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HERALD

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TRAINING PASTORS

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TEACHING
MISSIONARY KIDS

NEWS ...

NON FORMAL EDUCATION

ANOTHER QUIET WEEK

MAKING WAVES



PLUS DOUBLE TAKE ACTION PULL OUT

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Cover illustration by Sarah Prentice.

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BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY



Katie Norris high in Himalayas of Nepal.

Eyes Opened

By Katie Norris

How a non-formal education in Nepal is opening the way for women to accept new ideas.

The way literacy classes are started in the various United Mission to Nepal (UMN) projects is usually with a request from village representatives for a class to begin in their village.

Once the request has been made, villagers are asked to choose a committee, a chairperson, a treasurer and two facilitators to teach the class. The committee lists all those who want to attend the class, a minimum of 15. This becomes the register at the beginning of each class.

The idea of a committee is to make the literacy class the responsibility not only of the facilitators but of others as well. They are to encourage attendance, help the facilitators and keep a record of any finances. Although the classes are free, participants are expected to give an initial five rupees (about 3p) which goes into the class "kitty" to be used when a need arises.

The facilitators receive an initial training at the nearest UMN project centre. Each month one day follow-up training sessions are given to encourage them, to go through new material and to share ideas. Some may have an opportunity to go to Pokhara for a three or four day training workshop which is held once a year. The Pokhara workshop is for mission-wide project facilitators so not only is it a time for input from the Non-Formal Education (NFE) of UMN but also a time for facilitators to share informally with one another and learn from each other.

They get to practise different methods of teaching, are encouraged and usually have a *romeylo* (fun) time as well.

Once the initial training is over, classes begin.➤

The broad theme of this month's magazine is education. We take a look at theological education in Brazil, at non-formal education in Nepal, at teaching blind girls in Bangladesh and at providing schooling for missionary children in an isolated part of Nepal.

It is clear from these articles that education is never one way. All involved, teacher (tutor, lecturer or facilitator) and students are together within an educational process. "By your pupils you are taught" is not just a phrase from an old musical it is part of the reality of Christian education today.

In fact, this is part of the reality of our involvement in world mission. We've moved a long way since those days when people set sail for foreign parts believing they knew it all - if they ever did. Those who go as a Christians to work within a different culture soon realise that they are receiving far more than they are giving.

But this is also true for those in the UK who are fully committed to world mission. If mission is to be supported properly, if prayer is to be intelligent, if giving is to be purposeful, if action is to be significant, then time needs to be taken to learn about countries, national Christians and missionary workers. However, as soon as we begin to do that our own attitudes change, our horizons are broadened, our Bible study is enlivened and new possibilities for mission at home are discovered. We hear God speaking to us in new ways. We see people in other places, not as objects of pity, but as fellow human beings with concerns and needs much like our own. And we learn to stand with them in their various struggles for full and meaningful lives. ■

EYES

problem of two wives in one household, and so on. The goal is not only to discuss but, through discussion, relate the situations to a local and personal level. This is known as functional literacy.

For example, a picture may be shown of a family with all their possessions packed into baskets. They are walking through an area where the hillsides are bare.

In the discussion the reasons why the family have to move

and where they are going are drawn out. They note the lack of trees, so no firewood and no fodder for the animals. "What is it like where we live? Do we have enough firewood or fodder? Why not? How can we improve our situation? Can we get help from anyone?"

Class numbers vary and attendance fluctuates. After a day working in the fields and all the work which has to be done around the home it is often easier to stay home and

OPENED

Where they are held varies from village to village. Some erect a special shelter, others use facilities already there. Shelters can be made from woven leaves and stick walls and roofs; stone and mud walls with a thatch roof; or if someone has a big enough *dansar* (animal shed) it could be there in the room above the buffalo and cattle.

Each class is supplied, by the UMN project, with a blackboard, chalk, a set of *Naya Goreto* literacy books for each participant, and a kerosene pressure lamp.

The *Naya Goreto* books are produced by the Nepal Government Ministry of Education and Culture and are generally used in literacy classes throughout Nepal.

The kerosene lamp is the only light for the whole class so early arrivals in the evening get the best spot nearest the lantern.

Facilitators are taught to conduct the class using a participatory method. Topics presented in the books are used to create discussion and raise issues. There is a main picture for each chapter and key letters and words and short stories relating to such topics as health, sanitation, maternal and child health, deforestation,

To be able to write their own names, instead of giving a thumbprint when a signature is required gives them a real sense of achievement. Being literate gives them self-esteem.



sleep. However, it is amazing how regularly people do attend. The classes usually run in the evening for two or two and a half hours and for six days a week. Breaks are given according to the agricultural season and main festivals, with long breaks during the rice planting and harvesting seasons when there is little time for anything but work.

A good facilitator will make the learning time fun, using games, drama and examples to keep everyone interested. Most facilitators have only had the minimum of education themselves, taught in the traditional way by "up front" teachers and passive students, so even though they been trained in the new method of teacher/student interaction, it is not always put into practice.

Classes are usually visited once a month by the local project supervisors. They observe the class and help the facilitator through any difficulties.

The majority attending the classes are women, often 100 per cent. To be able to write their own names, instead of giving a thumbprint when a signature is required gives them a real sense of achievement. Being literate gives them self-esteem.

Many feel that through their new found literacy their eyes have been opened to learn and accept new ideas. In some areas, these classes have been like a doorway through which they could move to accept health programmes and clean water programmes. As people become more aware of what they can do to improve their situation, they begin to take action.

From a Christian point of view, it helps people to have a more receptive and open mind to think through new ideas. And it is now possible for them to read the Bible for themselves.

In the Ghorkha district a mother-tongue literacy programme was developed to help women whose mother-tongue is

not Nepali but Gurung. The programme was run in the same way with a committee and facilitators. The facilitators, through two seven day workshops, helped develop the teaching materials.

The programme ran in six villages. A whole language approach was used through observation, imitation, trial and error and participation. Gurungs enjoy music and dance so these were given a key place especially in the early stages. Lessons were built up around the songs.

The facilitators and the participants wrote new songs and those who could not write sufficiently well just dictated to someone else.

Songs were written around development and health issues. One song, with an anti-smoking message, was particularly popular when the local supervisor came to visit since it meant she had to get up and dance. ■



opened eyes



Most Brazilian Baptists, Brazilian evangelicals, are not producing any decent work. They are producing wishy-washy devotional stuff that feeds nobody.

The Baptist Theological Seminary in Curitiba is becoming more accepted by the churches both in the state of Paraná and in one or two other states. The level of teaching has grown over the years so that our personnel are as good as in the majority of seminaries.

We don't have the prestige of Rio de Janeiro or Recife, which are long-standing and have a national reputation. We are primarily a state seminary but nevertheless one of the six Baptist seminaries officially recognised by the Brazilian Baptist Convention in full status. This means there can be transfers between Curitiba and Rio or Recife and the other big seminaries.

We have three degree courses: in theology, religious education and sacred music. There are just over 130 students, most of them on the theology course, although a few just come in to do one or two subjects.

The majority of students have a full-time job either in secular or church work, so our classes are in the evening.

Most of the teaching staff

are Brazilian but we have Americans on the staff as well as foreigners like me. About four or five of us are working as full-time teachers, the rest, usually 20 or more, come in to do one evening.

About half of our male students will end up as pastors. Others will serve as missionaries, religious educators within the churches, or work within a church's music ministry, either paid or unpaid. A lot of them will just go back to their churches as lay people better equipped to serve the community.

