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WORKING WITH PEOPLE - CANDIDATES - A MISSIONARY LOOKS

BACK - WHY MISSIONARIES? * BICENTENARY * CALL TO PRAYER

APRIL 1992

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Telephone: 0235 512077 Telex: 94070435 BMSB G Fax: 0235 511265
GENERAL SECRETARY Revd Reg Harvey OVERSEAS SECRETARY Revd Angus MacNeill

Zaire

EDITOR Revd David Pountain DESIGN Sarah Prentice, Anthony Viney

EDITOR Revd David Pountain DESIGN Sarah Prentice, Anthony Viney Enquiries about service overseas to: Personnel Secretary, Janet Claxtor

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ERALD EDITORIAL COMMENT

So mission is about people! It is about the people on the cover of this magazine who have a right to know that God cares for them. It is about innumerable men, women and children throughout the world for whom Christ died. It is about members of our churches and congregations who are praying, giving and supporting mission in every way they can. It is about people who can no longer deny God's call and are prepared to be those who 'go' to tell the good news. It is about the way God uses ordinary Christians to reach out and touch the lives of countless individuals and to be the 'good news' for them.

If we have any doubts about whether 'missionaries' — or by whatever other name we call them in the future — are needed just look at the list of needs in the Herald each month: pastors, social workers, teachers, doctors, foresters, computer software lecturers, engineers, theological educators and so on.

These are not 'needs' dreamt up by some creative individual in Didcot. They are real needs felt by our overseas partners. They are saying to us, 'In order to fulfil the task of mission where we are we need the support of British Baptists. Please ask some of your people to come over and help us.'

Some of the people who are 'going' overseas today are the young people of our BMS Action teams. From missionaries and others in France, Brazil, India and Bangladesh are coming glowing testimonies of the way these young Brits are prepared to work hard. If they are all going to work like this, please send me a team every year from now on,' is a common plea.

People to people in the name of Christ. Long may it continue.





Baptism: Angola

'ARE MISSIONARIES STILL NEEDED IN THE WORLD TODAY?'



Jim Grenfell, who has been associated with the BMS for over 40 years as a missionary, tutor at a missionary training college and finally as Personnel Secretary, has been asked that question many times.

IT IS NOT surprising because missionaries have had a poor public image for a good many years. Sociologists and anthropologists accuse them of cultural imperialism, destroying other people's rich cultural heritage by imposing their own. They conveniently forget the devastating effect of economic exploitation on culture and the corrupting influence of tourism.

In recent years we have seen how the church in China has not only survived but grown without help from missionaries.

In Angola, despite 30 years of fighting, which forced large numbers of people to become refugees and caused turmoil and great suffering, the church has developed its own leadership. There has been very little help from mission agencies and only minimum missionary participation since 1961, yet the church has grown and is engaged in its own evangelistic outreach.

So, some people argue, if they can do so well without missionary help the missionary era must be over!

In some countries, church leaders ask for help from mission agencies and societies for experts in development, educational and medical work, but, they add, 'Don't call them missionaries!' The missionary is associated with the colonial era they are anxious to forget.

Nationalists, who learned their jargon and slogans from Marxist politicians used to accuse missionaries of being tools of neocolonialism or even spies for the CIA. Now, the big multi-national corporations don't particularly like the missionaries because some of them, at times, make a stand for justice and protest against the exploitation of the poor.



Crowded church, Luanda, Angola

In several countries where Christian missionaries from the West have worked for almost 200 years, visas are now restricted or denied. Ancient faiths have found new vitality and themselves become missionary religions with mosques, temples, social and teaching centres in numerous cities of Europe and America.



Mosque in Paris

Amongst those who teach theology in the West there is a bewildering variety of opinion regarding the Christian attitude towards people of other faiths. Some argue for a dialogue where it is clearly understood that no-one will try to convert anyone, while others adopt a confrontational attitude. Challenged by the secularism some argue for a religious 'common front' - a drawing together of people of all religions to re-emphasise spiritual and moral values, while others fear this would inevitably lead to syncretism.

Little wonder people in the churches are confused! In the face of social discontent in deprived areas, racial tensions, a growing crime rate, the widening gap between rich and poor, and the decline in church membership, people see Britain as the urgent mission field. Some argue: 'Why squander money and key people on future ventures overseas?

With so much prejudice based on half-truths and sweeping generalisations it would be surprising if people did not ask questions. Yet one advantage of becoming an older missionary is being able to look back and see that this is not the whole story. When faced with the

questions, 'Are missionaries still needed in the world today?' I have no hesitation in giving a positive answer.

The Church in Many Lands Still Says -'Come and Help Us'

One pointer which suggests a 'yes' answer to the question is that church leaders from many countries continue to ask for missionaries to 'come over and help' with a variety of jobs; an anaesthetist for Nicaragua and another for a hospital in Nazareth, a pastor prepared to offer 10 years to work with the church in Sri Lanka; teachers of English for Hungary and China; teachers, engineers, forestry workers for Nepal; pastors and social workers for Brazil, to mention just a few of the requests which are in the 'Overseas Needs File' on the desk of the Personnel Secretary in Didcot. They continue to ask for missionaries because they see clearly the needs of their people.

God Still Calls People to be Missionaries

A second pointer to suggest a 'yes' answer to the question is that God still calls men and women to be missionaries. During the five months I

It was thrilling to listen to their testimonies and hear how they felt God was leading them. Three couples were recommended for service in Nepal and a young theological student for work with the church in Brazil.'

worked as Personnel Secretary more than 230 people wrote to me making initial enquiries about missionary service with the BMS, because they felt God was leading them into His service.

Others came into the office to talk with me and the Overseas Secretaries. Two Candidate Boards were organised to meet those making firm offers of service.

It was thrilling to listen to their testimonies and hear how they felt God was leading them. Three couples were recommended for service in Nepal and a young theological student for work with the church in Brazil.

At Volunteer Boards during the same period we met with three people offering to serve in a voluntary capacity and pay their own fares to work for three months in Nepal, India and Nicaragua.

Two of our missionaries, evacuated from Zaire, went to teach in Hungary and 20 young people in the '28:19 year-out Action Team programme' went to work for a few months with the churches in France, India and Brazil. God still calls people to be missionaries and he knows what he is doing for the world still needs the gospel.



