

missionary herald

*The monthly magazine of the
Baptist Missionary Society*

July 1976

Price 5p

Baptist Theological Seminary Library
8000 Rüschlikon, Switzerland

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Kinshasa market

(Photo: Raymond Andrews)

DAVID NORKETT works in the headquarters of the Baptist Community of the River Zaire (C.B.F.Z.). This headquarters (General Secretariat) in Kinshasa oversees and coordinates the life and work of the whole of the C.B.F.Z.

The community is divided into four church regions, each with an office and a superintendent.

The next subdivision is a church district which groups together anything from five to twenty-five parishes.

The parish is either part of a town, with one C.B.F.Z. church building, or a group of village churches in the country.

The 1976 Campaign

SINCE the creation of the Baptist Community of the River Zaire (C.B.F.Z.) in December 1972 there has been no organized evangelism throughout the Community—no national plan for the C.B.F.Z. Some groups, such as the teachers and students at Bolobo Bible School, have made journeys with the specific aim of communicating the gospel to unbelievers. But apart from some local sporadic efforts evangelism seems to have been neglected.

There have been many financial and administrative problems to tackle during the first three years of the new community which have

taken up much time and effort at the general secretariat (church headquarters). But C.B.F.Z. authorities realized that a vital work of the church was not being stimulated, so last August the Executive Committee charged Rev. Mfwilwakanda (General Secretary) and Rev. Koli (Kinshasa Regional Superintendent) with the job of encouraging and co-ordinating evangelism in the C.B.F.Z.

A Central Evangelism Committee was set up which prepared an outreach campaign for 1976, outlined in a duplicated booklet "Bila Ngai nkojalisa bino baluki na balo" ("Follow me, I will make you fishers of men"). It has been a welcome change for me to be sending out booklets and letters promoting evangelism in the 24 districts of our church. Some people were

beginning to think all the general secretariat did was to ask for money.

THE PLAN

Mission within and without

In the outreach programme proposed by the Central Evangelism Committee, 1976 is divided into two parts. January to March was a period of preparation within the local churches. This included the formation of prayer cells, evangelistic teams and Bible studies on "The message we proclaim" and "Apostles"—our calling, our work and the Holy Spirit. This period of interior mission in the church was to be based on Christ's call to His disciples, "Follow me, I will make you fishers of men". We have need to follow the Saviour and be in His company, that He may train and prepare us to bring others to Him.

April onwards is planned as a period of action, with special journeys, services and campaigns. It was hoped that a wide variety of methods would be used including drama, youth choirs, door to door visitation, public debates, open air rallies, and personal witness at home and work. It was proposed that there be a special evangelistic thrust during Holy Week. The committee prepared and sent out plans for an

evangelistic campaign from 30th May-6th June, with the title "Christ our Life".

Christian Education and C.B.F.Z. booklets

The outreach Programme goes beyond direct evangelism. In the "Bila Ngai" booklet it was proposed that Sunday Schools be formed in each village where the C.B.F.Z. has a church with regular classes for teachers.

At the end of last year five hundred copies of a Sunday-School lesson manual in Lingala and Kikongo were duplicated and sent out for teachers. A booklet of brief Bible studies on the passion, death and resurrection of Christ was prepared and sent out to the church districts to encourage evangelism in Holy Week.

Booklets of lessons are being prepared for inquirers' classes and for classes for new church members. Too often the newly baptized have been left without special encouragement and instruction and many youngsters lose interest in the church soon after baptism. The formation of social-action groups was also suggested.

Besides these home-produced booklets, hundreds of Scripture Gift Mission tracts have been

A young people's band at Ngombe Lutete, Zaire

(Photo: Phyl Gilbert)



sent to district pastors. One hundred Scripture Union cards were also sent to each district to encourage church members to study their Bibles regularly and effectively.

Committees. In order to help local churches put into practice the proposals for outreach we suggested that regional and district evangelism committees be formed. A few districts have sent us letters to let us know that committees have been formed and to express their thanks at the proposals for the evangelism year and the accompanying literature.