A number of students are preparing for missionary service

at state, national, or world level. It is a privilege to work with them through their four years and then to see them go out into the churches. One of my students is now working in a ministry with the deaf.

We have started a postgraduate course. It is not as high as a Masters, but it is a beginning, an in-between course. Students will come in twice a year for a fortnight. We hope that within a few years we shall be putting on our own masters course.

However, much will depend on the quality and qualifications of the staff. We need teachers with doctorates and masters degrees in order to get started.

All courses are geared to practical involvement in church work or mission evangelism. One evangelistic group is run by the students themselves and this has now been recognised by the State Convention. We have been looking closely at this aspect of training because often it has not related to anything dynamic that we have been doing. We rely heavily upon local pastors but if they don't have the time or the ability to lead and instruct then the student suffers. However, in future, the pastors will have to give a comprehensive report on a student's involvement in a church. Without it a student will not complete the course satisfactorily.

We do concentrate on giving



TEACHING

THEOLOGY



One of the tutors at the theological seminary in Curitiba.

our students some basic experience in hospital service, in hospital chaplaincy - they have to do a course related to this. We are always looking for other opportunities in social work. The problem is that the students have to do it off their own bat. They don't get paid for what they do and if they are working full-time as well as studying we have to be very careful not to overload them.

A big difference between seminary work in Brazil and theological education in the UK is that we do not lecture. We have to teach because they depend on what they get in class. Books are not available to the same degree as in Britain. Many of the books we have are translations of something that

has no relationship at all to what we are doing. Anyway, at the best, these books contain an imported language, an imported theology and often outdated ideas.

Most Brazilian Baptists, Brazilian evangelicals, are not producing any decent work. They are producing wishy-washy devotional stuff that feeds nobody.

Filho in Brasilia is writing some decent Old Testament stuff. He doesn't go as far as he ought, but at least he is writing and dealing with Biblical subjects. Most of the time we are on imported stuff.

I don't teach from a text book but from what I have built over the years through my own study and from my experi-

ence in Brazil. There are times when I produce hand-outs and there are times when I don't. There are times when they have to learn for themselves but, because of the education system in Brazil, this is not easy. They are used to having it put on the table for them. Sometimes it is quicker for us to do that but it doesn't mean that we are more efficient. It doesn't mean they are actually going to read it, or understand it.

How do we help students to think? It all has to be backed up with as much reading as we can give them.

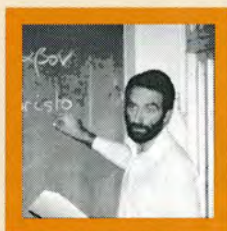
What perplexes me is that BMS missionaries in Brazil haven't produced a thing apart from articles in magazines. I wonder why? ■

LOGY IN CURITIBA

By **Keith Hodges**, *Dean of the Seminary.*

WHY FOREIGN TEACHERS?

Martin Hewitt teaching New Testament Greek at Porto Alegre Baptist Seminary



David Pountain asked **Martin Hewitt** what value there was in having people from other countries teaching in Porto Alegre Seminary.

We are of great value because of the preparation and the breadth of our own study and knowledge. We have had greater opportunities for study and have been able to study full-time instead of having to work all day.

We come with a different philosophy of life and a different way of living and doing things, this enriches the life of our seminary.

I think the British are better prepared. We seem to have had a broader base of study than others. Mind you, the Brazilians think we are a bit closed emotionally when we get here, difficult to know and so on.

The British speak better Portuguese and learn it more quickly than the Americans. We have a lot less accent. It partly comes from having learnt French at school so we already come knowing a foreign language.

Martin, what have you been learning while you've been teaching these students?

Patience! The cultural exchange between us is two-sided and it changes. I come here with a different theological background to the standard Brazilian teacher and so I teach different things. At the same time I enter into conflict sometimes with my students because they have a traditional Brazilian background so we find ourselves in heated discussions. I then modify some of my ideas and they modify theirs. We are mixing our English and Brazilian culture together as we discuss in class and that is good for all of us.

How different is teaching in Brazil from teaching in the UK?

I have never taught theology in Britain, but I would imagine that the academic level of students at start level would tend to be higher at home. The breadth of schooling in the UK is much wider than here therefore there are things that I could assume that I can't assume here.

Then there are also things like note taking, how to read a book and analyse what the writer is saying, criticism and how to write an essay. Many students arrive at the seminary never having learnt about these things. In Brazil the education system is based on learning by rote. In the UK it is based upon learning by analysis and experience. So the whole ethos of teaching and learning is different. I have to adopt some of my methods to them, but at the same time I try to teach them to learn some of my methods because I think they will be better church leaders because of it.

However, I actually produce my notes, using a computer, and hand them out to my students. We can then actually discuss what is there. We don't have to spend time writing everything out and they end up with a mini-volume of something which is not available elsewhere. ■

I STUDY AT DAWN...MIDDAY...NIGHT

Who are the people being trained in Brazilian Baptist Seminaries? What is it costing them study? What kind of work are they preparing for?

These are some of the questions David Pountain asked students at the Baptist Seminary in Porto Alegre, in the southern Brazilian State of Rio Grande do Sul.

How do you see your future work?

I am hoping to work with my church. There are many congregations and churches without pastors, so we are training lay people like myself for leadership.

I hope to join the ship Logos, but first I have to do six months training in Rio de Janeiro.

I want to complete my studies at university. Then I shall look for a specific ministry within the church, perhaps with adolescents or with young people. After that I hope to enter a pastoral ministry.

I've set out this year to pray. I know I am not called to lead a church, so I must choose a particular area in which I shall specialise. During this year I am going to find out what God wants me to do.

I am looking in two directions, one is ministry and the other is teaching. I would like to be able to write good Christian books especially from the point of view of the scientist.

How are you supporting yourself whilst doing your studies?

I'm a baker. I have my own business and my father helps me.

I'm a Geography teacher.

I work two days in the seminary as a librarian.

I work in the town hall. My area of specialisation is organisational methods, particularly in the design of forms and standardisation of ways of working. My job is to minimise bureaucracy.

How difficult is it to study when you have to sustain a day job?

When you've got small children it is very difficult, if you are going to give proper attention to your family. If I am not too tired I study when I get home from class. The class finishes at 10.40 pm so I can get home by 11 pm. If I am too tired to study at night I get up early and study before I go to work. When I've got a lot of work, I study late at night and before I go to work. The weekends are a mixture of study and church work.

I study either at midday, during my lunch break, or sometimes I just don't go to worship on Sunday morning in order to get my work done.

I mark all the dates when I have to get work done and try to spread it out evenly so that I don't end up with a mountain to do in a short time.

You've got to choose your priorities with great care. Because I have started in the seminary I have cut down the work I am doing for my university course. I certainly can't continue the way I was working before. It would just be impossible. When I accepted God's call into the ministry God opened the doors for me. The situation in my work has changed. I am able to fit the two in together.

What kind of support do you get from the churches?

The church where I am working is a congregation (of a larger church). Ever since I arrived the church has supported me. I feel that I am valued by the congregation. But financially the congregation has nothing to give me. My home church, pays my monthly course fees.

In a big city like Porto Alegre we desperately need a good seminary. Before we were able to come here the nearest seminary was Sao Paulo. So my church supports me very strongly because they see this is a good seminary and because whilst studying here in the evenings, I can work during the day and at the

weekend I am still in my own church. I can put into practice in my church what I am learning in the seminary.

My church is very poor and cannot give me financial backing. But in terms of opportunity to work my church gives me lots of opportunities and I have learnt a lot. When I expressed my desire to leave the church because I was coming to the end of my course the church was sad because it needs workers.

