more opportunities. Not only would he be self-supporting, and thus no longer a financial drain on the Society, but he would be brought into close contact with the very people he had come to India to reach. Outside the busy rainy season, there was plenty of spare time to study and preach.

In the unhealthy climate of **Mudnabarti**, Carey's five-year-old son, **Peter**, died of a fever in September 1794. Such was the hold of caste that William, himself weak with fever, could find no one to dig Peter's grave or carry his coffin. Four Moslems, finally persuaded to help, were ostracised by the whole village community, a situation which Carey and Thomas speedily sought to rectify. Dorothy Carey's fragile mental state was finally shattered by her son's death, and she lapsed into **insanity** for the 13 years until her death.

As he travelled around the villages checking on the Indigo

crop, William tried to see if any European crops (requested from Britain) would give improved results: in this he was a fore-runner or later 'agricultural' missionaries. The medical help offered by Thomas and Carey, which later developed into organised medical missions, also evidenced a concern for the whole person.

But after nearly six years in India, and despite attracting large crowds to his preaching, there was not a single native convert. Carey was often discouraged and frustrated but stubbornly pressed on with his translation work, realising its vital importance in the foundation of any missionary venture. By 1795 significant sections of the Bible had been translated into Bengali, and by 1798, he had completed his translation of the whole of Scripture.

'My pundit judges of my translation style and syntax: I of its faithfulness. He reads the translation to me and I judge by his accent and emphasis whether he fully understands. . . .'

In 1796, Carey had begun to learn Sanskrit, the key to mastering all the other Asian languages. He translated a **Sanskrit grammar** and dictionary into English and compiled his own Sanskrit/Bengali/English dictionary.

When the Indigo factory was closed in 1799, Carey used his savings to buy a small Indigo works in **Khidurpur**, about twelve miles to the north. He also hoped to locate his own small printing press there, concluding that this would be the only way to get his translations published.

Thomas was constantly flitting in and out of Carey's life, and also missionary work. Carey, desperately lonely, begged the Society to send out more workers, including women to reach the Indian women in Purdah. The first to join was the politically radical **John Fountain**. More reinforcements arrived in October 1799: **William Ward, Joshua and Hannah Marshman** with their two children, and **Miss Tidd**, who was John Fountain's fiancée. As missionaries they were not allowed to land in Calcutta, so they took a boat to Serampore, across the river in Danish territory. From there they planned to journey north to join Carey, but the East India Company would not allow them to travel through their territory.

Colonel Bie, the Danish governor at Serampore, urged the missionaries to settle there, and William Ward, the printer who had met Carey briefly in England, was chosen to put the case for transfer to him. *'At length I saw Carey!'* wrote Ward, *'He is less altered than I expected . . . and blessed be God! he is a young man still.'* Although he would be at a considerable financial loss, Serampore had a number of significant advantages: a good site only two hours' boat journey from Calcutta, complete freedom to engage in evangelism, and the chance of operating a printing press freely.

Serampore: nerve centre for outreach

1800. The dawn of a new century and also the dawning of a new era for William Carey and his fellow-missionaries. He had served a difficult apprenticeship of seven years in what he now regarded as his 'own country'. Now he would begin to see some fruit from his labours.

Carey's vision was typically broad as he made plans for the site purchased on the river bank at **Serampore**. All the missionary families lived and worshipped as one in the large house, with absolute equality being the rule. Every Saturday night a meeting was held to sort out any grievances. It was an arrangement that worked remarkably well, and Carey, Ward and Marshman became known as the **'Serampore Trio.'** Very quickly the Marshmans' opened up schools, first for Europeans and then

Indians, and within a year the community was largely self-supporting.

But tragedy struck early. Within three months of arrival in India, William Grant died, to be followed shortly after by John Fountain, leaving a pregnant widow who later married William Ward. There was nothing to show for all their preaching and pamphlet distribution, and Ward confessed, *'We are often much disheartened, though we try to keep up each other's spirits.'*

But the day of the first Indian conversion was coming. **Krishna Pal**, a 35-year-old carpenter, injured his shoulder and Thomas was called to give medical aid, also taking the opportunity to tell him of Christ. Krishna, with his friend Gokul, began attending the mission house daily to learn more about the Saviour, and then on 22 December 1800, both men confessed their faith in Christ. They sat down for a meal with the missionaries, fully appreciating the significance of their actions.