Communications. One big problem was how to send information about the evangelism year to districts hundreds of miles away, with the postal service slow and unreliable. Where possible we sent letters and booklets with people going to the four regional church offices and to some districts. But we discovered at regional assemblies in March that some districts had not yet received literature sent in November or December. Perhaps we should have made the evangelism year 1977!

ACTION

By some. As we near the end of April it's difficult to know how far the outreach proposals have yet been acted on. We know that some district committees have been formed and that in quite a few parishes special services were held during Holy Week to which non-Christians were invited.

In February, some Bolobo Bible School students and teachers spent a week in the large village of Yumbi, thirty miles north of Bolobo. Homes were visited and special services were held both to challenge the uncommitted with the call of Christ and help wake a once strong, but now sleeping local church.

By the General secretary

Rev. Mfwilwakanda, has taken an active part in evangelism on his journeys. After the Middle River Regional Assembly at Ikoko Bonginda, he walked over twenty miles to the main road to Mbandaka, preaching the gospel at seven villages en route. On a visit to Ngombe Lutete in the Lower River Region, he learnt that no special services had been organized for Holy Week. The district pastor was asked to call an open air meeting that evening in the small village and about 50 people gathered by



torch and paraffin lamp-light to hear Rev. Mfwilwakanda's evangelistic message.

In the Capital

At the beginning of December the proposals for the C.B.F.Z. evangelism year were put to a well attended meeting of Kinshasa pastors and deacons. Talks were given on the Christian responsibility to share God's good news, on the needs of Kinshasa for evangelism and on the proposed outreach Campaign. This was followed by a question time in which not many questions were asked but quite a few people expressed pleasure that all our Kinshasa deacons had been called together for the first time for years and that at last evangelism was being organized in the Community.

I led a weekly Bible study and discussion group for deacons of Kitega parish during February and March as part of the "preparation for evangelism" period. Usually ten to fifteen people turned up, keen to learn and listen, not so keen at first to discuss. One session that really came alive was when we compared the witness of the apostles at Pentecost, and of the young Christian community in days following, with our own local church life.

Several parishes in Kinshasa held special services in Holy Week with an evangelistic flavour, proclaiming salvation in Jesus Christ, through his life offered up for us on the cross and his resurrection. In Kitega parish, deacons gave out invitations to these services to people living near them. On Palm Sunday afternoon the Kitega church was packed for a concert of Christian songs. During the week two services were held outside the homes of church members; on the other evenings of the week they were in the church.

At the Good Friday evening service, Pastor Enguta spent nearly an hour graphically describing the judgement, suffering and death of Jesus, insisting, in conclusion that this was all for us and our salvation. This was followed by the Lord's Supper. The pastor was in the middle of concentric semi-circles of deacons all in white clothes and the serving of the bread and wine was accompanied by singing led by a male-voice choir. It was a very moving experience. Then on the Saturday afternoon a passion play was presented. There was a large crowd in church the following day to celebrate our Saviour's resurrection.

The previous weekend there had been a retreat for our Kinshasa Sunday school teachers, mainly young people, at Makala parish. Pastor Kiyedi, who co-ordinates Christian education by the C.B.F.Z. in Kinshasa, asked Phyllis Gilbert and I to give talks on basic Christian beliefs rather than on how to communicate these to children; evangelism rather than pedagogy! Phil talked on "following Jesus" and I on "sin and its wages" and there were other gospel messages encouraging the youngsters to a personal commitment to Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

On the Saturday evening the 140 Sunday-School teachers were divided into groups for prayer and reflection and discussion on the talks they had heard. Quite a few confessed that they had come to a new experience of Jesus Christ

and that up until then their church membership and work had been mainly due to their coming from Christian families rather than deeply held personal convictions. As one young man said to us afterwards "The spirit really moved amongst us".

The C.B.F.Z. planned six evangelistic rallies in different parts of Kinshasa on 30th May which six teams, including pastors, theological students and laymen conducted. The theme of the rallies was "Christ, our Life" and Pastor Mfwilwakanda wrote a meditation on this theme to guide us.