What do you value most from the opportunity to study here?

The access to teachers, the open talking and the opportunity to speak freely. I sense the real participation of my teachers. We've all got a chance to talk, to work up ideas and to help one another.

I value the experience of pastors who speak to us from personal experience. Then there is the opportunity to live alongside other students and to share problems, help one another and pray for one another. I have learnt to think more about other people, to live as a family and to care. When I leave I am going to miss being together with other students. ■



Student on the right: "I work in the Town Hall designing forms."

WHY FOREIGN TEACHERS?

SHIRIN STAR FOR A DAY

It was a day young Shirin Akhtar would never forget. She had received Star Marks in her Higher Secondary Certificate Examination, (that is, over 75 per cent in all subjects), and as a result of her remarkable performance her life story had been published in all the daily newspapers.

“So what?” you may think. “That’s just an every day occurrence; not worthy of getting into the newspapers.”

But you’d be wrong. Shirin lives in Bangladesh. She is the first blind student in Bangladesh to have achieved such outstanding results. She used to help out at the Baptist Sangha School for Blind Girls in the holidays, and then went on to help the teachers as a volunteer classroom assistant. Now she is trying to get a place at Dhaka University, where three former Blind School pupils are already attending.

That wasn’t the only time the Dhaka Blind School hit the headlines last year. October 15 was observed as White Cane Safety Day, and to help raise the profile of public awareness towards the visually handicapped, the Dhaka Blind School

arranged a rally and discussion meeting, followed by an open air concert of songs and poetry. Again, the newspapers, featured all the day’s activities.

Now that girls are given the opportunity to go on to further and higher education, their achievements generally are quite notable. As well as the three girls at Dhaka University, eight are now attending College for Higher Education, and 24 are receiving Vocational Training, and are taught various types of handicrafts.

Care is taken over the rehabilitation of school leavers. For example, two girls, Parveen Akhtar and Sufia Khatoon, were both due to finish their Vocational Training last year. Parveen, who lives with her old widowed mother, was provided with a dairy cow to help her make ends meet, and Sufia was given a rickshaw. Her father is a rickshaw puller, and up till then he had had both to rent his rickshaw, and hand over half of his income to his lender.

The Blind School has 99 pupils, ranging from Kindergarten to Higher Education. Including the Principal, there are eleven teachers, who teach not only general education but also Orientation and Mobility, Braille, daily living skills, music, dance and drama.

The BMS maintains more than a passing interest by once again over the last year contributing financially to help run the braille press at the school. ■

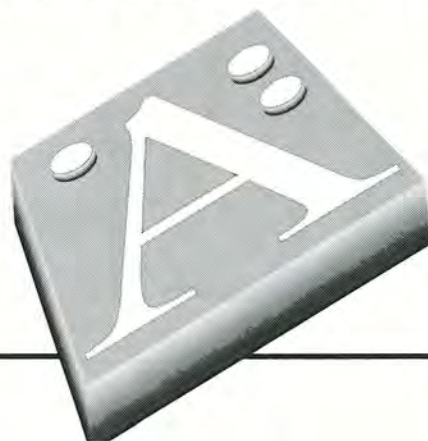


Left: Pupil at the School for Blind Girls in Dhaka reading a braille book.

Above top: Learning handicrafts.

Above: Enjoying a relaxing game of Ludo.

Dhaka *blind school*



Discussion Starter

Double Take Double Take



1 What sort of preparation for life and ministry ought a Bible College or Theological Seminary to give? Would you give the same answer for a Seminary in Brazil and a Baptist College in the UK?

Do you think theological training can ever be a waste of time, especially if the person concerned goes into 'secular' work afterwards? (See student comments, p8)

Conversely, would it be a good idea for all theological students to spend a year or two in an office, factory or shop before they embark on their training? Is the study of theology alone enough? Is there a gap between theologians and 'ordinary clergy'? (See Keith Hodges' article, p6)

2 Why do you think it is that most Brazilian Baptists and evangelicals are not involved in the production of deep theological works? (See Keith Hodges article, p6)

3 How useful would it be to have tutors from another culture teaching in theological colleges in Britain? (see Martin Hewitt p8)

How welcoming and receptive would we be to "foreigners" preaching and teaching in our British churches?

4 Why do you think Jean bought the pair of white shoes instead of a cooking pot? Does our education play any part in the way we make decisions? (See Still Quiet, p15)

5 What is the difference between lecturing and teaching? (See Keith Hodges article, p6) What is the value of different teaching methods? (See M Hewitt, p8)

6 Should education be confined to schools? What is the place of teaching in the home? In church? Or Sunday School? Are Sunday Schools really needed nowadays? Are we compartmentalising teaching and worship?

7 How great a part does good teaching play in our growth as Christians; and what part revelation?

8 It has often been alleged that the intelligent layman leaves his intelligence outside the door of the church as soon as he enters it, and unfortunately is often encouraged to do so. Do you agree? ■



DOUBLE TAKE?

Double Take is a way of using the Herald to consider, more deeply, the theme which is highlighted each month. Whether used privately, within a missionary or house group, or as part of Sunday worship, the hope is that a better understanding of the issues will lead to a change in attitudes, to a commitment to prayer, to involvement in mission and to action.

Bible Study

Matthew 13 1-23

Even non-Christians agree that Jesus was a great teacher - yet he did not have the kind of aids that we associate with teaching today : chalkboards, OHPs, or videos to help him in his teaching. Instead he used a time-honoured means of communication which meant his message stayed in the hearer's mind for a long while : he taught in parables. It was an art form in itself in which Jesus introduced his audience into seeing things from a new and different point of view, and at the same time those listening had to make some decision about Jesus and his message.

■ 13 1-3 Background

Up to this point Jesus seems to have spent his time talking and teaching in cities and villages. At this point there seems to be something of a watershed ; he now begins to teach in homes (13:36), in "lonely places" (14:13), and by the seashore, as here. Here too, in Matthew's Gospel, he begins his teaching in parables. Jesus was adapting himself to the needs of the situation. Take Shirin (p10); would you have followed the same course of action? Who is the sower?

■ 13 4, 18-19 Along the path

The seed is the same; it is the soil into which it falls that is different. When one thinks of paths it is tempting to just turn our minds to the stretch of concrete or tarmac we have in our back gardens. But remember the sower was sowing seed in a field; this path was a well trodden way across it, comprising of parched earth. Any seed lying here would quickly attract the birds.

Can the seed be something other than the gospel?

■ 13 5-6,20-21 Rocky ground

Not so much ground covered with rocks, but a rock ledge covered with a thin layer of soil. Seed sown here would quickly sprout and grow in the warm soil, but it would not be able to put down roots; nor would the soil contain enough moisture, and so the plant would quickly wither.

Would some of stories and backgrounds cited in this edition of the Herald cause you to think that they were very much "rocky ground" situations?

■ 13 7, 22 Thorny ground

The soil here would be better, but the ground still contained thorn roots that ploughing had not removed, but these roots would not be visible at planting.

■ 13 8, 23 Good soil

A ten-fold harvest was an average one, so these figures, though not impossible would be considered bumper crops. Note the yield is not always the same; even here some are more receptive than others.

Who do you think represent seed sown on good soil today?

■ 13 10-17 A word of explanation

When the disciples asked this question, we might be forgiven for expecting Jesus to extol the virtues of a good story. Instead he gave a very different answer. These are not easy words to understand, and as one commentary says : "the sheer difficulty of these verses is proof enough of their authenticity". There will be frustrations and people who just refuse to hear the truth in our seeking to spread the gospel; but

the blinding of men's eyes and hardening of their hearts is not so much God's intention as what he has foreseen. Would such a question get the same answer today?