Sheila Brown, teaching typing at Usina Church, Rio





28:19 BMS Action Team, France



de Janeiro, Brazil

The Holy Spirit Makes Missionaries

Roland Allen is remembered for his influential books about mission policy and strategy. He was also deeply concerned about the motive and the resource for mission. In a book *The Ministry of the Spirit*, he emphasised that it is the Holy Spirit who makes missionaries! He wrote:

It was the Holy Spirit who came to the Apostles with the fire of divine love. It was His presence which made them missionaries. Missionary zeal does not grow out of intellectual beliefs, nor out of theological arguments, but out of love. If I do not love a person I am not moved to help him by proofs that he is in need; if I do love him, I wait for no proof of special need to urge me to help him. Knowledge of Christ is so rich a treasure that the spirit of love must necessarily desire to share it.

To read Acts with understanding, we must know, with the real knowledge of experience, that the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of the Incarnation and the Passion, the Spirit given at Pentecost, is the answer of God to the real need of the world, that is of every single soul in the world; for in the Acts these two meet, the redeeming Spirit and the utter need and it is the redeeming Spirit that reveals the utter need.

This is true to experience. In the past the Holy Spirit who led the Apostles into mission has led men and women in generation after generation into the same mission. He created love in their hearts and they went out into the world convinced that the world needed Christ. The same is true today. The Holy Spirit continues to make missionaries.

So to offer a 'yes' answer to the question with which we started we have these three pointers. In many countries church leaders continue to say: 'Come over and help us'; in the world men and women and little children need what Christ came to bring; and thirdly, God in His love responds to that need by creating love in the hearts of His servants to go out into the world to share that love.

COULD THIS BE YOU?

PERSONNEL NEEDED URGENTLY

BRAZIL

Requests for pastors, church based community/ social workers/health educator

CHINA

TEFL (English) teachers for work with Amnesty Foundation

FRANCE

One pastoral couple

ISRAEL

Anaesthetist

ITALY

Two pastoral units

NEPAL

Community foresters; leather industry specialist; primary tutorial teachers; computer software lecturer

NICARAGUA

Doctor – specialist in anaesthetics, ophthalmology or neurology

SRI LANKA

One minister/ministerial couple for at least a ten year commitment

PLEASE MAKE THESE NEEDS KNOWN IN YOUR CHURCH!

> For more information, contact Janet Claxton at BMS on 0235-512077

IN AND OUT LDERNESS

BMS doctor, Adrian Hopkins, remembers responding to a an appeal during a Sunday School Anniversary when he was seven 'although,' he says, 'perhaps I didn't understand fully what I was doing.'

Y MY TEENAGE years questioning began. I found it hard to accept the resurrection. My scientific mind wanted proofs. One Sunday, having been off school with flu, my parents wouldn't let me go to church. I wasn't pleased. I wanted to see my

With nothing else to do I picked up Your God is too small. I realised my thinking was too limited and the resurrection was not that impossible to believe. At the same time, I realised that if Jesus had died for me I had to respond and so I committed my life to him there, alone, whilst everyone else was at church. I was baptised at Rochester Baptist Church a little while later.

My Christian commitment did not have much immediate effect. I had already decided I wanted to be a doctor and ended up going to Queen's College, Dundee.

There I began to think more deeply about my Christian commit-



Sylvia and Adrian Hopkins and family

ment and its relevance to my life. I was involved with the Christian Union and the Christian Medical Fellowship. I also attended Ward Road Baptist Church, where Andrew MacRae was minister, and appreciated the preaching as well as the welcome for the students.

Several things challenged me. When Andrew MacRae left the church, so did all the students. They seemed only interested in listening to sermons. There was no commitment to the local church.

As students everywhere, we spent much time discussing important issues over coffee. I became involved in a project to decorate slum properties in central Dundee for the old and infirm. But it was difficult to get more than one or two of my CU colleagues to help.

To me a Christian commitment meant being ready to go out and do something, not just sitting around discussing theological points. It meant commitment to a Christian church and its activities even if it was going through a bad time. It meant commitment to evangelism and to helping others. It meant

commitment of one's talents, career, money in God's service.

This came to a head at a BMS Summer School. What was I going to do with my medical career? I was challenged by Dr Michael Flowers, home from Bangladesh, and felt that my medical training would take me overseas. Two years later, at another Summer School, I met Dr David Wilson, home from Zaire, and was able to fix up a three month elective period at Kimpese, Zaire.

Those three months were an experience I should not forget. I had seen a mission hospital at work at Kimpese and also had the chance to visit a 'bush hospital' at Bolobo. I saw the effects of corrupt leadership in the church and government. I saw poverty, overworked doctors, the need and I saw my place was helping to meet the need.

Between Summer Schools I had met Sylvia and on returning from Zaire I talked about my feeling for Zaire. Sylvia had always felt she would end up as a missionary in Bangladesh. During a traffic jam in Cardiff I proposed marriage suggesting we could sort out where we would go afterwards. She accepted and one week after all our training was over we were married.

We then went to Bradford and later worked in Leeds. We ended up in a church in Leeds where Drs Wilson and Flowers were in membership, so we were not allowed to forget our missionary call and in 1974 we were accepted by BMS for medical work in Zaire.

During our time in Leeds, Simon and John were born. This pregnancy was planned almost to the date so that Sylvia could complete a full teaching year and benefit from the Summer holiday and full maternity leave. But God had the last say by sending two at once!

After missionary training at Selly Oak, a tropical medicine course in Liverpool and two months in Brussels, we arrived in Kinshasa on 1 July 1975. Two months later, after a period of orientation at Kimpese and Kinshasa we set off north, just across the equator, to Pimu.

The honeymoon period was short. Only 10 days passed before there was an angry crowd outside the houses of the two doctors yelling for us to go home. We didn't understand what they were yelling, so we stayed. The conflict was provoked by a competent, caring local nurse who wanted more power and clinical responsibility than was compatible with his situation. After an uneasy peace over several months, when I never left the mission, the situation was resolved when the nurse was transferred elsewhere.