CONCLUSION

From news trickling in it seems doubtful that the evangelism year has yet had much impact on the C.B.F.Z. as a whole. We did not prepare well enough in advance and perhaps the time was not ripe for an organized outreach campaign. But certainly it will have been a means of challenging many people to follow Christ in trust, love and obedience and there have been some who have responded. We hope that the evangelistic project will have encouraged pastors and local churches to remember that mission rather than survival should be the aim of the church. We hope that 1976 will be the first of many years in which evangelism becomes a vital concern and activity of the Baptist Community of the River Zaire.

**Left: General Secretary,
Rev. Mfwilwakanda (right)
with Rev. Kuvitwanga**
(Photo: Phyl Gilbert)

**Girls at the opening of the
Roman Catholic church at
Ngombe Matadi**
(Photo: Phyl Gilbert)



Youth service fills church

NAIROBI Baptist Church is packed for two services, at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. each Sunday. The 9 a.m. service is the Youth Church and up to 400 attend.

This news came in a letter from Eric and Linda Humphreys, members of the B.M.S. International Fellowship, who are teaching at schools in Thika, Kenya.

Linda has learnt Braille and is able to correct the homework of students at the secondary school for the blind. Eric has six blind students taking A level courses, three of them taking Divinity and English Literature. They braille notes in class and then type their homework. In November 1975 the school presented 113 candidates for A level and 87 did sufficiently well to obtain places at university.

Details of the B.M.S. International Fellowship can be obtained from Rev. (Mrs.) A. W. Thomas, 93 Gloucester Place, London, W1H 4AA.

Water means life

Joyce Brown reports from Nepal.

THE parables of Jesus have become more real, seeing the clay water pots and the oxen in the fields. When Jesus speaks of the living water I can now see the significance. Here water is precious and used sparingly; in the villages it has to be carried from a spring. In a Nepali family it is used for everything—drinking, cooking, washing food, dishes, clothes and people and mixed with mud on the floors.

When travelling you get so thirsty that to be able to drink water means life. It has become a luxury to be able to wash my feet after being on the dusty road, making me realize the significance of Jesus washing the disciples' feet. Oh that we may be really thirsty for His Holy Spirit in the same way.

Please come back

Rosalie Harris reports on a visit to a village in the Ngombe Lutete district of Lower Zaire.

WE have been to Manilonde, one of the villages in the Ngombe Lutete district, but about 30 miles away, to hold a "seminaire" of Bible teaching for the women of that area. This was at their invitation.

The talks and Bible studies were based on a booklet produced for this purpose during this year, with the theme "Who is my neighbour?" Not only did we get used to the idea of a meeting, or a meal, happening now or perhaps in two hours time, but also to the fact that there were as many men, young people and children as there were women, making well over 100 people most of the time. It must have been quite an event in an isolated village. Fortunately we had taken children's activities, and the men joined in the main sessions but not the discussion groups or other activities like tie-dyeing in the afternoon.

We need to live alongside people to begin to understand them. In a way we were struck by their lack of Bible knowledge, and also the inability of many to make use of literature because they could not read. And yet there was such a lot they could teach us, and there were laughs at our attempts to do some of the things that are second nature to them, for example, in food preparation. We soon learnt not to expect anything to happen until it had started, and there were always people around and things to do.

There is a deep Christian love and fellowship that does not depend on a lot of knowledge. Yet the need for teaching is real and we were asked to stay longer, or to go again.

TOGETHER IN A DIVIDED WORLD

“Let us remember—

That contrary to all good sense and business efficiency,
in the world mission of the Church—

Where advance is most rapid over the roughest terrain,
where victories abound every day,
where opportunities arise every moment,
where mammoth successes can be followed by tragic
failures due to lack of consolidation,
where human need is most acute and exploitation at its worst,

BUT

where most can be done to help,
where the doors are open and the Churches most united,
In Africa, South America, the Islands and some parts of Asia—

WE PUT OUR LEAST RESOURCES

How can we change our priorities?”

“Grant us, Lord, to spread true love in the world;
Grant that by us and by Your children it may penetrate a little
into all the circles, all societies, all economic and
political systems, all laws and customs, all contracts,
all rulings;
Grant that it may penetrate into the places where people eat,
work, meet, sleep, play and live;
Grant that it may penetrate the hearts of men and that we may
never forget the battle for a better world is a battle
of love, in the service of love.”