List some of the frustrations given in the life of a Brazilian theological student (See M Hewitt, p8) Does this explanation of God's fore-knowledge help one deal with this?

For the people who are locked in a life of illiteracy and lack of self esteem, how can they be encouraged to have an open mind and new ideas relating to reading and writing? (See NFE, Nepal, p3) ■



Double
Take
Double
Take

Action Points



1 Ask your minister to unearth a group photo which includes him/her, taken whilst undergoing theological training. Then ask him/her what has happened to all his/her contemporaries; are they in a pastorate, teaching, involved in social work or something else?

2 All former theological students and "deep readers", why not turn out your book shelves, and donate recent and reasonable books to overseas students.

In Eastern Europe many people can read English and so we are particularly looking for basic books on Christian life-style and growth, introductions to the Bible and commentaries. Please send books to John Passmore, Baptist Missionary Society, PO Box 49, Baptist House, 129 Broadway Didcot, Oxon OX11 8XA.

3 Get personally involved or get your church or a group within your church involved in raising money to help with NFE work in Nepal. The BMS Project 1994 "Moving Mountains" focuses on the mountains that exist in many people's lives today in Nepal: the mountain of illiteracy and ignorance; ill health, isolation and prejudice.

Join in the Nepali women's song "Responsibility of Life" (to the tune of Ilkley Moor!); find out why it will be impossible for Shanti to get her baby who has been injured to hospital; and why Pompha had her bag snatched. With worship, Bible study and lots, lots more. Send for your project pack (poster, booklet, book-marks and slide set) to BMS Didcot. ■

WE CAN DO SOMETHING

Jean and Joan, missionary secretaries of neighbouring Baptist churches, have known each other for many years. They meet regularly at various committee meetings. They met recently at the missionary auxiliary meeting.

"Hello. Haven't seen you for a while," said Jean.

"No, we don't seem to have as many joint meetings these days," complained Joan.

"I suppose that's it. Now we've got this new World Mission Link Programme there doesn't seem to be anything to meet for."

"I know. It's strange," said Joan. "I thought World Mission Link was all about getting more involved with world mission, not less."

At this point, a rather breathless Mo came over to join them. "But Link-Up's super. We've had lots of contact with our missionaries... and there's been a visit.. and people in the church are really showing interest... and ..."

"But that's the problem," Joan interrupted. "You have a visit from your Link-Up missionary and then nothing. We used to have a visit every year - Deputation we called it."

"And we all got together and there was tea and people came from all the churches," said Jean. "What are we supposed to do between Link-Up visits? How can I get the church involved if nothing happens?"

"I think that's where the Mission Education part of World Mission Link comes in," suggested Mo.

"I've never heard of that," said Jean.

"If world mission is really part of our church life we ought to be doing something about it all the time and not just when a missionary comes," explained Mo. "Why doesn't your church organise a World Mission Sunday?"

"How can we do that? We haven't worked overseas," Joan asked.

"But BMS has lots of resources. There are videos, maps, lots of suggestions and ideas for meetings. Everything you need to organise your own programme."

"But we'd need a speaker," said Jean.

"There's a speakers' list. And the BMS Representative will help with ideas and suggest people to contact. You could suggest that the Sunday School do something, or the Women's Meeting. We had a meeting of our Link-Up group."

"I hadn't thought of that," confessed Joan. "Where do we find out about Mission Education?"

"There's a couple of pages about it in the World Mission Link booklet but you can always write to BMS, or contact the local BMS Rep, or just look through the BMS Resource Catalogue."

"Come on," said Jean. "The committee's about to start. I think I'll talk to our minister next Sunday: see what he says."

"I've an idea," said Joan, brightening up. "Why don't we suggest the committee organises....." ■

Worship

Lord,
 there are varieties of gifts and service
 in the body of the Church
 and we praise you
 that you recognise
 and can use them all.
 As women and men
 prepare for Christian service
 help them to identify and develop
 the gifts they have been given.
 And when they take up positions
 of leadership within the churches
 help them to search out and use
 all the talents in their congregations
 to your glory
 and for the service of your
 kingdom.

(David Pountain, 1993 BMS Prayer Guide)



A PARABLE FROM AFRICA

Student I can't understand what you say.

Teacher Life and thought and conversation seldom conform to an outline.

Student But that makes it hard to prepare for the exam.

Teacher What exam?

Student The one at the end of your course.

Teacher You'll be taking my exams for the rest of your life.

Student: I don't understand a lot of what you're teaching us.

Teacher You won't for three years.

Student That's the whole course?

Teacher No, it's only the beginning of the course.

Student Do you have any idea what my class standing will be?

Teacher You'll fail the course, along with the rest. But then all of you except one will turn the world upside down.

Student When we've finished, will we know as much as the Pharisees?

Teacher No. You won't know

as much, but you'll be changed. Do you want to be changed?

Student I think so. Is your teaching relevant?

Teacher Is it true?

Student You seem to throw questions back at me instead of answering them.

Teacher That's because the answers are in you, not me.

Student Will we see you in class tomorrow?

Teacher The class continues at supper and at the camp fire tonight. Do you think I teach only words?

Student Is there an assignment?

Teacher Yes, help me catch some fish for supper.

From "The Renewal of Evangelical Theological Education" an article by Tokunboh Adeyemo in "Evangelical Theological Education Today", Evangel Publishing House, Nairobi, Kenya.

Like to get a different look at the Parable of the Sower?; BMS drama pack **"Fool's Gold"** has a play by Bill Paice, called "The Sower", and guess what it's about? Only be warned, it's told as it's never been told before! **Fool's Gold** has ten different plays, for ranging abilities and numbers involved. Available from BMS Didcot, price £5. ■

Another quiet

WEEK

STILL QUIET CBFZ compound, Kinshasa

It was quiet when I arrived and still quiet when I left. Three months of peace and quiet! Apart from the interruptions, that is. In fact, I probably spent as much time on interruptions as on anything else.

They were mostly someone with a problem - usually financial - school or university fees, medical bills, rent, a hungry family, a need for capital to trade with, water or electricity bills. Sometimes it was clothing. People can't afford new clothes any more. I've given away more shirts than I've got left, and several pairs of trousers. My wardrobe is almost down to subsistence level.

Everybody wants shoes. Bata's factory was pillaged out of business, and the imported ones are cheap and nasty, but expensive. Local feet are mostly small, whereas mine are big, but they all said, "Don't worry about size, we'll make them fit."

I didn't give many away, though. I'd rather see my shoes on someone they fit.

A lot of people pinned their hopes on me, and I did help quite a few one way or another. It didn't fundamentally change anything, however, in most cases. The basic problems are still there. At best I gave a marginal boost to the survival prospects of a minute fraction of those in need. Perhaps that's better than nothing, and in

some cases it was an answer to somebody's prayer.

About a week beforehand I warned Jean (as in French), the odd-job man that I had been paying, that I would be leaving. I said that I knew where he might pick up a bit of work handling sacks of maize that were to be sold.

"Who's in charge," he asked, "a white or a black?"

I said that, as it happened, a Zairian colleague was in charge. He looked doubtful.

"It's not worth working for a black these days," he said, "you might not get paid."

I hesitated to argue with this, as a good many working people were not being paid on time at the moment.

"A white man," he said, "knows you can't expect someone to work and not get paid, but not a black. That would be a kind of slavery - I'd rather stay at home and suffer. If I accept it, what about those who come after me. That's what they'll find, and it's not right."