'Thus is the chain of caste broken. Who shall mend it?' said Ward.

On 28 December 1800, a baptismal service took place at the river. Gokul and Krishna's wife and sister-in-law (who had also professed conversion) had, for the time being, lost their courage in the face of violent pressure, but Krishna Pal stood firm. Carey wrote with jubilation, *'Yesterday was a day of great joy. I had the happiness to desecrate the Gunga by baptising the first Hindu, viz. Krishna and my son Felix. . . .'*

In stark contrast was the scene at the mission house. John Thomas was detained **'raving mad'** in one room, Dorothy Carey in another. The cost of winning souls was high.

Carey had, from the beginning, planned for the work to be extended through native evangelists, the Krishna Pal went on to become one of the best ambassadors for Christ to his own people. One of his Bengali hymns, translated by Joshua Marshman, still features in the Baptist Hymn Book.

After this initial breakthrough came a steady trickle of conversions, some being recorded every month, though sadly many converts received ill-treatment or even murder at the hands of their families. Some tramped up to 70 miles to be baptised at Serampore. Those who were capable were trained in preaching and so the news of the gospel was extended still further. Carey envisaged a network of mission stations set at 200 mile intervals throughout northern India, with missionaries initially overseeing the work carried out by the native evangelists.

March 1800 had seen the beginning of the printing of the Bengali New Testament, and in 1801 the first complete version was published. Better translations were to follow, but it was still a demonstration of how well the former shoe-maker had mastered the language. Carey's linguistic gifts and the personal respect in which he was held, were recognised in April 1801 when he was asked by the Governor-General, Lord Wellesley, to become a teacher of Bengali (and later Sanskrit and Marathi) at the newly-formed Fort William College in Calcutta. This had been set up to train young Britons for careers in the Indian civil service, for which fluency in Bengali was an important requirement.

Carey had never attended a College in his life, but his initial hesitancy was overcome by the enthusiasm of his fellow-missionaries for the idea. It would bring in a significant income for the mission, provide contact with some of India's future leaders, and, most importantly, give Carey new opportunities to develop his translation work. And so every Monday night for 30 years, William went by boat to Calcutta, returning to Serampore each Friday evening.

With characteristic enthusiasm he tackled his new work, systematically producing, with the help of skilled pundits, text books for his pupils. He published his own book of Indian stories

entitled **The Colloquies**, and generally fostered a revival of interest in the Bengali language. Carey saw more clearly than Fuller and those at home that this involvement with Hindu literature was a means of reaching educated Indians. He translated the Scriptures into Sanskrit and then into the vernacular languages, until by the end of his life, Serampore had been responsible for translating the Bible into nearly 40 languages and dialects, including Chinese. It was the achievement to which Carey and the others devoted their lives.

William Carey always had a great social concern, and had been horrified to witness the practice of 'Sati' or widow-burning in 1799. He calculated that 10,000 women lost their lives annually due to this rite, and he campaigned for it to be banned. When he was handed the official document making 'Sati' illegal in December 1829, he left the preaching to another and hurried to translate the order into Bengali. Even an hour's delay, he said, meant the loss of many lives.

He was also instrumental in the prohibition of child sacrifices in 1802, and his concern for leprosy sufferers, whom he had seen being thrown alive into burning pits, led to the establishment of a leprosy hospital in Calcutta — a very advanced concept for the time.

Struggles and Difficulties

LIFE WAS NOT ONE OF unopposed triumph for Carey and his fellows at Serampore. There was a constant struggle against their own indwelling sin: 'Indolence is my prevailing sin,' Carey said in 1802. But there were also external problems. When Lord Wellesley retired as Governor General in 1805, anti-missionary feelings amongst East India Company officials re-emerged, and without continuing Danish protection those at Serampore might have been forced to leave India altogether. As it was, further restrictions on printing and evangelism were imposed.