“Lord, share out among us the tongues of your Spirit,
that we may each burn with compassion
for all who hunger for freedom and humanness;
that we may be doers of the Word and so speak
with credibility about the wonderful things you have done.”

Three examples taken from a 26 page booklet
of worship material produced by the Conference
of Missionary Societies as part of the Common
Theme for the Churches “Together in a Divided
World”.

The booklet contains a section of practical
guidelines for preparing an act of worship,
prayers and meditations related to the five
aspects of the theme, selections from the worship
material produced for the World Council of
Churches Nairobi Assembly, and the Coventry
Litany of Reconciliation.



**This is the symbol
of the C.B.M.S.
Common Theme**



**Any publication
bearing this is
being used by all
missionary societies
sharing in the
Common Theme
programme**



Three other Common Theme booklets have
also been produced by C.B.M.S. No. 1 is a list
of resources—invaluable for groups wanting to
take up the project, but also useful as a general
resource list. No. 2 is Bible study material, in
which each of the six sections have been contrib-
uted by Christians from various parts of the
world. No. 4 contains background study papers.

The Resources booklet costs 10p; the Wor-
ship, Bible study and Background Papers book-
lets are each priced 20p. The booklets may be
obtained direct from C.B.M.S. (2 Eaton Gate,
London CW1W 8BL) or from the B.M.S.

TOGETHER AT S

This month the Society's Summer School programme b

ANCASTER House, Bexhill; Allhallows School, Lyme Regis; Kelly College, Tavistock; Blaithwaite House, Wigton; **TOGETHER** they make up the venues for the 1976 B.M.S. Summer School programme.

Worship, sports, talks, outings, films, barbeques, Bible studies, rambles, discussions, competitions, Late-Night-Extras. Put them all **TOGETHER** and you've got a B.M.S. Summer School.

Young people from all over Britain. Young people from other parts of Europe. Overseas students at present in Britain. People from many walks of life with leadership, administrative and domestic skills. Missionaries home on furlough. They'll all be **TOGETHER** at Summer Schools this year.

In case you've not guessed, the theme of this year's Summer Schools is **TOGETHER**. The theme arose partly through the C.B.M.S. Common Theme "Together in a Divided World". But it's also an ideal theme because Summer Schools do bring together a very varied group of people to share together their beliefs and ideas about many aspects of Christianity and the worldwide mission of the Church, and also to spend a great holiday together.

The B.M.S. has been arranging Summer Schools since 1910, when Folkestone was the venue for the first ever School. In 1926 we paid our first visit to Ancaster House, Bexhill, and with very few exceptions have been going there each year since. No doubt our 50-year-link will give opportunity for some appropriate celebrations this Summer!

A typical Summer School day—if such a thing is possible!—is a real mixture of study and relaxation, worship and fun. Each day begins and ends with an opportunity for worship and prayer. The major part of the morning is used for a study session. Usually the emphasis is on working in small groups, using a whole variety

TOGETHER in Jesus

What does it mean to say Jesus is alive? What are our opportunities and responsibilities in relation to Christians in other parts of the world? Is the mission of the Church the same in all countries? Why has the Church remained in being for almost 2,000 years? How did the first friends of Jesus see him? What is your own personal experience of Jesus? How can we share our faith and beliefs with others? How much are churches in Britain working together? How are Christians in other countries working together?

These are just some of the many questions this with considering.

All these questions are contained—in various by B.M.S. Young People's Department. The file As well as a number of information sheets, there discussion questions and where to find additional

The file will be provided to members of Summer Although designed with Summer School mainly in groups looking for study/project material. Copy 35p each.

TOGETHER in Giving

Is our money our own to do with as we like? Is it wrong for Christians to have a lot of money? What responsibilities do we have to share our wealth with people in the Third World? Should we try to "live simply that others may simply live"? How does B.M.S. raise money? What is the cost of living in other parts of the world? What is the new B.M.S. youth fund-raising project? What does the Bible say about money?