I said that it was up to him, there was no obligation.

I wanted to set things right with Jean before I left. There had been an incident. One day when I had given him some rice, as I had to the other workers, he had said that he had no cooking pot. I had replied that it would not be wise for me to give away one of my wife's pots in her absence, and he had taken the

point. Eventually, as a kind of bonus, I had given him the money to buy a pot, and next day asked whether he had done so. He hadn't. He pointed to the white shoes that he was wearing, which he said he had bought very cheaply at the market, adding that he had had the misfortune to lose the rest of the money, he knew not how - whether the girl had cheated him, or what. I was not amused.

"Misfortune - rubbish!" I had exclaimed, "that was sheer negligence on your part!"

He had looked suitably abashed and said nothing further, but the atmosphere was strained. Next day he had asked whether he could have the money again, and knock it off his wages, but I was not inclined at that moment to help. I relented and gave him the money again as an additional bonus. He was pleased. All that he would need now would be food to cook in his pot. He said that when I came back he wanted to work for me again, and would I save half his daily wage for him as he wanted to find somewhere to live. He was fed up with living rough.

Just as I said, any help you give is only a drop in a bucket. The basic problems are still here, and when I return to Kinshasa with my wife I can be sure that they will be on our doorstep again. ■

From our special correspondent,
Owen Clark,
in Kinshasa.

My Two Friends - the Cat and Corinna

Life as a missionary child in Nepal.

Corinna Woods left the UK in 1991 bound for Jumla in Nepal, a place so isolated that to get there you either have to fly or walk. There are no roads. She is a trained primary school teacher and Girls' Brigade officer and she went out to teach missionary children.

Because of the nature of missionary work in Nepal the children in any tutorial class are going to be cosmopolitan. On her arrival, Corinna found she had three children in her charge: Mark and Stephen from Australia and Hannah, with Irish and English parents, who was born in Nepal.

Her first impressions of trying to teach such a group were interesting.

"Teaching three children is no sinecure! There is nowhere for them to get lost in the crowd and there aren't enough to make up even half a football team. Even simple exercises like comparing the size of footprints require me to remove my woolly tights and make footprints along with the pupils."

Children come and go in any school, but when there are only three pupils to start with the changes are even more noticeable. In October 1992, Gordon and Lizzie joined the group. Their parents are English and Canadian and the family has lived in Nepal for a long time.

But in November, Stephen and Mark said goodbye temporarily. The following January, Sanna and Kesia, who are Scottish but have lived in Tanzania most of their lives, were two more additions.

It is really hard for the children in a place with so few friends. Children find it hard to say goodbye to other children. They fell a loss, but do not always know how to express it. After Mark and Stephen left, and Gordon was missing them, he announced: "I have only two friends - the cat and Corinna!"

But the feeling of loss and uncertainty is not just one-sided. Mark found adjusting to life back in Australia difficult. "Things in Australia

were very different from last time I was here... In Adelaide my school was much larger and many more people than my one-roomed school in Jumla. My classroom was heaps bigger too. Making friends was also difficult because when you haven't met somebody for a long time and you've suddenly come from a tiny little school to a huge enormous school it's just so hard to become friends again, especially in a school of 400. That's why recess and

lunchtime were so boring."

In October 1993 the class dynamics changed yet again.



Gordon and Lizzie left for three months' home leave and then Hannah left for at least six months.

Preparing children for "home leave" is not easy for the teacher either, trying to help them adjust to those questions of what it will be like living back home. Sheila Loader, also teaching missionary children in Nepal, cites some of the questions children ask her.

"What will happen when I go to school and start talking about snakes on the way to school? Or the rats and bats that live in my room with me? Will people believe me?"

"Will the apple someone has given me be alright, without its being soaked in iodine first?"



What will my new teacher be like?"

Children like these have little memory of what life was like living in the west and it is doubly hard fitting back into a culture they can hardly remember. ■



CALL TO PRAYER

Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you. Mark 5:19

*Lord,
you know
how home is the hardest
place for a prophet to
speak a message,
but if our friends
can't see what you have
done for us
who can?
So as we pray for
Christians
at home in Thailand
caring for AIDS sufferers
befriending young women
at risk
helping refugees
and all the time speaking of
your love,
so we pray that people near
to us
will see the difference
you have made
in our lives.*

WEEK

23

June 5-11

YOUNG PEOPLE

In the West the average age of the population is increasing and churches reflect this but in most countries the majority of the population is under 25. Both the European Baptist Federation (EBF) and the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) are training leaders to understand and work with young people.

The 28:19 Action Team programme continues to grow with 27 young people in six teams this year. This provides opportunities for Baptist young people to engage in mission in another country and cul-

ture for a short time.

The BMS is planning an action team to work in Britain - 29:19: Challenge-UK. See the In-View item, "More Challenge".

WEEK

24

June 12-18

THAILAND

BMS has three missionaries working in Thailand and another couple preparing to go. Jacqui Wells is involved with the Women's work of the Thailand Karen Baptist Convention as an organiser and is working with Karen women colleagues.

Geoff and Christine Bland are now serving in the Bangkok Institute of Theology based on the outskirts of the city which is training leaders mostly for the Thai speaking congregations of the Church of Christ in Thailand (CCT).

Angus and Carol MacNeill are leaving for Thailand on 27 June. Although Angus, during his years as BMS Overseas Secretary, has visited Thailand several times, their previous missionary service was in Africa. So they need our prayers to come to grips with a new language and culture before they get involved in pastoral and teaching work with the CCT in the Kwai River Area.

WEEK

25

June 19-25

NICARAGUA

Growing churches are developing their work against a backdrop of political instability and economic hardship. High unemployment, poverty

and armed conflicts are constant realities.

The Nicaragua Baptist Convention - General Secretary, Revd Eias Stnchez; President, Revd Carmen Peña Garay - struggles to make ends meet. Many churches are unable to send contributions.

Radio Bautista, helped by the Fund for the Future, appeals to young people. Since half the population is under 16 it is important in spreading the message.

Theological Education by Extension courses are served by BMS workers Peter and Sheila Brewer. There are also agricultural and income-generating projects run by the churches with some funding from Operation Agri and machinery from Tools With a Mission. helps these causes.

WEEK

26

June 26-July 2

HOME ASSIGNMENT

Home Assignment is a time for missionaries to renew their links with the home-base. It is an opportunity to realise that they are not on their own but have caring, supportive, praying groups of churches who are interested in them, their work situation and the national Christians with whom they work.

WEEK

27

July 2-9

BRAZIL: CEAR, AND RIO GRANDE DO NORTE

We rejoice at the news of rain in this area (see In View) after a long period of drought, but it is still the most underprivileged and needy area in Brazil.

In 1993 few crops were harvested, leaving part of the rural population close to starvation. Mike and Daveen Wilson are engaged in rural community development work in Trapiá. In the state capital of Natal Margaret Swires is a church worker in a large urban housing area.

Further north in the state of Ceará, Mary Parsons works with the Save the Children Project in Fortaleza. John Clark is head of the Missions Department in the Baptist Seminary and Norma Clark is the Librarian. Also in Fortaleza Mark Greenwood, recently married to Suzana, is in church planting in the favela area of Genibaú.

WEEK

28

July 10-16

ZAIRE: DEVELOPMENT

Zaire has been described as a country undergoing reverse development. Urban areas which once boasted modern transport, telephone, water and sewerage facilities are rapidly deteriorating. Parts of the Kinshasa to Matadi highway became so full of pot-holes that it was easier to rip up the tarmac and revert to the old dirt road than try to fill in the holes.