Paediatric Ward, Pimu

Pastor Bombimbo, the church leader at Pimu, was very helpful. He is a devout and educated man and able to cross all cultural and economic barriers to minister to missionary and villager alike. He has ministered at Pimu for many years for very little reward and has become a real friend.

It was an unfortunate start to our time at Pimu. The reason for some tensions are obvious. Others are more subtle.

On one occasion I questioned the worth of charging around doing eye work. We had a visiting pastor from one of the places we work and he told us that after one of our visits every one that we had operated upon had committed themselves or recommitted themselves to Christ. I had my answer.'

The mood of independence from colonial rule which came in the 1960's was more pronounced in an isolated place like Pimu.

Lack of educated nationals at independence meant qualified people find more remunerative work in towns. This is coupled with a better social life for families. At Pimu in the 1970's there were no national senior staff so missionaries were always in senior posts.

Poor by UK standards the missionaries were 'stinking rich' in the eyes of our national colleagues. The missionaries were only there to earn big salaries!

Hospitals with 24 hours service are a western idea not always compatible with African priorities.

Forward planning of more than a few weeks coupled with budget preparation and control were western ideas of management.

Nursing care as understood by missionaries was far different to nursing care as understood by our Zairian colleagues. Our care was mostly what was done by patients' relatives and was not really acceptable if someone from another family or tribe was to do it. Zairian nurses tend to see their role in terms of simple diagnosis and administration of treatments.

Our understanding of the cause of disease is very different to an African. An African often has a certain fatalism whilst the European fights on to the bitter end.

Pastor Gbamo, at one place we visit on our eye and supervision

trips, has been more than helpful to us as we try to resolve some of these cultural and other problems. Our trips include his village when possible so that we can enjoy a spiritual uplift. I always have to preach, but we will sit up late into the night around a storm lantern and long after the family has gone to bed, discuss the sermon or some other issue at great length.

The stress of the relationship problem over our first few months bonded missionaries at Pimu in a very real way. The economic and supply problems also united us in a caring way. If one was short of a commodity it was lent by another who had some or if everyone was short we decided what to do as a group. Once we agreed no one would bake cakes or biscuits. There was virtually no flour. At one stage even bread making came to an end.

are determined Missionaries people. That is why they are where they are. In a small community they work, worship and socialise together. So there were sometimes conflicts between missionaries. Sometimes it was caused by lack of tact or understanding. Other times it was a personality clash. Sometimes the cause was obvious and easily put right. Other times situations were more complex needing time and prayer to put right.

One of my difficulties was being doctor, boss and having to make clinical and administrative decisions and maintain standards of care at work and then being one of

the crowd out of work with the same people. I can only pay tribute to the staff at Pimu for their tolerance and dedication over the

So what? My witness as a Christian missionary should be to carry out the task given in the most professional way possible and with as much energy as possible. If I do not do this my words become worthless. This has been my aim. I trust that something has been achieved.

On one occasion I questioned the worth of charging around doing eye work. We had a visiting pastor from one of the places we work and he told us that after one of our visits every one that we had operated upon had committed themselves or recommitted themselves to Christ. I had my answer. Although I often preach when present on a Sunday in this village, the biggest impact was the work that I had been doing on an occasion when I did not preach.

Many Christians feel guilty if they are not directly involved in the proclamation of the gospel. Let us remember that Jesus spent a lot of time healing and doing good. It was not all preaching.

This has been extracted from Wanderings in and out of the Wilderness one of several mini-biographies of BMS 20th century missionaries which we shall be publishing during our BiCentenary celebrations.



Adrian Hopkins and nursing students



WORLD MISSION LINK is one year old! A year of learning and rejoicing and -

In our area we still find we have much explaining to do about WML Churches ask us if changing to WML. has really made any difference.

It is too early to say what the longterm effects of WML will be but after a year we can say that more churches were involved in some sort of mission event - Link-Up, Staff Teams, Mission Education - in 1991 than in previous years.

The numbers attending 'No Small Change', the BMS Staff Team event, are rising with many speaking in appreciation about a new way of sharing world mission.

Over 400 Link-Up groups - over 1,600 churches - have asked for a Link-Up missionary and a third of these have had a Link-Up visit.

Many groups are exploring how they can learn and share with churches in other countries through Link-Up.

I'm sorry to trouble you again but our Link-Up group has not yet received the missionary profiles.

It is not just the churches that are learning. The WML desk has had to adapt and change and, yes, there are delays in getting some material out, but all promised material will eventually arrive.

WML is very different from the previous Deputation programme. Are any steps being taken to monitor or evaluate the new scheme?

Yes. All parts of the WML programme are being monitored. Churches involved in the various parts of the programme are being asked to help in this. The comments received are fed into the system so that needs for materials are heard, ideas for the future noted, mistakes corrected. We need this help so if you get an evaluation form do fill it in and return.

We are all learning. From a missionary letter: 'The new system is about making relationships. It's very challenging. We recognise our responsibility in this.'

THE BEAUTIFUL LANDS

BMS work in Sri Lanka and Nepal by Jan Kendall





Ebenezer Daniel

hese two lands on the edge of India are very different. One is land-locked; the other is an island. One is predominantly Buddhist; the other a Hindu kingdom. One is a land where BMS has been at work since 1812; the other is a comparatively new venture, with work only on a united Christian front since 1954.

CEYLON/SRI LANKA

Ceylon (the ancient sanskrit name Sri Lanka was adopted in 1972) is a beautiful island; the kind one would wish to be shipwrecked on along with eight records. It has an area about the size of Wales. It is a tropical country with little change of temperature throughout the year. The south-west monsoon blows from April to September, and the north-east from October to March. Nowadays tea, rubber, and coconuts are the mainstay of the economy, with efforts being made to make the country self-sufficient in rice — the staple food of the people.

Over two-thirds of the people are Sinhalese, (that is of Aryan descent, and therefore more closely related to Europeans), and over one-fifth are Tamils. Other people groups include small numbers of Moslems, Burghers (of Dutch descent), and Veddas (Ceylonese aborigines).