SUMMER SCHOOL

begins again. Martin Howie introduces this year's theme.

TOGETHER in Service

Should Christians be prepared to work anywhere in the world at the call of God? What is a vocation? How can Christians support one another in their Christian service? Do the claims of Christ conflict with the desire for a job with good prospects and a high income? How can Christians use their place of work for Christian witness? Where and how do B.M.S. missionaries serve? What is it like being a missionary? How are missionaries trained for service? Where can young people offer for voluntary service? Does God work through non-Christians?

Year's Summer School project will be concerned

forms—in the "Together" resources file, prepared contains material for each section of the project. are suggestions for activities, Bible study passages, resources.

School staff concerned with leading the project. mind, the file is also suitable for youth (or adult) les may be ordered from B.M.S./Y.P.D., price

TOGETHER in Prayer

Why should we pray? What does the Lord's Prayer teach us about prayer? Are prayer "guides" or "calendars" a helpful aid? What are the problems in praying for people overseas? Is the whole of life a prayer? Does God always answer our prayers? Where is it easiest to pray? Is prayer an important link with Christians in other countries? Are prayers in church services too long and too dominated by the minister?

of methods and techniques.

One group might hold a discussion or Bible study; another might use a questionnaire or interview as a way of discovering some new information; another might use role-play, drama, pictures or film. Each group has an appointed group leader who tries to enable all the members of the group to take a full part in the activities. The presence of the missionaries is one of the most vital parts of the study project, for it is in the small groups that they can get alongside the young people and share information about their work and beliefs in a very personal way.

More study sessions are held in the evenings. These may sometimes be in groups but more often it is a time when everyone comes together, again using a whole variety of methods to explore further what it means to follow Christ and be part of his Church. In between these sessions the energetic will take part in swimming, football, cricket or pudox matches, tennis and table-tennis competitions, rambles, It's-a-Knock-out games—or even judo at some Schools—while those less energetic will sunbathe (hopefully) catch up on lost sleep, write postcards or simply sit around chatting.

Then of course there are lots of new friendships to be made at Summer School and many old ones to renew. Many Summer Schoolers return year after year and it's a safe bet to say that it's the fellowship with other young people that is the major attraction. Naturally some of these friendships develop—there must be more than a few married couples around the country who first met at a Summer School. No wonder some Schoolers think B.M.S. stands for Baptist Matrimonial Service!

So Summer School can mean many things: a coming **TOGETHER** of people; a coming **TOGETHER** of many different ideas and beliefs; and for some it may mean getting **TOGETHER** with Jesus in a new way that will change the whole course of their life.

Joyce Andrews, on a visit to Zaire, with
Mama Detina and Hazel Pilling in Kinshasa

(Photo: Raymond Andrews)

Do we know what has happened?

by Hazel Pilling,
B.M.S. missionary from Zaire,
reflects on the changes of the last ten years

SORTING through my slides the other day I realized I would be embarrassed to show some of them in churches now. It's not that they are from the pre-independence, colonial era, but they are definitely out-of-date. Good pictures of my life and work in Zaire, say ten years ago, but they no longer give a true picture.

There I was, setting out on trek carrying a camera and light shoulder bag, my African companions carrying large loads of luggage, mine as well as their's. Now I would only take what I could carry myself.

I saw the special house set aside in a village for my use with separate food provided. Now I would sleep with my travelling companions and share the same food.

New ways and faces

I saw missionaries sitting on the best chairs at the front of the church, rather like a squire's family of old in a country parish, and knew that now they would sit anywhere, probably sandwiched between crying babies and hot mums.

There was the missionary teacher, doctor, minister, the key man, in practice if not in theory, but now one behind the desk, holding interviews, welcoming new missionaries, arranging accommodation is a Zairian.

A coloured face greets you in the headmaster's office; the area superintendent, the hospital director are well-trained nationals. (By the way, don't think that the missionary has worked himself out of a job and can pack up and come



home—it may be those key men can only do their jobs because the missionary is there—his very presence acting as a kind of buffer.)