In Britain, too, the missionary cause was debated in the press, and Fuller, in particular wrote passionately in defence of his colleagues. When the Charter of the **East India Company** came up for renewal in Parliament in 1813, a clause was inserted into the Charter giving legal protection throughout the Company's territories to those seeking to make known the Christian gospel.

The success of the pro-missionary cause in Britain was assisted by a disaster which had struck Serampore in the previous year. On 12 March 1812, the printing works were destroyed by fire. Gone were the original manuscripts representing years of hard labour and much of the expensive equipment and stock. Carey was in Calcutta when Marshman broke the news to him and he was grief stricken. And yet he saw that perhaps he had been too proud of his own achievements, and had not relied enough on God: *'The Lord has laid me low,'* he said, *'that I may look more simply to him.'*

In Britain the fire aroused much public sympathy and within two months the appeal to replace the press reached its target of £10,000. In India, the missionaries redoubled their efforts to make up for the setback.

In 1807 Dorothy Carey died, and in the following year William married Lady **Charlotte Rumohr**, a cultured Danish woman who had come to India for health reasons, and who had been converted through the missionaries at Serampore. Despite her physical weakness, they shared 13 happy and supportive years of marriage together. Carey's third wife, Grace Hughes, whom he married in 1823, cared affectionately for him until the end of his life.

After the deaths of his dear friends John Sutcliff, in 1814, and Andrew Fuller in 1815, a controversy developed over who should control missionary activity in general and Serampore in particular. The demands of the new men on the Home Committee in Britain, that the sending Churches should exercise more power, was seen by Carey, Marshman and Ward as a lack of trust in them, who had poured their life's savings and labours into Serampore.

The rift was widened by the arrival of new, young missionaries, who found it difficult to settle into the order established by the older trio at Serampore, and who left to establish what was, in effect, a rival mission station in nearby Calcutta in 1817. This caused Carey much distress and embarrassment, especially as the Home Committee tended to support the breakaway group.

The dispute was not finally settled until 1831, when a collapse on the Calcutta money market removed all the missionaries' investments. The work of a number of outlying mission stations was at risk, and the trio surrendered their independence, as the Society stepped in with a generous financial rescue offer.

Solid joys and lasting treasure

Despite the trials, these years were perhaps those of Carey's greatest achievement. In 1818 a prospectus was issued for a new college offering higher education at Serampore. Schools had become an essential part of every mission station he established, but Carey recognised the need to build on this basic provision. He envisaged a truly liberal education, with teaching in Arts, Sciences, and Hindu literature, as well as a faculty of Theology to train evangelists and teachers. It was to be open to those of any religion, and was the first centre to offer higher education to members of the poorer classes as well as the more affluent.

It was a great success, and in 1821 moved into a new imposing building, paid for by the missionaries themselves. Serampore College remains today as a centre of excellence.

As Carey grew older and restricted by illness, he spent more time enjoying his life long **passion** for plants: his beautiful garden at Serampore, with its rare specimens, had become famous. His contributions to botany, not least the founding of the **Agri-Horticultural Society** of India in 1830, were recognised by a number of learned Societies which awarded him membership. But these interests were not only a source of valuable relaxation: he was always seeking to improve agricultural techniques and to introduce more productive species for the good of the Indian people.

Towards the end of his days, when he could no longer walk, he was wheeled in a chair into his garden. Later still, when too weak even for these outings, he would lie in his bed overlooking the grounds. He completed the revision of his Bengali translation of the Scriptures, and received progress reports of the mission's activities. Most of his family and his old friends, save Marshman, had preceded him and he died on 9 June 1834, aged 72, trusting only in the grace of God for his salvation.

William Carey had achieved a prodigious amount in many different spheres: evangelism, translation work, social reform, education, co-operation with other Protestant missionaries, botany — the list could go on and on. He had set the pattern for the modern missionary movement, but this own assessment of himself was typically modest:

'I can plod. That is my only genius. I can persevere in any definite pursuit. To this I owe everything.'

NEW OVERSEAS WORKERS



Kevin and Linda Donaghy

Linda, who originally comes from Lincoln, and Kevin met in Leicester, where they both attended church.

Kevin was a police sergeant and Linda worked for Social Services in a children's home.