THE PIONEER WORK

In 1812 when the BMS was 20 years old, James Chater along with his wife Ann came to Ceylon from Burma because of his wife's ill health. The British and Foreign Bible Society began work in Ceylon that same year. However the Dutch government alienated the people by allowing only professing Christians to government appointments, and this produced a great unwillingness to listen to the Christian missionaries. After three years, Chater's first church in Colombo had only three members. One of these was Henry Siers, who had left the Dutch Church with a lot of opposition and became Chater's assistant helping with the translation of the New Testament into Portuguese.

Chater was succeeded by Ebenezer Daniel, a man who threw himself into all his labours. Even so the day he landed, he preached twice in English. Within three months 16 people had been admitted to church membership and within a year he was able to preach in Sinhalese. He reorganised and developed the work on the island, starting Sunday school work for about 100 children. Scripture readers or colporteurs were appointed to go from house to house and read the Bible in Sinhalese or Portuguese to any who wanted to hear. Preaching stations were opened in different parts of Colombo, and regular visits were paid to six or seven



neighbouring villages. On the death of his wife at sea in 1835 (returning to England for health reasons), Daniel was able to leave Harris, a newly-arrived missionary at Colombo, and was able to tour the island in quite a successful attempt to reach the people in the jungle villages.

FORGING AHEAD

In the remaining years of the 19th century, many mission stations were opened by other BMS missionaries. These were to be found at Kandy, in the centre of the island; at Matale 16 miles north of Kandy; at Ratnapura, 56 miles south-east of Colombo and capital of Sabaragamuwa Province; at Matara in the extreme south, as well as in Colombo itself. In 1867 the English speaking Baptist church moved to a fine building at Cinnamon Gardens in the centre of Colombo.

Bible translation work made great headway at this time. BMS missionary Charles Carter translated the whole Bible into Sinhalese. He also wrote dictionaries, grammars and a book of Sinhalese hymns. To avoid losses in transit his wife wrote out copies of the entire Bible in Sinhalese and two of the dictionaries he compiled, one of which was reckoned as having 80,000 Sinhalese words.

Akin to this a newly married missionary couple, the Dawsons, established a printing press in Kandy, which at one time printed 90,000 tracts annually in four languages (English, Sinhalese, Dutch and Portuguese). Buddhist priests occasionally came to see it and were said to regard it as an object of wonder and miraculous power!

Schools work has always been one in which Christian missionaries have placed great emphasis. At first there were difficulties in getting parents to send their children, because they looked on education as something novel and intrusive, especially for girls. James Chater, the first BMS missionary, established 10 boys' schools which had an attendance of nearly 500. Ann Chater superintended the work of two girls' schools in Colombo, and these were so successful that another three girls' schools

were begun. In Ebenezer Daniel's time the number of schools had increased to 44, with 1,000 pupils. This work continued to grow, attracting more and more pupils. In celebration of its centenary on the island in 1912 a boys' school was built with money from the Arthington Fund, which was to be renamed Carey Baptist College in 1925. In 1954 it was observed that all schools and colleges on the island had become overcrowded, but none had progressed so rapidly as Carey College, with a staff of over 55, 16 of whom were



Baptists. Mr W M P Jayatunga, the Principal of Carey College, wrote in that year: 'As far as I am concerned, the most promising feature is that the number of our Christian children has increased. We now have over 200, and the most inspiring activity of the week is the Christian Meeting held every Friday. We have a ready response from boys who are always willing to take part, either speaking a few words, offering prayer, reading the Scriptures, or giving special songs."



W M P Jayatunga

CHURCH UNITY AND *INDEPENDENCE*

Returning to the 19th century some comments must be made about the progress of the churches towards independence and unity. As early as 1863 Kandy and Matale churches became self-supporting and elected pastors for themselves. All the churches had become self-supporting by 1893. The Ceylon Baptist Union was formed in 1895 as a means of strength and encouragement to the churches. At first the mission evangelists became the pastors of the churches and the mission stations (that is, centres where there were not enough Christians to form a church) declined. All the churches were Sinhalese or English speaking, with one exception, which was a Tamil Baptist Church.

In 1924 Revd C E Wilson, General Secretary of the BMS visited Ceylon to bring the sad news that owing to shortage of funds the maintenance grant for the work in Ceylon was to be cut by one-half, and that this one-half was to be reduced each year and to disappear after 10 years. This was a savage blow. A missionary in Ceylon wrote: 'That looked like the beginning of the end of the BMS in Ceylon and a heavy blow from any point of view. However the inevitable was faced courageously and 30 years later we are inclined to say that the drastic reduction has proved to be a blessing in disguise.'

What transpired was that the authority and organisation shifted from England to Ceylon, with a central body, the Ceylon Baptist Council, being formed.

JAMES PERERA AND FAMILY

With the background of all these facts and figures it would be good to highlight one particular Sinhalese Buddhist family, of whom many came to faith in Christ. James Perera was a student at the Wesley College, Colombo and there accepted Christ as his Saviour. His family, however, did not welcome this as good news, and because he would not give up this new religion, he was thrown out of the house into the rain with just his bed, Bible and a few belongings. He became a colporteur with the Bible Society and sold many hundreds of gospels on board ships in Colombo Harbour. From there he became a theological student and went on into the Baptist ministry. His family eventually became reconciled to his new life and one of his sons served as a deacon at Cinnamon Gardens Church in Colombo.

Ceylon celebrated its Independence Day on 4 February 1948; at that time there were 26 Baptist churches, 20 ministers and 1,600 members. Since that time there have been tensions between members of the Sinhalese and the Tamil communities, and though there is freedom of worship, and the small Baptist community is not seen as a threat, the number of serving missionaries has been restricted to five or six. These BMS missionaries are welcomed as co-workers, working with the Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya (or Union).



A living church in Sri Lanka



NEPAL

Nepal is situated in central Asia, a country about 500 miles long and 120 miles wide. It nestles between the plains of India and the foothills of the Himalayan mountains. It is one of the five poorest nations in the



world, on an economic level with Ethiopia. For 150 years from 1846-1951 it kept its borders closed in an attempt to preserve its purity as a Hindu nation. It may not be realised but prior to this period, when the trade routes were open, and visitors, particularly traders, came from China, Tibet, Hindustan, Kashmir and the Punjab, missionaries from the Capuchin Order sent 20 expeditions of missionaries to this mission in groups of anything from two to 10 members. They spent their time writing reports to their superiors, writing dictionaries of the language and journals about the religions and customs of the people. They gave instruction in their faith, and baptised those adults that believed and requested it. They performed nine Christian marriages and led Christians in worship. But generally they considered their mission a failure, and had to evacuate to India



when the political climate changed, and all foreigners were regarded with suspicion.