I am so thankful that times changed while I was there, even though the change was hastened by some tragic happenings. In 1963, to be white, and a missionary at that, meant you enjoyed various privileges, not only in the church but from the government too.

New responsibilities

The *Simba* rebellion of 1964 cracked the "sacred" image of the missionary. Missionaries were tortured, raped and killed. They were vulnerable after all. From that time, senior pastors began to exercise a fatherly protection over us, especially any new, young missionaries. They felt and still feel, a responsibility for their welfare. The rôles were being reversed, in practice as well as theory now, as to who had the authority, and who was dependent. As the Church Councils decide where we should work

this increases our dependence on the national church.

It is probably fair to say that missionaries and nationals are now colleagues in a way they never were before. We can share holidays by the sea together, we stay in each other's homes, so we get to know one another and our work together is more meaningful. The barriers put up by former hierarchy fell at Independence time, but even after that we were treated as members of a rather strange tribe. But as a result of civil wars, and also the improvement in communications, members of different tribes in Zaire itself have had to learn to cope with each other and accept each other. I think this helped us to be accepted on a more equal footing. "All those who love the Lord Jesus belong to the same tribe," say the Christians, and they accept us, with our odd ways as members of this tribe, and so treat us as they would any other member of the tribe.

New relationships

When thieves broke into a missionary's house, they stole his clothes, radio and other family possessions. The next week a delegation from the local church knocked on his door, with a new tailor made suit for him, a dress-length for his wife and a gift of money. If someone falls on times of misfortune, the traditional clan system of mutual aid makes insurance policies irrelevant!

When people here at home say to me about the Africans "They are like children aren't they" I feel indignant. They are talking about my friends. Many a time I found I was the child as I talked with wise, Zairian Christians. When I left Zaire I realized that my attitude had unconsciously changed since I first went.

At my commissioning service in 1963 I remember I quoted the text, "Freely you have received freely give", and I was very conscious I had received so much in my life that I must be prepared to go and give, of myself, my experience and my training. As I prepared to leave Zaire eleven years later (older and wiser! ?) the thought uppermost in my mind was how much I had received from the people there that had enriched my life. I had gone to teach, but hadn't I learned far more than I had taught? Perhaps new missionaries should have as their first thought, "we've come to learn".

And only missionaries? As a member of the Christian community here in Britain I ask myself "Have we got the right picture of the church overseas?" If it is the same as ten years ago it's out-of-date! If we had the right picture I venture to suggest we would not expect people to sing certain verses in our missionary hymns, because they are ridiculous in the present situation.

Are we conveying the right picture to our children in Sunday School? Ask them "what is a



**Margot Stockwell
with Pastor
Mpidisi and two
deacons at
Ngombe Lutete**

Photo:
Phyl Gilbert



Delegates from all four regions in Zaire gather for a congress in Kinshasa

(Photo: Phyl Gilbert)

missionary?" and you will probably get some old-fashioned answers from those bright, modern children that would make a missionary squirm. "A missionary goes overseas to tell others about Jesus" is one typical answer. Yes, but he is only a small cog in the wheel, there are many more people, born and bred in that country who are far more able than he is to tell others the Good News.

New links

When I hear of churches adopting missionaries, I want to say, if you adopt a missionary it will be a much more enriching experience for you, and him, if you adopt also the place where he is working. Get to know the people, the conditions, the growth of the church. As he is part and parcel of that place how can you isolate him, and pray for him alone? If he comes home, you will still have links with the work of the Lord he was sharing in there, and you will be able to continue sharing in it.

Sometimes we are put off by foreign names which are difficult to pronounce and remember. (I well remember my near panic when I had to call the register of 30 names on my very first day at a secondary school in Kinshasa. With hindsight, I realize it would have been wiser to ask

one of the pupils to do it!) But seriously, I wonder if that is why we just give a cursory glance at the B.M.S. Prayer Guide on the days when no familiar names of missionaries appear. Yet some foreign names just roll off our tongues, because we hear them so often on radio and TV, so perhaps it's just a question of practice leading to familiarity.