'Our home church is Kirby Muxloe Free Church, and they have supported us both prayerfully and practically since I started to train at Spurgeon's College in 1986,' Kevin said.

'We have been attached to Selsdon Baptist Church where we have both gained experience in leadership roles.

'Linda made her commitment to the Lord before moving to Leicester, whilst I made my commitment during the summer of 1981. We were baptised in 1983.

'Both our calls to work overseas came whilst we were leading a party of young people from Kirby Muxloe at the Baptist Youth World Conference in Glasgow in 1988.

'Linda's call came during a seminar on World Mission and mine came at

the end of the "Make Way" march through Glasgow.'

Kevin and Linda were accepted by the General Committee in November for church planting and pastoral work in Brazil. After completing studies at Spurgeon's College and a term at St Andrew's Hall Missionary College, they hope to proceed to Brazil early in 1991.



Maren-Eva Wilmott-Borberg

Maren has wanted to get involved in Christian work in a Third World country for some time.

'But this was not possible

for many years because I had not fully committed myself to Christ. When, however, I accepted Christ as my personal Saviour, my compulsion about this service became predominant.

'I prayed earnestly about and was further encouraged by a Keswick Convention speaker and also my church. It was time to make myself available. Having done this it has been a joyful experience so far.

Maren originally comes from Germany where she was a member of the Lutheran church. She has

been in membership of the Baptist Church, Cowes, on the Isle of Wight, since 1985.

As a teacher, she has put a new Christian emphasis into RE teaching. She has also played an active part in house groups, Sunday school work and social and community work.

She has been accepted by the BMS General Committee to teach at the Zaire British Association School in Kinshasa. She will first of all do a term at St Andrew's, Selly Oak, and some language training at Massy in France.

ATTENTION WEST MIDLANDS

Open invitation to anyone who wants to learn about mission organisations

MISSION — YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

A series of talks to be held at
Carters Land Baptist Church at 7.45 pm

Monday 26 February — Biblical Base for Mission
Monday 5 March — Mission in History
Monday 12 March — Baptist Missionary Society
Monday 19 March — Home Mission
Monday 2 April — Mission in Today's World
and mission supper tickets required

A wide variety of speakers include
Jim Grenfell, David Lewis and Andy Bruce

For further details please contact:
John Tiley, 0384 75896, or
Mrs Lynette Houghton, 021 421 1018

Ten Per Cent More

The BMS expects to spend £3,783,290 this year, an increase of 7.8 per cent on last year's figures.

Some of this will be covered from investments and legacies but the Society will still need to ask the churches to increase their giving by ten per cent and provide £2,840,000.



'These estimates present an encouraging situation,' said Arthur Garman, the BMS treasurer, when he reported to General Committee.

'Provision is made for the present work to continue and in many cases for it to grow. The new work in France, El Salvador and Thailand is beginning to show the full cost of maintaining missionaries in those countries. In Bangladesh and India there will be fewer missionaries because of retirements and resignations.'

'Also the effect of exchange rates means that we can achieve the same level of support without increasing the cost to the Society.'

'In Zaire the number of missionaries has increased from 64 to 72. In France there is provision for three

missionary couples and Thailand shows a full year's expenditure.

'We expect to have 34 missionaries in training and have set aside £119,000 for their preparation for overseas work, and we have set aside £93,000 for bursaries and scholarships — an important part of our work.'

We are able to assist the work overseas with larger provision for building and equipment and transport grants to the amount of £310,000.'

Proliferation

When the Roman Catholic Bishops met in Brazil last October, they warned against the proliferation of religious sects inspired by North American tele-evangelists.

A statement issued by the bishops claimed that the electronic churches received millions of dollars in help from the United States and ultra-conservative groups. Looking for disenchanted Catholics, their aims involve making money and shady political motives, they said.

Tremendous

A church with a massive building debt has raised over £1,000 for the 'Pimu Plan' project in Zaire.

The churches in Gwent, South Wales, have adopted Pimu hospital and each church has been contributing to the project on a monthly basis. St Julian's Baptist Church, Newport aimed to raise



The cheque from St Julian's being handed over to BMS Welsh Representative, Sue Evans by Church Missionary Secretary, Mrs Janet Richard and Church Secretary Miss Marion Smith.