In 1846 the monarchy in Nepal had lost its power, and the country was governed by one family of Prime Ministers: the Ranas. These were dark days for the Nepali people; shut off from the rest of the world, in a showpiece Hindu state, with few resources, and wealth confined to the people in power. The peasant people continued in a primitive hand-to-mouth existence.

Mission work was able to take place with the people who lived on the borders of Nepal. In 1892 Nepalese Christians formed their own Gorkha Mission and European/North American Mission Stations were established in two particular areas, firstly, where Nepali emigres had settled in the Darjeeling tea plantations and secondly, around the various Indian railway stations that stopped at the Nepali border.

In 1950, in a palace revolution, King Tribhuwan broke the power of the Rana Prime Ministers and became ruler of his own country. Both democratic processes, and the borders of Nepal were opened up.

The beginnings of the United Mission to Nepal took place in an unassuming way. In 1949 Dr Bob Fleming, an American Methodist had applied for and been granted permission to go into Nepal on an expedition to study and collect birds. A second trip was made 1951-52 in which he took his family and another missionary couple Dr Carl Friedericks and his wife Betty Ann, plus stocks of medicine and equipment for a clinic. They stayed in Tansen for six weeks, and saw about 1,500 patients in that time. About 200 people watched through the window as they performed their first operation, at the end of which Dr Friedericks displayed the bladder stone to the onlookers, who gave a spontaneous cheer. At the end of their stay town leaders came and asked them to return and establish a hospital at Tansen. And so from this small beginning the UMN came into being in 1954, not without conditions, and restrictions (such as open evangelism and seeking of converts being forbidden). Some Christians were informed against and spent time in prison.

The situation changed again in June 1990 when the King made an announcement, granting amnesty to all religious prisoners, and dismissing all cases against people waiting trial for religious activities. Along with many other Societies, the BMS has sent missionaries to help in this Partnership. The first missionary was a nurse, who worked in the hospital at Kathmandu. Other nurses, teachers, administrators, community workers, dentists and engineers have followed.





THE OTHER SIDE OF THE

If you're not too interested "in the how we were evacuated from Zaire and now we're feeling guilty" stories, I can't blame you,' writes Carolyn Green. It was interesting at first, but now it's a bit boring. If I give you the other side of the story, perhaps you'll find it is not so boring after all.'

NE DAY in September 1991, the balloon we'd all been watching went up. Advice from all quarters said that expatriates, and even missionaries, should leave. Most heeded the advice. However, some of us stayed on as the time wasn't right. Let me tell you about that day at Kimpese.

The local population didn't know what was happening. Planes were arriving and leaving all day, or so it seemed. The missionaries were all leaving, it seemed. The large crowd of unknown young Americans, Peace Corps volunteers from the whole of Bas-Zaire, were milling around. Suddenly they too had gone and there was an eerie quiet.



Left: Carolyn and Steve Green Below: Scenes of evacuation



Walking back from the airstrip through the hospital, an old lady commented in amazement, 'Oh, look! They've left her behind!'

I was tickled but the humour didn't last too long as we realised that out of a missionary group of over 30 people, only 11 remained. It was like a mass bereavement. The church was stunned, because, although they had known it might happen, they hadn't ever faced the reality.

It was a temptation to sit and sob, but we remembered that a praise

'Steve and I had read other people's prayer letters that "the Spirit fell on the meeting". That was the only description of what followed.'



evening had been arranged by the Hospital Christian Fellowship group. Frankly, we weren't in the mood, but being involved in the music group we had to. The auditorium was full. The evening passed well with songs and praises and an evangelistic address from a Malian dentist.

By the clock, it was time to finish, but Madituka Beyo, the head of the HCF training school, realised that this was just a preparation. He called us to repent. Repent of our involvement with corruption and the regime which had precipitated all the troubles of the week. There was an amazing reaction to this call.

Steve and I had read other people's prayer letters that 'the Spirit fell on the meeting'. That was the only description of what followed. Every person present was on their knees, weeping and confessing their part in the folly of the country. They cried aloud for God to forgive them, for putting a man in the place of God, for singing songs to him, calling him saviour of the nation, having his image in every



public place. They called to God for forgiveness for not having spoken out against dishonesty, by their silence accepting the system of bribery and corruption.

They, no we, wept and prayed for quite a while, and then there followed an hour of powerful prophetic prayer. Prophetic in the sense of speaking God's Word into the current situation, reminding God of His promise in 2 Chronicles 7:14, and claiming the promise made to heal the land when the people pray.

We were stunned by that evening. In fact Steve and I said, as we walked home, 'If we die tonight it will all have been worth it.' And we knew that this group was not the only group praying in Zaire that night. Eleven years in Zaire was just the run-up to seeking God's hand on a group of people. We were thrilled to have been there.

Next morning, as two of the three expatriates at the French service, we felt a tremendous privilege to be there with, and be a part of the Church. Some of our colleagues had been 'taken out of the situation' but we felt that God was reassuring us that there was a place for us at IME for a little while.

The five weeks that followed were the best of our missionary lives. They were very difficult. Can you believe that in the midst of national disaster, the nurses went on strike for more pay? Gwen Hunter and Steve ran the gauntlet of troubled Kinshasa to track down drug supplies, then Gwen, accompanied by Charles Harvey, a Canadian pastor, made two more trips to buy up as much medicine as possible and try to find money from the banks to pay salaries.

But the fellowship was deep and we talked and prayed at a level we'd not achieved before. As we emptied colleague's houses and distributed their possessions, we were re-



minded of the fragility of all we possess and that Jesus is the only sure thing.

If my people which are called by My name will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgue their sins and heal their land. 2 CHRONICLES 7:14

In the last week that we were at IME in October, there was an extraordinary meeting of the Board to discuss the nurses' pay demands. During the lunch break, Steve was talking with some of the leaders of the church communities. They brought up the subject of corruption in the church — the willingness of the Protestant Church as a whole to accept political favours from the President and the church's failure to speak out against bribery, theft and violence.