"The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above . . ." so we sing and so they sing in Zaire, and in India and in Brazil. . . . Are we most at home with British Folk? Are we going to feel a bit odd in that fellowship above? Or are we taking every opportunity we are given for sharing with other members of our world-wide family? The needs today are not less, but different. We are called to share what we have (and we really do have so much in this country), but it is to be a mutual sharing, a giving and a receiving. We could learn from the church in Zaire of their enthusiasm for worship, about being a caring community, about sharing fellowship as one family.

The early church was a sharing community; we are members of that same church.

* * * *

Number 44: home for many B.M.S. missionaries through the years and still used as a guest house for missionaries in Calcutta. It is home for Joy Knapman

(Photo: Basil Amey)

Girls who need courage

by Joy Knapman,
B.M.S. missionary in Calcutta
introduces school girls who enjoyed an outing

LET'S go to the cemetery first" was the surprising suggestion at the beginning of the day's outing in Serampore! After our bus passed the Jagannath Car (which we had stopped to view) on the outskirts of the town, the driver by mistake turned a corner taking our small borrowed bus away from the College for which we were heading.

So we agreed to stop first at the cemetery since its memorial stones would be of interest even to a party of schoolgirls from Calcutta, for Carey, Marshman and Ward were buried here.

Carey's name, the most familiar of the three, already meant something to our party since Bengal owes a debt to William Carey who contributed considerably to Bengali literature; besides, most of the girls in the group attended Bible classes regularly at the Carey Baptist Church, Calcutta, and so have frequent reminders of the one after whom the church is named.

Wandering around the cemetery, we had fleeting glimpses as to the calibre of the Serampore trio, Ward, the printer, said to be the friendliest of the three; Marshman, the educationist, paved the way for formal primary education in Bengal. All three suffered the loss of close relatives who did not survive the difficult climate in the early days when the antibiotics which safeguard today were not available. It was a surprise to some that Carey had married three times.

From the site of graves, we continued to the very live Serampore College. To young people



living in congested Calcutta who seldom leave the city, the approach by the river Hooghly was very attractive and the majestic College building in its own grounds somewhat impressive. The College was in session and we were soon mingling with some of the many students as we went first to the canteen for a much needed drink.

We were met by Edward Burrows who, together with his wife Julie and sons, Andrew and Jeremy, have been in Serampore a little over twelve months, after a ministry in Luton. The majority of the students are Bengalis absorbed in the Arts and Science degree courses. The small number of Christians (fifty or so) who study theology, come from widely scattered areas of India and other parts of Asia.

Recovering from dehydration, thirsts quenched, we decided to make another quick trip outside the College campus before the sun became too hot—it was still only 9 a.m. We continued along the river back to the local water

works and obtained permission to walk between the reservoirs to the river to see the Pagoda to which Henry Martyn, an Anglican absorbed in a ministry among Muslims, retreated from time to time at the turn of the 18th century. This place of refuge on the Hooghly's banks must have been a welcome spot in which Henry Martyn continued in peace his translation work.

History lives

Returning to the College the girls soon became absorbed in the intriguing interests of the Carey Library and Museum—manuscripts were shown and special treasures displayed . . . from Carey's crutches to a tome entitled "Chinese Bible—Marshman". Even schoolgirls were interested in the Royal Charter given by the King of Denmark in 1826 which gave the College its right to confer degrees. As someone explained the wide interests attributed to Carey, which ranged from many translations of the Bible to his great desire to promote horticulture, all were impressed and staggered at the listed achievements of one man whose greatest passion was to share his faith in Jesus Christ.

Although this was a "day out" it was by now too hot to enjoy our picnic comfortably outside, but we pooled our resources in the canteen—every member of the party had brought some-

thing, and soon only debris of paper and crumbs remained! What to do next?—stretching out under a fan was the obvious common thought, but not for long . . . the more energetic had seen the basket ball pitch and soon two teams were battering the ball to and fro—some of us opted to be spectators only!

By 2 p.m. it was time to move to make our final call in Serampore, this time to the Cheshire Homes. Strange, really to include this in our programme during a day's outing, but then we had claimed it would be an educational trip. All of us went and what a sobering effect that visit had on the group; perhaps the contrast was just too marked, moving from the healthy enjoyment of a basket ball pitch into a home where so many handicapped men and women are cared for by a staff undoubtedly dedicated to the task. Each patient is incurable and in some way severely handicapped physically and a number also mentally disturbed.