Mrs Mary Isaac of St Julian's Baptist Church. Although badly crippled she works tirelessly for the BMS selling 'Heralds', Prayer Guides, Calendars and promoting the Birthday Scheme.



£1,000 in a year towards the cost of pumping and piping water to the hospital. This has been achieved and in October a Service of Thanksgiving was held and a cheque for £1,035 handed over.

'This has been a tremendous effort by this

church as it has had to struggle with a massive building debt, which they have had to push to one side in order to raise this sum for the Pimu Hospital,' said Margery Pryce-Jones, in Gwent.

Church of North India

Members of the Church of North India have been told that the CNI *'is at a critical juncture in the history of its engagement with Indian culture and society.'*

It holds up *'saints of the India church'* like Sadhu Sundar Singh, Pandita Ramabai and Mother Teresa as *'models of spirituality and discipleship'* who have to be incorporated into the witness life of the church.

Meeting for its Seventh Ordinary Synod, the CNI said that it had reached a significant milestone in its march towards maturity and called upon the membership to *'emerge joyously from . . . traditional denominational loyalties'* so as to experience *'the new identity and meaning of . . . an organically united church — a new creation.'* It

called for repentance and renewal in church life and systems so as to be more Christ-like and consistent in faith and action.

Other concerns were worship and witness which must involve 'a greater sense of solidarity with the deprived and the disinherited,' and decentralisation of resources 'to facilitate congregational renewal and dynamism for social action.'

The new CNI bishop moderator is John Ghose the Bishop of Darjeeling.

Exceptional

The national infant mortality rate in Nicaragua has decreased by 50 per cent over the last ten years according to a UNICEF report.

'Such a reduction is exceptional on the international level,' said a UNICEF spokesman, 'especially when the country's war-ravaged economy is taken into account.'

According to official figures, the mortality rate for children under one year old was 128 per 1,000 births in 1979. In 1989, the rate is 62 deaths per 1,000 births. ▼



Enabler

Mission should no longer be seen as unidirectional. There should be reciprocity in mission.

'I would like to see the BMS enabling,' the Rev Ken Cadette, General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Trinidad and Tobago, told the BMS General Committee.

'The task of mission is not for those who have wealth, but it is for all of us. Those of us on the poor side of the world sometimes feel excluded from mission. But I now believe that the BMS, beyond 1992, should use its resources to enable churches, right across the world, to be part of global mission.'

'It is easier for us to sit back comfortably and say: "They will pay the bills," rather than get involved in mission. I have a sense of call that our partnership with the BMS must not be expressed in the equality of dollars, but in terms of the equality of opportunity. The challenge of mission has to be presented to the poorer churches and the BMS can enable us to be part of that mission.'

A New Idea?

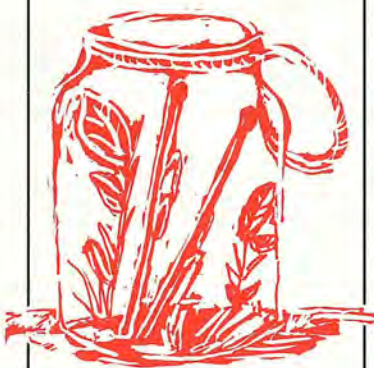
How goes your fund-raising activities? Thought up anything new recently? If you want some new ideas why not write to Andrew Webster in Leicester, that is if his letter doesn't give you enough inspiration.

I am eight years old and I go to Dovelands Junior School. At my school I have been selling stick

insects, which I have bred, for ten pence each. I raised £8.75. My mum and dad made it £10.

In the summer holidays I went to this club and made a money-box to collect money for the poor countries. I am giving you this money because I want to please my Lord Jesus Christ.

Love Andrew.



Sarah Prentice

Conflict in the Ivory Coast

According to an official Ivory Coast newspaper, Baptists in Bably, near Bongolo, about 550 kilometres northwest of Abidjan, were attacked by a large number of Traditional Religionists after one of their number who became a Christian refused to return a mask he had used in worship as a Traditionalist. The paper reported Christians and Traditionalists battled for several hours before the Christians retreated. Leaders on both sides were arrested.

EPS

The Time Has Come!