The Baptist Community of the River Zaire is sponsoring a variety of development projects to provide food and clean water assisted by BMS and Operation Agri.

However, whilst it is possible to grow enough food in Zaire, the main problem lies in its distribution. The river traffic has virtually stopped and the few reliable vehicles have to use almost impassable roads.

CALL TO PRAYER

1994 Prayer Guide Update

(Week numbers correspond with those in Prayer Guide)

THE DAY DISASTER OVERTOOK RELIEF IN A MOUNTAIN VILLAGE

The man was running fast down the rough track behind us. As he approached I turned to see who it was. Perhaps he was one of the large group of men we had seen outside the a house when we first approached the village; maybe one of them had recognised me and had come to greet me. It would be typical Albanian hospitality to do so. But if so, why was he running?

I recognised him immediately: he was the son of one of the village elders. Strangely he didn't seem to notice me: he dashed head-long on.

Mirâdita, si jeni? "Hullo, how are you?" My greeting followed him and he whirled around. Even then he could only mumble apologetically that he had to go quickly to Krujë, three hours walk away, and ran on. I commented to my companion, Liz Martin, that it seemed very odd.

A few minutes later we arrived at the centre of the village. A small group of people stood around talking softly. They told us that a few minutes earlier, in the forest above the village, a man had felled a mature pine tree. It had fallen on a group of four young men who, unknown to him, were climbing up the steep slope from below. Three were unhurt, protected by the rocks and the unevenness of the slope, but one 17 year old lad had been killed instantly by a branch through his skull.

We had walked down the main track into the village soon after news of the accident had reached his home: the men of the village were gathering to express their condolences. One younger man had been sent to Krujë to tell the Hodja (a minister of the Muslim religion) to come the following day to officiate at the interment. Then I saw that Islam still has one hold over people of the village: at death. For Islam in Albania has no formal link with people at birth or in marriage, and circumcision is not yet practised openly (it was forbidden in the atheistic Communist period). People who think of themselves as "Muslim" drink raki, a locally distilled strong spirit, all the while, but in death they return to their roots, just as the un-churched do in Britain.

Liz and I "just happened" to be there that day, except that we know things don't happen by chance. We had planned to come by four-wheel drive vehicle to tell the Head of the Village Elders

that the very next day clothing would be distributed to each of the families of the village at the nearest point on the main road by the charity "Feed the Children". But it wasn't to be. Our Land Rover got stuck on rock-hard ridges of frozen mud on the road to the village and it took us over an hour to get it free. So we walked to the village instead, over frozen ground, along goat-tracks, across scree, over snow and ice. Inevitably the message arrived late.

It was just as well, for it spared both the villagers and us a disappointment. If the distribution had been arranged for the next day as originally planned, no-one would have come to collect the clothing. Death had subsumed the day we had chosen for the distribution of aid; instead, a Muslim cleric on a mule would arrive to preside at an interment on a bleak, stony hill-side near the village.

Reflecting on this sad business I realised that until we have Albanian Christian pastors to whom they can turn, the people will necessarily seek a Hodja's services, if not for guidance in life at least to provide some comfort in the



melancholy of death.

Taking funeral services is not something missionaries will do well; it's a task for the Albanians themselves. Finding and training strong national Christians as pastors will take quite a time, but there is one young Albanian man, Freddie Galoshi, at the International Baptist College in Hungary and we hear there is a young woman from a distant Albanian town currently studying at Spurgeon's College. A beginning has been made towards fulfilling this essential ministry to the people of Albania.

And the aid? The delivery of aid took place the day after the one originally intended. People from over a hundred families living in the village walked ten km each way in pouring rain at near zero temperatures to collect the warm clothing and footwear they needed. As the drenched aid workers poured themselves hot coffee after completing the distribution, they reflected on the need which drove people to come in such conditions. We might equally well reflect on the need which kept the people in the village the previous day.

Glyn Jones is a BMS missionary working for the European Baptist Federation and based in Tirana, Albania. He is one of a group of Baptist missionaries who have been making a study of Shkretë, an impoverished mountain village in Central Albania.



Left: "A small group of people stood round talking softly."

Above top: "A mature pine tree had fallen on a group of young men climbing the steep slope.."

Above centre: "Our Land Rover got stuck on the rock-hard ridges of frozen mud."

Above: "So we walked to the village instead, over frozen ground"

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ALBANIAN EASTER

Our Easter Service was wonderful. We had a full Church with at least 20 people sitting outside.

All three pastors took part and at the end we took a six foot wooden cross with small holes drilled all over it outside the red doors and people were invited to put flowers into the holes.

It looked very attractive and many came from the streets to talk about it. Ryder Rogers stood with it for about two hours giving out Mark's Gospels to all who came to talk to him.

FIRST ALBANIAN STUDENT

Alfred Gollosi, the first Albanian student at the International Baptist Lay Academy (IBLA) in Hungary, has visited home for the first time since he was converted.

Alfred came to faith while studying in Bucharest, Romania and was baptised in a local Baptist church. Later, going to Germany as a refugee, he made contact with Bochum Baptist

Church. The church promised to sponsor Alfred's studies in English and theology at IBLA.

When Alfred decided to visit Albania again, IBLA arranged for him to be introduced into the Baptist work there.

He returned to IBLA "bubbling over about what is happening there," said IBLA Director, Errol Simmons. "He was impressed by the new hunger for spiritual



Above: Chris Burnett removing the door so that those outside can join in the service.

Left: Old women tending her cows by the side of the road, not far from Tirana, the capital of Albania. To fight boredom she keeps busy by spinning wool.

things."

He was startled when even members of his family asked for a Bible. Alfred (known as Freddy) shared his testimony and his experiences with students at IBLA. He was warmly received by Christians at the Albanian Baptist Centre who are delighted that an Albanian is preparing for Christian service at IBLA.



CHALLENGE UK

MORE ACTION

Something new from the 28:19 Action Team stable. Action Teams have been up and running now for three years and are becoming more and more popular. Young people who are prepared to work hard in a limited time and adjust to the demands of a different culture have been having a tremendous impact in Asia, Central and South America and Europe.

And now, **28.19 Challenge-UK** turns round the Action Team idea. We are looking for young people who will make an impact in the UK. The team will be made up of overseas and British young people. The challenge - to put world mission on the agenda of 10,000 young people in British Baptist Churches.

How they will do it is yet unknown. That's up to them. We are prepared to be amazed.

Young people, between the ages of 18 and 25, should apply now for the year-out beginning September 1994. Write for further details to: Andy Stockbridge, Baptist Missionary Society, PO Box 49, Baptist House, 129 Broadway, Didcot, Oxon OX11 8XA.

IT'S RAINED

It's rained in Trapiá after nearly two years of drought. That area in north-east Brazil for which people have been praying for so long and which was helped by donations from the churches through the BMS Relief Fund, is now looking green all over and people are beginning to harvest their first fruit.

Daveen Wilson, in a recent letter home, writes: "The rains continue and the crops are looking great. The goats are having their kids, so there's milk about already. Next door picked their first



Debbie Wilson enjoying the end of the two year drought in Trapiá

watermelon yesterday (7 April)."

However, long periods without rain do have some benefits.

"You'll be glad to know the drought seems to have killed off most of the snakes, spiders and other big nasties."

BABY MILK ACTION



NESTLE

Nestlé, the Swiss based multinational, is once again the target of criticism. Picking up a World Health Organisation (WHO) report that HIV can be passed on from mother to child through breast-feeding, they are suggesting that the dangers of breast-feeding could, in some situations, be greater than that of contracting diarrhoea or dysentery through contaminated water used to mix milk powder.