As we moved around the wards, some of our number showed loving concern, while others held back and a few were visibly overwhelmed. Some of the patients are able to employ themselves usefully and earn pocket money—from embroidering handkerchiefs to making paper bags or painting greeting cards—mostly Indian scenes and characters. We stayed almost an hour,



**The Interior of new Chapel
at Serampore College**

(Photo: Neil B. McVicar)

singing a few scripture verse songs and encouraging those who seldom are visited, a good conclusion to our trip.

So back to Calcutta in our bus, revived spirits remaining pretty high throughout the journey. This was an outing mainly of Christian teenagers, whose singing, loud and boisterous at times, confirmed their testimony to a living faith in Christ.

A Christian's battles

Completing the somewhat hazardous journey back into and through Calcutta's rush hour, we scattered to our homes; but, who were these schoolgirls? Anglo Indians, Chinese and Indian, average age approximately seventeen years, from widely varying backgrounds and religious persuasions. Most have attended Carey Church for several years; during recent months five have confessed faith in Christ openly in baptism. Each one of those five having struggled personally with varying problems before coming to a place of commitment; can a Chinese girl in a Buddhist home refuse to eat food offered to idols when all food provided at home has been so offered? Will the chances of marriage be thwarted in another home, if the girls refuse to carry out domestic worship honouring the ancestors? These and many more questions.

The battles won in this generation will surely make it easier for those of the next to fearlessly honour Christ, but the cost for many now is great. A few of our friends in the group have never entered our Church, but were contacts made through day school, several from the same Christian High School—where moral science is taught and for which in the senior school the Bible is openly used as the text book.

There is something very thrilling in seeing Bibles handled by a class of more than thirty girls who have never before had access to this written Word. Great is the privilege (and greater the responsibility) of classroom discussion in which Sheila Masterton (a Baptist from Edinburgh) and I have to share.

Recently in Class X we have discussed with three parallel groups their ideas of worship and ours. Introducing them to the worship of the Old Testament from the days of the Tabernacle, we felt it appropriate to visit a large Jewish synagogue here in Calcutta—a place of worship packed with Old Testament history and local Jewish interest. The immediate reactions were revealing, but where are the images, the idols or even the pictures? How difficult for any Hindu with her many domestic deities to understand the claim "I am the Lord your God . . . you shall have no gods before me".

Their future for Christ

How very earnest are the few Muslim girls who show devotion to Mohammed, tactfully and courteously telling us in class they cannot accept our claims concerning Jesus Christ. How forcefully has another girl declared in an essay she does not accept the faith of her Hindu family, nor any other; she is an avowed atheist. She cannot accept the thought that a God of love was prepared to let His Son suffer and die.

And so the opportunity quietly continues; pray with us that the Holy Spirit will select from educated young women of this city those who will yield to the claims of Christ and share their faith with many in this country, as they move into the realm of College life and all the future beyond.

Acknowledgements

The Secretaries acknowledge with grateful thanks the following legacies and gifts sent anonymously or without address.

(6th April-4th May, 1976)

General Work: Anon: £20; Anon: (For His Sake), £7.00; Anon: £1.00; Anon: (Cymro), £28.00; Anon: £25.00; Women's Work: Anon: (Prove Me), £5.00; Medical Work: Anon: £2.00; Anon: £25.00; Anon: £2.80; Relief Work: Anon: £100.00; Anon: £10.00.

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Missionary Record

Departure
14 April. Miss E. Wyatt for Khulna, Bangladesh.

Birth
18 April. In Cuiabá, Brazil, to Rev. and Mrs. D. McClenaghan a daughter.

Pray for the children

A request from David Boydell at Bolobo, Zaire.

Another urgent matter for prayer is the Sunday school work in Bolobo, which depends entirely on our students. Please pray that local Christians might be given a vision of the task that is rightly theirs, and that they might be enabled to play their part in the evangelization of their own children.

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