For years, Christians in Nepal have accepted the reality that it is against the laws of their land for anyone to change faith. If accusations are proven new converts may spend one year in prison as a result of their witness and baptism. Those who encourage others to change their faith are liable to penalties of three or six years in prison. Nepali churches have accepted such prison sentences as the "birth-right of every believer in Jesus Christ", and up until now have requested that Christians of other lands do not draw attention to this curtailment of their liberty.

In the face of a stepping up of measures against Christians the churches there now feel that the time has come to speak out.

They are not challenging individual cases going through the courts at present, nor the sentences already passed upon Christians. All this is due to the outworking of current law within the country. However, they feel it appropriate that the basic question of human rights within Nepal be raised at the highest level and for this reason they call upon churches around the world to protest at the restrictions which outlaw changing from one religion to another.

IN VIEW



A World of Difference

*Two friends died together, but their funerals, described here by **Steve Green**, showed that their families were a world apart.*

SATURDAY WAS NATIONAL Youth day. Everyone had been celebrating the day off work. All the students had taken part in a march past in the town centre in the morning, and the afternoon was free. We celebrated by our usual swim in one of the two local pools, and were busy cooking a barbeque at home for some friends when we heard the news.

At first it was a confused report. Had we seen any girl students from the nursing school at the pool before we left? Someone saying there had been an accident, and that two students were drowned. Disbelief at first. Then fear. Then came the confirmation.

Three of the girl students from our nursing school had gone to **Lukala**, the town 11 km away, to visit family and friends on this free afternoon. One had her own parents there, one had gone with her, and the third wanted to visit friends. Before students can leave campus, the supervisor must give permission. Permission had been given to one student but not to the others.

Two of the three decided to go swimming, and, waiting till all the other people had left, they somehow got into the pool. Whether they both got into difficulties together, or whether the stronger swimmer of the two had

tried to help the other, we shall never know. It was the screams of the little boy, who had gone in with them, which brought people running. But it was too late. The bodies were locked together. Both were drowned.

As director of the school, I was one of the first to be informed. At first I must admit to having felt very little emotion. It all seemed to be so unreal.

As custom demands, it was necessary to go to be with the families. This in itself, helps the family and the friends to realise that the death is real. One family was in **Lukala**, the other in **Kimpese**.

Because **Lukala** was the scene of the accident, we went there first. At the parents' house people were already gathering. The terrible grief was beginning to show as the news began to be accepted.

The truth was evident as **Kusutiku's** body was brought from the house and laid on a bed outside. She was dressed in her best dress, blue and white, so different from her student nurse's uniform.

Her father is under-manager at the cement factory in **Lukala** and a very respected member of the community. He is also the president of the deacons' court at the **Lukala Baptist Church**.

They had spent some time having the body embalmed so that the humid heat's rotting effect would be slowed.

Neighbours and friends were arriving to sing hymns and pray with the family, or simply sit round the body expressing their love and support by their very presence. Part of the group of mourners was from the school, her friends, whom we had brought along with us, and members of the **IME** parish.

After a suitable length of time, we moved on to **Kimpese** to be with **Kutoti's** family. **Kutoti's** uncle, the most important member of the family, had been at **Lukala** and he travelled to **Kimpese**. Here it was not grief that was being shown, but abject despair.

Kutoti's death was only the next episode in a series of tragedies. Her father had died a year ago, her brother was killed at the beginning of the year, her older sister is dying in **IME** hospital of **AIDS**.

The mother's anger was tangible. There was the screaming and crying that accompanies many deaths in this country. I have become used to that. But here, I felt a very different emotion. At first I found it hard to pinpoint. There seemed to be very little organisation, no one in control. Usually it is the uncle on the mother's side who is in charge. But there the only person who seemed even willing to take responsibility was an old friend of mine, **Tata Twasamo**.

I assumed he must be distantly related as he was making some arrangements. He ushered the teachers from the school up to the bier, and asked me to sit at the head. This time the bed was in the middle of the yard, and the yard was almost in the middle of the main street in **Kimpese**. There was no singing or praying here before our group from the school arrived.