From these Zairian friends came the conviction that if the church in Zaire was to survive, it must truly become a 'confessing' church. They likened the situation to that of wartime Germany when the state church was silent on the issues of the day. Only the confessing Church spoke out, was persecuted and suffered. At the end of the day the acquiescent church died and the confessing church is still alive.

They asked Steve, 'Are you with us? Will you pray with us that the Church of Christ in Zaire becomes a confessing and prophetic church?'

His answer was, and still is, 'I'm with you.'

So when you hear depressing news of Zaire, remember these signs, the ones we were privileged to see and hear, and share now with you. When Steve returns, can he assure our brothers and sisters in Zaire that you are 'with them' in this?

It's not as bad as all that . . .' Chris and Alison Rudall had been assured in the weeks preceding their interview with the BMS Candidate Board.

ERE WE WERE, arriving once again at Baptist House, this time for the final and possibly most probing of the series of interviews and medicals by which the Board was to assess our suitability for service overseas. I felt as if we had leapt through a series of hoops, and in front of us lay the final one, soaked in petrol and ready for ignition.

After a kind welcome from the chairman, we were invited into the coffee lounge and asked to 'meet' him again, this time in front of a camera as part of a publicity video. Accordingly, we shook hands at least three more times until the film director was satisfied and we could go ahead and drink one of several cups of coffee we had been proffered as part of the screenplay.

I had arrived with several reservations in the back of my mind, none of which I had found easy to express, even to myself.

There was an unnerving sense of our lives in their hands. Up to that point, we had been seeking the Lord's direction for ourselves, then making the decisions, step by step.

Now we were being expected to hand over the package of our experience to the Board for their verdict. I hoped and prayed that they would be attuned to the Holy Spirit's prompting and that in reality the decision still lay in God's hands. Our family's future is surely our responsibility - and here we were trusting the judgement of a group of people, the majority of whom we had never met before.

Why were we prepared to do it? A respect for the BMS built up over many years; many months of

ON THE RECEIVING

END



Christopher and Alison Rudall

seeking the Lord's direction, and a strong sense that if we were to reject this opportunity, it would be like setting our hands to the plough and looking back.

I was concerned too about a rather paternalistic approach that we had come across elsewhere — 'We know what is best for you . . . '.

Was the Board prepared to give us credit for the journey we had already travelled on to reach this point?

For someone used to the single-interview, straight-answer approach of job-hunting in the industrial environment, the whole process had seemed an odd way of going about recruitment. But as we

Christopher and Alison Rudall, with their two boys — Alexander who is nearly three and David who is just over one year old — have been accepted for service in Nepal. Seconded to the International Nepal Fellowship, Christopher will be involved in community water supplies and sanitation work.

had progressed through the selection process I had become reconciled to the need for such a cautious, step-by-step approach. By the time we came before the Board I felt that we had nothing to lose.

Our only responsibility was to be clear; clear about what we believed God was saying to us, and clear in our answers to the Board's questions. In understanding this, the pressure of the situation was immediately removed. There was no competition, no success or failure, only discerning God's will on the matter. For these reasons it also seemed somehow inappropriate that we should afterwards be congratulated by friends for being accepted.

As the day progressed, we became reassuringly aware that these people were not there to judge, criticise, or catch us out, but to do what was right in God's sight — from the warm welcome to the opening time of worship and meditation and into the interviews.

For the final session of the day we were ushered into a room to find tables arranged in a large square and 16 or so members of the Board sitting round smiling at us — a potentially intimidating situation, but at the same time it is difficult to see how it could be avoided if a corporate decision is to be reached.

Some questions were easy. 'Do you like curry?' Some were more probing, and some were impossible to answer. 'What would you do if. . . .?'

Following this we were sent out during final deliberations then brought in to hear the verdict.

'It seems good to us . . .' and, yes, it seemed good to us too.

After our acceptance and welcome into the BMS 'family', we were ushered away for photographs. And as we talked to various people in Baptist House, the word seemed to have spread through the building before us. I wondered if a message had flashed up on all the computer monitors in the building — '***RUDALLS ACCEPTED***'.

Afterwards, I thought about how we had been on the receiving end of something, but what exactly? We had not been before a firing squad, neither had we been prisoners in the dock, but we had been on the receiving end of something very special — a group of people committed to seeking the Lord's will for us, and in so doing, seeking the best for us and our family.

A CELEBRATION IN FLOWERS

With Love to the World – 200 years of the

Baptist Missionary Society

12, 13 June

BROADMEAD BAPTIST CHURCH BRISTOL FLOWER FESTIVAL

9.30 am - 9.00 pm

Admission £1.50 adults 50p children

Enquiries re coach parties, etc. Tel: (0272) 656447



Dr and Mrs Wickramasinghe, Sri Lanka

New Appointment

Former Serampore student, Dr W G Wickramasinghe, has recently been appointed Justice of the Peace for the whole of Sri Lanka.

Dr Wickramasinghe took his oaths before a High Court Judge in Colombo on 14 February.

Dr Wickramasinghe, who is the president of the Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya (union), was principal of Carey College, Sri Lanka, for 21 years and principal of Trinity College, Kandy for 11 years.

He serves on many national and international committees including the General Council of the Baptist World Alliance and the Asian Baptist Fellowship of which he was the first chairman.

Accident

The Missionary Aviation Fellowship plane, *Mike Victor*, based at IME Kimpese, Zaire, crashed near Muanza, in the Bandundu Region, early in February.

Evidently the plane, which was carrying a Swiss missionary couple, clipped a tree close to the airstrip at Muanza, an area of American Baptist linked work. The husband was killed and Myumbi, the Zairian pilot who is well known to BMS missionaries in Kimpese, was seriously injured. He was evacuated to a hospital in South Africa where he is on a ventilator and dialysis support machine.

Serampore

A report from the Theology Department of Serampore College says that 'Carey's arrival in India in 1793 has caught the imagination of many individuals and bodies, not only in India, but throughout the world.

'We (in Serampore), at first, have been slow to react, but now many plans are being thought-out, some have already been worked out, to celebrate the events.

'The plans for a new building project for class-rooms, gymnasium-cummeeting hall, seminar complex, lectures, consultations, seminars, film project, publication and others are taking final shape.