The comments are attributed to the shareholders' association president in an editorial written for their magazine. She writes: "The social and sanitary situation in the world has changed with such speed that we have to be ready to undergo a radical shift in thinking."

However, in spite of its report that half a million babies have been infected by milk from HIV mothers, the WHO still contends that unless there is a source of clean water available, even HIV-positives should breast-feed.

In the two-thirds world around three million children die each year from diarrhoea.

"Any action which is likely to lead to a widespread decrease in breastfeeding will put many more children at risk of death and is therefore highly irresponsible," said the WHO.

SEX TOURISM

Sex tourism is growing in the resort cities of north-east Brazil according to local press reports.

At least 2,000 young women between the ages of 13 and 20 are involved in a sex tourism trade that has taxi drivers, tour guides and street children acting as intermediaries between tourists and the prostitutes.

According to Ana Vasconcelos, president of a support group for prostitutes in Recife, most of the clients are foreigners, and the majority come from Germany.

Street children go to Recife airport and offer foreign tourists opportunities to meet young women in exchange for food. Some taxi drivers receive commissions when they arrange a companion for a tourist.

When 255 women were interviewed they said that prostitution was the only way they could make a living.

In Fortaleza a city council investigation discovered an informal prostitution network involving taxi drivers, hotel managers and bar and restaurant owners operating along the city's beachfront.

"The tourist arrives in Fortaleza, says he wants a companion, and the people involved in the network arrange one for him," said Dorival Ferraz, a city councillor who chairs an investigating committee.

Most of the prostitutes are young girls between the ages of nine and 15 "because gringos like nymphs." In some cases the girls' mothers act as their agents.

Fatima Dourado, president of the Ceará Council for the Rights of Women,

said the state's preoccupation with providing incentives for tourists must be accompanied by action to combat prostitution.

COALITION ON CHILD PROSTITUTION

In order to raise public awareness about the situation the Coalition on Child Prostitution and Tourism has recently been formed. The coalition members include Anti-slavery International, CAFOD, Christian Aid, Jubilee Campaign and Save the Children (UK). They aim to give the issue of child prostitution and tourism a high profile in the UK.

"We will also be pushing for changes in legislation so that UK citizens can be prosecuted for offences against children overseas," said Anne Badger, the Campaigns Co-ordinator. "There is currently an Early Day Motion (EDM), No 257, circulating in Parliament to this effect."

She is encouraging people to contact their MPs to ask them to add their signatures to the EDM.

For more information contact: Anne Badger, Coalition on Child Prostitution and Tourism, Anti-Slavery International, Unit 4, Stableyard, Broomgrove Road, London SW9 9TL.

ISLAM IN GERMANY

Islam, with more than two million members, is now the third largest religious community in Germany, after the main Roman Catholic and Protestant churches.

CHECK OUT

ARRIVAL'S

- Action Teams**
from Zimbabwe, Thailand and Nepal, Brazil, Sri Lanka, Lille and Carcassonne
- Gerry and Johan Myhill**
from Brazil
- John and Sue Wilson**
from France
- Sheila Samuels**
from India
- Jim Grenfell**
from Luanda
- Millie Hallett**
from India
- Derek and Joanna Punched**
from Brazil

DEPARTURE'S

- David Wheeler**
to Albania
- Joy Knapman**
to Kathmandu
- Joy Knapman**
to Sri Lanka
- Rena Mellor**
to Kinshasa
- VISITS**
- Angus and Carol MacNeill**
to Glasgow and Kirkwall
- John Corbett, David Martin and Derek Rumbol**
to Kinshasa
- John Passmore**
to France

CONGRATULATIONS

- David born to Robert and Catherine Atkins.**
Born on 11 April 1994
- Jethro Lehane to Tim Lehane and Alison MacLean.**
Born on 12 April 1994.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
(for gifts and legacies received between 1 and 31 March 1994)

ANONYMOUS GIFTS

| | |
|-------------------|--------|
| Aberdeen | 30.00 |
| Anon CAF Voucher | 50.00 |
| Carmarthen, Dyfed | 10.00 |
| Durham | 30.00 |
| Farnborough, Kent | 121.57 |
| Give as You Earn | 55.92 |
| Glasgow | 2.00 |
| Gloucester | 66.00 |
| Headingley | 5.00 |
| Leeds | 50.00 |
| Leicestershire | 10.00 |
| Paddington | 20.00 |
| Slough/Windsor | 10.00 |
| Tunbridge Wells | 10.00 |

LEGACIES

| | |
|----------------------|------------|
| Mrs Rose A C Barber | 500.00 |
| Miss W Buttifant | 217.04 |
| Mrs H Crutchett | 830.99 |
| Mr G L N Gibson | 272.83 |
| Miss W M Hemmens | 1,216.60 |
| Miss Elaine W Hooper | 3,750.32 |
| Mrs N Johnson | 100,103.04 |
| Miss Dorothy Jones | 5,573.49 |
| Miss K Ludlow | 519.08 |
| Miss G E Michael | 1,000.00 |
| Miss W J Mouncey | 1,200.00 |
| Miss C A Oldrieve | 300.00 |
| Mrs K Joan Ridgeon | 1,000.00 |
| Mrs O G Spoor | 610.95 |
| Mrs Lilian Tarrant | 100.00 |
| Miss H D Tebbs | 200.00 |
| Miss G E Tressider | 7,500.00 |
| Mr George H Wells | 100.00 |

DOING WHAT THEY CAN TO HELP

Jim Grenfell reports on Hospital Chaplaincy Services in Luanda.

Leaders of the Evangelical Baptist Church in Angola (IEBA) have valued the work of hospital chaplains for a long time. The older ones remember the catechists and deacons who visited the sick in BMS hospitals and dispensaries over 30 years ago. Others appreciated the fine work of João Matwawana when he was hospital chaplain at IME Kimpese during their refugee period in Zaire. In Luanda with the changes of attitude during the past few years it has become easier for pastors to visit the hospitals. In 1992 IEBA became the first protestant church to appoint a chaplain to Luanda hospitals.

Before training for the ministry, Matondo Mika worked as a nurse. He was the obvious choice. He felt it to be a call from God confirmed when he received a letter from Jose Gomes, a long stay patient, paralysed because of a broken neck. Jose became a Christian after reading a Portuguese translation of Joni. Like her he learned to write and draw pictures holding a pen with his teeth. He wrote about the needs of people in the Medical and Rehabilitation Centre and asked Matondo to help.

So Matondo Mika and his wife Isabel, and a small team of voluntary helpers, from a local church and João Manuel a retired Baptist minister, work in the hospitals three days each week. Their work is supported by IEBA. For the rest of the week Matondo is co-pastor of the Petroangola Baptist Church. He is also one of the IEBA representatives on CICA (National Christian Council of Angola). There are plans to expand the chaplaincy service on an ecumenical basis.

The chaplaincy team visit patients, distribute food and clothing, which friends in the churches provide, to needy cases. They hold services on the wards on Sundays and conduct a Bible Study in the Rehabilitation Centre on Monday afternoons. Wednesdays they co-operate with the Hospital Bible Union in Maria Pia Hospital. This group is led by Dr Filip Matuba. Together with another doctor, a senior medical officer and six nurses this group holds a prayer and bible study each week in the hospital common room. They invite patients who are mobile to join them. When I participated in their meeting there were over 30 patients present.