The family are nominally Catholic, but there was no priest, which indicated to us that there was no real faith being practised. As a group from a Christian school, the students wanted to help the mother in the way they understand, and they asked if they could sing and pray. Under the influence of these young students, there was an atmosphere of calm for about an hour.

Suddenly, someone called my attention to the place I had parked the vehicle. There was a large group of angry young men crowded round the uncle whom we had brought from **Lukala**. They had started to accuse him

of witchcraft, of being responsible for Kutoti's death. Next day we heard that he was severely beaten. The students should have been back in the dormitory at 9 p.m. so at 11 p.m. we all went back to IME.

On Sunday morning, the hospital was filled with sadness. Even we, who are so used to death, seemed shocked that it could come so close to us all.

It has been announced that the funerals might be held on Sunday afternoon, so in a larger group, we went first to Kusutiku's house in Lukala. By now a crowd of several hundred people had gathered, an atmosphere of calm amongst the grief. It was then heard that her funeral would be on Monday at two in the afternoon.

The group of friends and teachers moved on to Kimpese. *'Surely, Kutoti will be buried today! It's terribly hot, and her body wasn't embalmed,'* we thought.

Arriving, there was a group of mourners round the bed, the women close to the body, the men some distance away. The uncle greeted us. He'd survived his beating. The young men of the 'quartier' had been smoking hashish all night. I could smell it before I saw its effects. They were very aggressive. They'd erected a barrier across the road only permitting people to see the body if they paid money. Eventually the local police chief, not in uniform, came to clear them off.

Some of it was in keeping with tradition, but there was an unhappy atmosphere. It became apparent that they would not be having the burial until some more members of the family, who live quite far away, had arrived.

The body was already decomposing, it was still hot and rain was not far off. There seemed to be no one willing to make decisions. I left after an hour or so. If the family didn't arrive very soon the burial would have to be on Monday, as it will be dark by 6.30 p.m.

It rained all night.

On Monday, the school proclaimed a **day of mourning**, so that as large a number of students as possible would be able to attend the funerals, one in the morning, the other in the afternoon.

At 9 a.m. we were all in Kimpese. There was little sign of movement, although Tata Twasamo had already organised a coffin, and a pickup truck to take the body to the cemetery. The word had gone round that some of the uncles had arrived in the evening, but there had been such a lot of violence

and accusation of **witchcraft** that the police took them into custody for their own protection. Now we heard that these same uncles had run away rather than face more accusation.

No one seemed to know what to do. The body was in the coffin, but, instead of being open, they had covered the face because it was already so rotten. The teachers were invited to sit right beside the body, but I was asked to sit by the head.

The director of the nursing section of the school eventually took the initiative. He organised a simple service. One of the missionary teachers prayed, they then sang some hymns. Some verses of scripture were read. The women kept spraying **perfume** over the body. The coffin lid was brought, and with the final prayer, it was fastened down.

The male students had organised themselves as pall bearers. At last it

Neighbours and friends were arriving to sing hymns and pray with the family, or simply sit round the body expressing their love and support by their very presence.

seemed that some order had been established. They began to carry the coffin to the truck for the journey to the grave. All of a sudden, as if they had been waiting for the 'Christian' bit to be over, the young men of the 'quartier' erupted on the scene.

Instead of being put into the truck, the coffin was snatched from the students. Horrified, they had to watch as their friend's body and casket were thrown into the air. The evil in the atmosphere was given voice and hands. Dreadful wailings and sad songs were being chanted. The strength provided by the nightlong use of drugs was awful to see.

A mob had formed, which then began running wildly with the coffin, now throwing it in the air, now going into the middle of the road with their stinking, dripping load, beating on passing vehicles and demanding money. There was only one soldier with a machine gun there when usually there are five or six. His reply to our demand to help restore order and allow the burial to take place, was a shrugging, *'It's our custom.'*

Everyone was singing, the pace being set by several drums. At the cemetery, more singing, more prayer, a word of encouragement and prayers. A student ►

Church at IME Kimpese



friend bade farewell to his 'sister' and her father made a little speech. He reminded everyone that she was a member of the Scripture Union group, and that she was able to share her Christian faith with the patients on the wards.