'The government, the university grant commission, church bodies and individuals will be approached for their help and co-operation.'

Private University

With the help of the United Mission to Nepal, the country's first private university will develop into an advanced education centre of international standard.

'We think it's very important to encourage high-quality education, which will save the best students from going abroad for further study,' says Mark Keller, UMN Education Secretary.

Independently from the national system, Kathmandu University is building its new campus in beautiful surroundings just outside Kathmandu. UMN's promised involvement includes funding for the main science building, providing four expatriate science teachers and scholarship funds.

Started as Kathmandu Valley Campus a few years ago, Kathmandu University now has about 500 science students. When the expansion is finished, the

number of students will be around 2,000 and courses will also be given in computer science and possibly education and business administration.

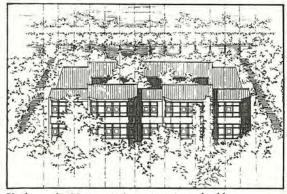
'The possibilities to form international linkages and to develop a curriculum that is responsive to the present needs of society are other important reasons for UMN's commitment,' said Mark Keller.

from 'UMN News' January 1992

Younger Leadership

At the National Chinese
Christian Conference held in
Beijing in January a call
was made for a renewed
emphasis on younger
leadership, the role of
women, church order and
commitment to the ThreeSelf principles of selfgovernment, self-support
and self-propagation.

The 273 delegates from throughout China heard a report called 'Grace Beyond Words' which outlined the work of the Protestant churches during the past five years. The report noted that the number of Protestant churches in China has risen from 4,000 in 1986 to more than 7,000 today.



Kathmandu University's main science building





Cathedral, São Paulo, Brazil

Carey Speaks Today

'Well of course he does! You'd expect the Archbishop of Canterbury to do that.'

'No! Not George. William! One of the founders of the Baptist Missionary Society. . . .'

The conference began with a well-prepared 'radio-script' along these lines.

The Rev David Smith, the main speaker gave a very fine address on Carey, the back-ground to his views; on mission; his views on scripture and mission; what has happened to this vision and what we can learn from it.

It is challenging to reflect on whether or not we have Carey's commitment to know what scripture says and his determination to act on what he found.

We are probably familiar with his saying, 'Expect great things from God, attempt great things for God.'

The concern of the organisers – Edinburgh and Lothians Baptist Missionary Auxiliary — was not only to look back to Carey, but also to consider our responsibility to take the gospel to the ethnic communities of our city.

A debate, with the motion, 'To win and nurture converts from the ethnic communities, we need a special agency rather than our churches,' focused our minds on this subject.

Four people from 'Asian Concern' formed a panel to answer questions. From what they said, it was hard to avoid the impression that the churches, of various denominations, are not doing much in this task, although individuals from the churches are active.

This impression takes us back to Carey. In the 1790's, the Particular Baptists, to which Carey belonged, depended so absolutely on the sovereignty of God that they actually did little about overseas mission.

Challenge is necessary, but so is the assurance that, in Carey's words of, 'I have God, and His Word is sure . . . and God's cause will triumph.'

Confidence V

In a recent survey, Brazilians said they had more confidence in the Catholic Church than any other institution in the country.

Of the 950 people polled, 48 per cent said the Catholic Church had a credible reputation. A similar poll in 1990 gave the church a 45 per cent approval rate.

The big losers in the survey were Brazil's government and political parties. The government's approval rating fell from 36 per cent in the 1990 survey to six per cent last year. Political parties, which have never ranked very highly, fell from seven per cent to three per cent.

Assembly Missionary Speaker

The annual missionary sermon will be preached by Dr Denton Lotz, General Secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, during the closing of the 1992 Baptist Assembly on Thursday, 30 April.

Dr Lotz was appointed Director of Evangelism and Education of the BWA in 1980, and then became General Secretary in 1988. Prior to his appointment, he was a missionary with the American Baptist Churches in the USA. He served for 11 years as a Professor at Ruschlikon Seminary, Switzerland.

With a passionate desire for evangelism, Dr Lotz has played a major role in bringing together theologians to discuss issues of contextualisation, secularism and proclaiming the Gospel today.

VIEW POINT

I am writing to express my profound disquiet concerning the article on El Salvador in the January edition of the Herald.

It was an interesting account of Northern Baptist College students to that country. However, I am concerned first about the way that the words from the Communion were used. It seemed to imply that the people's suffering in El Salvador had atoning and redeeming significance.

Now, their suffering is great, but not unique. The work foreshadowed in the words of the Institution is unique. By Jesus' death alone can sinful and guilty men and women be saved. To use the words of the Institution to describe people's suffering is wrong and should at all costs be avoided.

Second, I was concerned that the students were going back to find out where God is working. That sentiment seemed to imply that God has not revealed Himself clearly. Surely the whole point is that God has clearly revealed Himself, in Jesus, and that this revelation has been inscripturated. He, God, has clearly revealed Himself so men and women must listen to Him. He has already spoken. There's no need to look, simply humble oneself and listen.

I am writing as pastor of a Baptist Church but am not writing on behalf of the church.

Patrick J Buckley North Baddesley Southampton

CALL TO PRAYER

19-25 APRIL

Bangladesh: Christian Education

Sunday School work is an important part of nurturing young Christians in Bangladesh. The teaching of religion in schools is compulsory and the children of Christian families may be tested on their faith — but there may be no competent teacher to train them. Pray for Christian teachers in schools — that they may see their profession as a relevant and happy vocation.

Valerie Hamilton heads up the Sunday School work for the Bangladesh Baptist Sangha (Union). She reports on one Bible Camp held at the end of last year:

'At a camp in a small village way off the beaten track about 130 children attended from 10 Sunday Schools. The Church there was working through some problems and had an awareness of the need for the Lord to work among them. As we held meetings with the children, grown-ups also came and a number of people from other faiths stood around to listen. It was a tremendous opportunity to witness. We pray for her and all her Bangladeshi colleagues in their vital work among children.

26 APRIL-2 MAY

Baptist Assembly

At the Westminster Central Hall this week, the BiCentenary celebrations will be launched during the Baptist Assembly! The meetings will be driven by the Assembly theme, 'That the World may Believe'. While we celebrate the past we look forward to the future —

eager to hear the Spirit's voice in new methods of work and witness for the Baptist community in Britain and overseas.