The Maria Pia Hospital

Afterwards we visited a number of wards in the Maria Pia Hospital which was built in 1883, a fine example of old Portuguese Colonial architecture. Still an impressive building on a hill over looking th

old city. The walls are of stone and plaster 3 ft thick, which keep the wards cool even on the hottest days. The plaster is crumbling, the paintwork is peeling but the floor tiles have stood up to the years better than the plastic ones in the more modern Medical Centre. The medical staff had a sense of purpose and were always helpful when we had difficulty finding a patient. Despite its age, the hospital serves a vast number of patients. The population of Luanda is almost three million in a city which the Portuguese considered could only cope with a fifth of that number. To meet the health needs of such a population in peak times would be a big enough task without the added burdens created by civil war.

We visited the wife of a Petroangola deacon. She took some finding but, with the help of a nurse, we found her in a small side ward with three other patients, an old women and two teenage girls. Matondo and Isabel talked with them and then Matondo did a short bible reading and prayer with them. The effect on the patients was good to see. They brightened up and were all smiles instead of the dull expression when we arrived.

We visited a man who had been shot in the head by bandits. A security man wanted a bribe, but Matondo wasn't playing that game, so after a brief argument we went into the wards. The man had just returned from the operating theatre and was unconscious. The operation had been a success but he was still in danger and it would be some time before he regained consciousness. We don't know how seriously he was wounded. Banditry is a serious problem in Luanda. Because of the war, many people have access to weapons.

We went to the Orthopaedic Department to visit victims of anti-personnel (AP) mines. The ward was divided, into six smaller wards each designed to take four beds. However, in each there were six beds and two more mattresses on the floor, making a total of eight patients to each side ward. Beyond the ward in what would have been a common room were another 15 with mattresses on the floor. These patients, were waiting to be moved to another hospital for the next stage of their rehabilitation. So, in this ward, there were 63 patients all of them amputee cases.

Apart from the over-crowding, the patients were well cared for and remarkably cheerful, greeting Matondo with obvious pleasure. They face a bleak future. There seems no way of knowing how many victims of AP mines there are in Angola, or how many die without the help and treatment Maria Pia Hospital offers. If peace comes there is hope that the aid agencies will be able to provide funds to train some of the victims in new skills. Meanwhile, Matondo and the chaplaincy service do what they can to help. ■

NEW LAW

A new law passed by Bulgaria's parliament targets religious sects. The law will require groups such as the Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses and followers of Sun Myung Moon to register again with the government.

Apparently the measure will not affect Baptists and other evangelicals who have been the victims of a slanderous propaganda campaign. However, Bulgarian Baptist leaders have publicly denounced the law claiming it violates human rights.

"Everyone knows that nobody from these groups will receive a new registration," said Boshidor Iloff, General Secretary of the Bulgarian Baptist Union.

The law will also affect many para-church organisations such as an independent evangelical Bible school which has developed in Varna. It is likely that the foreign representatives of these groups may have trouble remaining in Bulgaria. Some of them are trying to affiliate with Bulgarian Baptists thereby hoping to avoid having to leave the country.

A TESTIMONY

My name is Onehkesi Zega and I come from North Sumatra in Indonesia. My village is in Nias Island. I was born in 1971 and I received Jesus as my Saviour and Lord in December 1990. On 5 January 1991 I asked for Baptism to proclaim my salvation. My family and friends did not agree with my decision, but I did

because Jesus' life is in my heart. Alleluia!

Before I was in spirit I studied with the Jehovah Witnesses. I denied them but was interested in studying the Bible and that way I saw the truth. The way to the Father is through Jesus. Salvation is to be found through Jesus alone. So I must listen to Jesus and believe in him.

After I accepted Jesus as Lord I never thought that I would go to the seminary. I passed my studies at Senior High School and continued studying at University. But then I enlisted at the Medan Seminary.

I am preparing myself now to be a minister for Jesus our Lord as long as my life. I shall go back to Sumatra to preach the true word of the Holy Bible.

Please pray for me that the Lord Jesus Christ will prepare me as his servant.



SILVER AWARD

The BMS video 'A Weavers Son' has been given a second prize (silver award) at the Chicago International Film Festival. The video which has now been shown twice on BBC 2 as "Mahatma Carey" can be hired for £9 or bought for £19.95. from BMS, PO Box 49, Didcot Oxon, OX11 8XA



CROSSING THAT CULTURAL BOUNDARY

The field of Christian education is one of several areas where congregational life has not readily adapted to serve Christians dispersed for ministry in a post-Christian society.



We can only grasp the seriousness of this situation if we recognise the massive cultural boundaries which Christians cross each time they move either into or out of the gathered community of faith. Once that cultural divide is honestly faced, then it becomes painfully obvious that local churches are deficient in helping their members wrestle with the increasing complexities of living robustly as disciples of Jesus. "Mr Bean goes to church" cleverly, surgically, and with poignant humour, illustrates what it feels like for some to cross that cultural boundary. However, for many Christians it is almost as difficult to cross the boundary in the other direction.

The centrality of the Bible for Baptists means we give priority to preaching and hence the sermon is an important medium in the education provision of most Baptist congregations. I suspect that in many congregations it is the only formal educational context. I stand by the crucial significance and unique effectiveness of preaching as a means by which God addresses his living word to each generation. But there is preaching and there is preaching. It is possible to hear preachers who with great skill and integrity expound the Scriptures and earth the biblical witness in application timely and relevant for the congregation. But it is a great skill, requiring more time and diligence in preparation than many preachers are prepared to invest.

Where preaching is not undertaken with that skill and care, it is open to a number of perils as an educational medium, not least a concentration on teaching over against learning. Much preaching can be full of cognitive knowledge - necessary in itself, of course, but divorced from the empirical realities of the congregation.

Extracted from "The Worldly Church" by Paul Mortimore, Church Life Advisor for the Baptist Union of Great Britain (price £2.50 from Church Life Office).

IS GOD CALLING YOU TO WORK OVERSEAS?

Opportunities

CHRISTIAN WORKERS NEEDED NOW FOR

- Engineering and Industrial Development in Nepal
- Community Development Work
- Doctors and Nurses
- Teachers (especially TEFL)

There are many other openings around the world for you to use your qualifications and gifts.

MINISTERS NEEDED FOR WORK OVERSEAS

Is God asking you to consider ministry beyond the British Isles?

BRAZIL There are opportunities in Brazil, especially in inner cities where church planting, evangelism and community work with a bias to the poor go hand in hand. Ministers need to be theologically qualified and experienced. Opportunities in theological education are sometimes available for those who are highly qualified after they have spent a couple of years in a church situation. Ministers need to have a conservative, evangelical outlook.

BULGARIA Experienced pastor for pastoral and evangelistic work and training of leaders, with experience of church strategy and administration. We are looking for someone who can offer a five year commitment.

NICARAGUA Experienced minister to care for, probably, three churches developing the ministry of preaching and pastoral care and also to train local leaders to take over responsibility. This is likely to be in a rural area and for a limited number of years.

PORTUGAL A minister for a church planting/evangelistic situation which could be either an existing small church or a new work.

SRI LANKA A minister and wife are needed for the Baptist Union of Sri Lanka. Because of the cultural situation the minister needs to be a man. His wife would have a low profile but an important supportive role. Acquiring a good working knowledge of the language is important in order to get alongside and work happily with local people and to build up good relationships, hence a long-term commitment is necessary. The job is one of co-operating with and encouraging local Christians, not organising them. There are many opportunities for a varied ministry given sensitivity, adaptability and patience.

ZIMBABWE A minister or ministerial couple for the training of lay-leaders and for church planting.

If you would like more information about these opportunities of service or if you would like to talk to someone about working overseas then write to:

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