How happy I was to go to this second funeral. It redressed the balance and showed that in the face of death, the Christian has hope and not despair, although the grief and the loss are the same.

In school prayers on the Wednesday before Kusutiku and Kutoti died, the students were asked if any of them had a watch which could tell the time of their death. The head of the nursing section of the school, Balandu, had underlined the fact that none of us knows when we will die. He urged each

one to be sure about their own salvation. This word has suddenly become very real, and we believe it was a prophetic word from the Lord which challenged each of us.

The students and other observers knew very well it was not the custom. At this point, some of the nurses and friends from IME became worried for the safety of the women missionaries who were there and asked them to return home. We all became aware of the narrow divide between crowd and riot!

Once they were safely away, I went to find Tata Twasamo. He had already gone to the graveside and was awaiting, unaware of the way things were going. When he heard of the riot, he immediately came back with me. By sheer force of his personality, he eventually persuaded the youths to put the coffin in the truck.

The Zairian teachers had stayed with the students, whose Christian witness had provoked what could only be called this truly diabolic reaction. They were mercifully not there to see the drug crazed crowd scoop up the foul fluids from the jolted coffin and claim it as strong medicine. They began making their way by another way, to the grave and now they are weeping to see their friend's body treated with such dishonour.

Deprived of the coffin; the crowd set out to follow the vehicle to the graveside. The students also wanted to be there and had started to take a back road to the cemetery. I was afraid that when the two groups met there would be another ugly scene. The teachers also feared this and I had been warned by Tata Twasamo to try and avoid confrontation. We managed to head the students back to the IME lorry and safety.

Could it be that evil triumphed? Or did the reaction of those poor crazed people show the terrible fear that death has for them? The witness of our students was impressive.

Our feelings of grief are not now for the loss of Kutoti, although each of her friends mourns her. The grief and the tears of the Christians are for the crowd, those who have no hope.

I must admit that none of us felt much like eating the midday meal. After an hour, the same group, students, teachers and many people from IME, went to Lukala for the second funeral of the day.

The family and up to a thousand people were already crowding into the

church. The pastor gave a short address comparing David and Job's reactions to the loss of their children. Kusutiku's father and mother were both there, the father's hand never left his wife's shoulder. The whole crowd and many who had not been to the church, followed the cortège on foot to the graveside.

BOOK REVIEW

Hammering Swords into Ploughshares:
Essays in Honour of
Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Marshall Pickering £6.95

ANYONE DEEPLY CONCERNED about injustice, oppression, and the struggle for freedom, must surely be to some extent a Tutumaniac. Desmond Tutu has become such a world figure with charismatic leadership that even his opponents have to take account of him in spite of the depth of their hatred for him. There is no way in which the man can be summarily dismissed.

Among those who admire Desmond Tutu for his stand and his ministry are twenty-six people, both in South Africa and outside, who have contributed these essays. While they honour the man they also honour God; for it is in God and the Bible that Tutu finds the strength of his cause, and his personal strength too.

The book centres naturally upon the struggle in South Africa. The principles that it states are applicable to many other situations where the Church seeks to right human injustice.

Social and political situations are so often complex. There is a simple clarity about the Gospel that 'cuts all the way through . . . and judges the desires and thoughts of man's heart' (Hebrews 4:12). That is the underlying theme in the life and words of Desmond Tutu and these essays applaud it.

Leslie Gregory

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on 6 October from Kisangani, Zaire

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on 13 September to Yakusu, Ziare
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on 19 September to Pokhara, Nepal
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on 21 September to Dhaka, Bangladesh
Miss P Woolhouse
on 21 September to Kimpese, Zaire
Rev and Mrs J Clark
on 23 September to Sao Paulo, Brazil
Dr A Hopkins
on 27 September to Pimu, Zaire
Rev and Mrs R G S Harvey
on 6 October to Brazil

BIRTHS

Kenneth Tapani Little
was born to Stuart and Pirjo Little on
14 October at Tansen, Nepal

DEATHS

Rev A Keith Bryan
on Tuesday 24 October 1989, aged 90.
Rev Bryan served in China from 1923
until his retirement in 1950. Letters of
sympathy may be sent to his niece, Mrs
Margaret Addicott of 61 Tenison Road,
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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