And are you, Lord Jesus, still praying that we may be one in your love, like you with the Father uniting that all in the world may believe?

And are you still patiently working with people who squabble and split, their backs on the world ever turning on people you died to forgive?

Lord Jesus,
keep on praying for us,
keep on working for us,
transform today's
sad group of disciples
as you changed your
mixed up band of apostles
and create a church,
united in love,
linked in service,
one in mission
to a world that longs to
believe.

3-9 MAY

Zaire: Bandundu Region

From the great River Zaire in the west to Lake Mai-Ndombe in the east; from the equatorial rain forest in the north to the Rivers Kwa and Kasai in the south, is the Bandundu Region. There are four villages large enough to be called 'towns' with populations of around 20,000 each. Communications are poor, transport unreliable and life difficult. Life is no less difficult during these troubled times in Zaire.

This week we remember Pastor Eboma, Regional President, and Pastor Mompanda, responsible for overseeing evangelism in the region. The church has a tremendous opportunity to witness to the reconciling power of Christ during these days of uncertainty and anxiety in Zaire. Pray for Christians throughout the country and, this week, particularly for those in Bandundu Region.

10-16 MAY

Nepal: Education

As a new freedom takes root in Nepal and people learn more of democracy, the education of Nepal's people becomes a burning issue. In order to take its rightful place in world politics, Nepal needs to use the tremendous resources available to it in her people.

The United Mission to Nepal is involved in training in a number of ways — through the Kathmandu Business School, the Gandaki Boarding School and the Karnali Technical School to name a few. Non-formal education is another important feature of UMN education work. We remember Joy Ransom, Corinna Woods, Graham and Debbie Atkinson, Ruth and Jeremy Clewett, and Sheila Loader — all involved in education in Nepal. Being a teacher brings with it many opportunities as Sheila says,

'What would you do if a Hindu teacher, guru, turned up on your doorstep one day and said, "I know you are a Christian, explain the gospel to me!" There are so many thirsty for God's Word.'

17-23 MAY

Brazil: Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina

The two most southerly states in Brazil with a strong Germanic and Italian influence, they are seen by Brazilian Baptists as their greatest evangelistic challenge. The need to

develop methods suitable for the region and prepare leaders who will be able to cope with its challenges makes the small seminary in Porto Alegre of strategic importance.

Martin and Kathie Hewitt live in Porto Alegre, where Martin teaches at the Seminary. The Seminary is looking for a Director and this is a matter for prayer. Roger and Angela Collinson are church planting in Rio Grande. Chris and Marion Collict are involved in local church and Association work in São Bento, Santa Catarina. We pray for more Brazilian pastors eager to work in this area which is culturally so different from the rest of Brazil, and for the strengthening of church life in Associations.

24-30 MAY

Expect Great Things from God. Attempt Great Things for God.

William Carey's famous epithet was the theme of a sermon preached by him in Nottingham in May 1792. He expounded Isaiah 54: 'Enlarge the space for your dwelling, extend the curtains of your tent to the full.' God speaking through contemporary events was telling His people to be bolder, to widen their vision and so, Carey said, through the events of 1792, was calling it to mission.

And so He does today. We remember the life, work and witness of the Baptist Associations in England, Scotland and Wales; and for all churches that the vision for world mission may be renewed and lie at the heart of the church's life.

31 MAY-6 JUNE

Zaire: Kinshasa

As capital of Zaire and seat of government, Kinshasa is the centre of administration for civil and military authorities, for private businesses and organisations and for the Church. Over the past few weeks, it has also been the focus of tragedy as a march for peace and democracy led by church leaders was fired on by soldiers and many people killed.

This week, let us remember the ministry of the Baptist Community of the River Zaire in Kinshasa and of missionaries who are in Britain anxiously awaiting news of developments in Zaire. As one returned missionary said,

'The money has been devaluing continuously, and food prices are very high so that it's hard to imagine how an ordinary Zairian family is able to survive. Most of the expatriate community has left and many factories, warehouses and stores remain severely affected so that 75 per cent of the Kinshasa workforce is now unemployed.'

7-13 JUNE

Young People

Around a quarter of the world Baptist family is under 35 years old. We live in a younger world! This week we share in the Baptist Youth World Day of Prayer on Sunday. Let us reflect on how young people are used in the work and witness of our local churches.

We pray for the BMS 28:19 Action Team programme, and the 22 recently returned young people who have been sharing in mission in India, Bangladesh, France and Brazil. They will be sharing their experiences with British Baptist churches soon. Pray for safety in travel as they do that.

We remember the preparations for the 12th Baptist Youth World Conference in Harare, Zimbabwe in 1993. The impact of the 1988 Conference in Glasgow is still keenly felt by many churches in this country.

We pray for young people in BMS summer teams in El Salvador, Belgium and Italy, and those preparing to attend the European Baptist Federation Camp in the UK.

MISSIONARY MOVEMENTS

ARRIVALS

Joy Knapman in February from Sri Lanka

Avelino and Ana Ferreira in March from Brazil

DEPARTURES

in February to France

Keith and Barbara Hodges in March to Brazil

Steve Green

in March to Zaire

Margot Bafende in March to Zaire

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LEGACIES

e was	45 000 00
E Horne	45,000.00
A E Pacey	100.00
F J Beale	250.00
E M Grassie	5,344.79
B J Keogh	593.75
Lilian V Collins	12,000.00
M V Bamford	18,000.00
Elizabeth Horne	36,000.00
D E Collins	2,000.00
W M Franks	7,076.67
B N Cooper	1,814.13
F E Mills	1,131.98

GENERAL WORK

Aylesbury: £10.00; Halifax: £250.00; Rode Methodist Church: £25.00; Aberdeen: £25.00; Postal Order: £20.00; Evangelical Trust: £250.00; Carmarthen: £20.00; Cardiff: £8.30; Swansea: £20.00; Anon: £99.56; Aylesbury: £25.00; via Ron Armstrong: £8.89; Sun Life Commission: £11.64; Darlington: £40.00; Amersham: £200.00.

