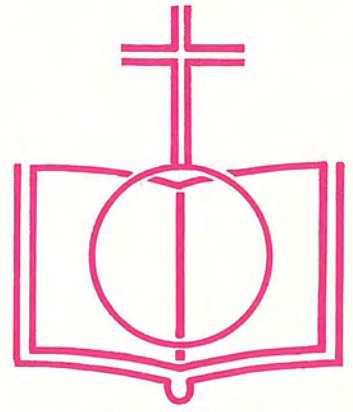


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MISSION AT DINAJPUR





Carey's pulpit, Dinajpur

THE OLD BOX PULPIT OF DINAJPUR

by Gwyn Lewis

On the old box pulpit in Dinajpur town church there is a small brass plaque which reads 'Carey's Pulpit'. The accuracy of the legend is a matter of dispute between historians but whether or not Carey actually preached from the old pulpit, it is a symbolic link between the present and the past. Carey did indeed start his missionary career in Dinajpur when he came out to join Dr Thomas, a freelance Baptist missionary whose mortal remains have long since mouldered in the old mission cemetery in Dinajpur town. In 1978 preaching is still carried on from the old pulpit, Sunday by Sunday, thus symbolizing the ongoing mission of Dr Carey's Lord.

At Sadar Mahal, across the river and 30 miles from Dinajpur town, the local Christians claim that the Church, not the building which is a mud structure with a corrugated iron roof, but the worshipping community, is the oldest in North Bengal and the oldest Baptist Church in Asia. This is an extravagant claim but the tradition rightly exemplifies the fairly long history of the Church of Jesus Christ in this area going back for 150 years.

During the 1930's there was expansion in North Dinajpur around Ruhea and in West Dinajpur around Balurghat. But partition of Bengal in 1947 cut the West Bengal churches off from the rest of the Dinajpur Baptist

Union. In Ruhea quarrels and rivalry resulted in most of the churches going over to the Catholic fold.

Bengali Hindus become Christians

Early in the 1960's there was a stirring among the Khatrias, a mixed racial group within the Bengali-speaking population who inhabit North Bengal. These people are peasant cultivators and adherents of a Hindu sect called 'Sonaton Dhorma' which means 'the original religion'. Ironically they know

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COMMENT

There are some things in life which are always associated in the mind. To name one is to conjure up thoughts of the other. So knife and fork, cup and saucer and soap and water are linked together. In a similar way some people are sub-consciously linked with certain places. Nelson with Trafalgar, Lord Montgomery with El Alamein and Livingstone with Africa.

The scene has changed

In the history and work of the Baptist Missionary Society to speak of William Carey is to refer at once to India, or to speak of India is to invite reference to William Carey. Up until recently this was quite acceptable and indeed natural, but when we speak of India today it is necessary to remember that, though still a very large country, it is smaller than it used to be, because from the original Indian sub-continent Pakistan and Bangladesh have now been taken away to become independent countries on their own.

An ideal place

It is therefore necessary to remember that William Carey was associated with what we now know as Bangladesh, in his day part of Bengal. In the far north of that country a mission station was formed at Dinajpur as early as 1795. Carey said of it, 'A more proper spot to make a large stand for the spread of the gospel could scarcely have been chosen. This is a situation so central . . . that, had we sufficient men and a proper plan, the gospel might with ease and small expense be sent from hence through all Hindustan, Persia, Boutan, Assam and . . . further afield.' 'Dinajpur is the place where all necessary languages may be learned.'

Ebb and flow

In this promising situation the servants of Christ, the missionaries of the BMS, have worked ever since. It is in this area that so many inquiries were received following the war of independence, and in which whole communities rather than just individuals, asked to join the church. It was an influx which overwhelmed the church in many respects because there just were not enough pastors or evangelists to nurture these new converts in the faith. The result was that many drifted back into their old beliefs, though recently, a number have asked to be reinstated in the Church.

Not all alike

There is a tendency to think of Bangladesh in connection with floods, and swollen water ways. This is a legitimate picture with regard to the delta areas but not of the northern part of the country around Dinajpur. This part is much drier and is only able to produce one rice crop per year. But a feature of this area is the cultivation of sugar cane which can be seen on all sides. There are also fields of mustard, grown for the oil which can be extracted from it.

The work demands stamina

It is much more thinly populated than the rest of Bangladesh and is an area of scattered small villages with very few sizeable towns. This means that church work is very demanding because to foster a growth in the faith among the Christian communities involves travelling great distances along poor roads, or even cart tracks.

The writers of this issue of *The Herald* have shared with us some of the aspects of mission in and around Dinajpur, and shown us the wide range of work undertaken.



Immanuel Primary School

by Valerie Hamilton

A circular brass gong being struck by a small boy enthusiastically with a heavy stick heralds the commencement of each day's work at the Immanuel Primary School in Dinajpur. Many children have been scholars here since the school was established about 1924, and at the present time almost 200 are on the roll. They represent the three main religious groups in the country, Muslim, Hindu and Christian, and come from every possible walk of life. The main subjects taught are Bengali, mathematics and English, but others are science, social studies, art and games. Just now the prayers have been said, the national anthem sung and lessons are in progress, so let us look in on some of the classes.

Muslims are in the majority

In one of the classrooms in the new building, supplied in 1977 by Swedish Free Church Aid, Jakir Hosene sits in Class V, working conscientiously under the watchful eye of the Assistant Headmaster, Mr Hernendra Marandy. Jakir represents the largest religious group in Bangladesh, and in the school — Islam. He works hard in spite of the fact that his widowed mother often sends him and his sister to school without any breakfast and

with the prospect of just a handful of dry cereal for lunch. The place they call home is a bamboo hut by the side of the road, which is frequently blown down in the storms. The boy's mother works all day in order to earn rice for herself and ten taka (35p) per month. There are several children like Jaki Hosene in our school, but there are also children from wealthy and influential Muslim homes. Some fathers are in Government service and others are officers in the Bangladesh Rifles, whose camp is opposite the Mission.

The smallest group by far in the school are the Hindus. There are just five children and one of the six teachers who are Hindus. Mrs Arati Saha has been with us now for three years and fits into the staff very well. Her husband is also a teacher in a Government school and they have one young son in Class II. Mrs Saha always works extremely hard and especially enjoys the coaching classes we hold from time to time for the staff, on methods of teaching English and mathematics. We are praying constantly that she and her family may come to love and accept our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Christians old and new

Over in one of the other buildings, the

kindergarten class is happily learning simple mathematics. This year we have had more applications than we can accept and quite a number of children are waiting in the hope that we can acquire another teacher. Near the back of the room is a small boy who rejoices in the name of Augustine Mardi. He is a newcomer this year to our boys' hostel and comes from the village of Sadar Mahal some 30 miles from Dinajpur. Augustine represents the older Christians in our area, for Sadar Mahal is where Dr William Carey began his work and where the Church was first established. Altogether 50 children at the school live in the hostel and another ten come from nearby Christian homes.

The teacher of this class represents the new Christians, that is those converted since Independence in December 1971. He is Mr Monindra Rai and only last year was baptized. He met with opposition when his Hindu neighbours heard he had become a Christian, but things are a little easier now. He is happy working in the school and in the summer hopes to begin a one year course at a teachers' training college. After training, he will return to us and continue teaching in the school. Most of our teachers are trained, which is good, but the training leaves something to be desired and any assistance in improving their

methods of teaching is appreciated by the staff.

Educated children, illiterate parents

In the past four or five years, we have had increasing numbers of children from our new churches and this is very encouraging. Many parents in the village churches are themselves illiterate, but are beginning to see the advantages of having their children educated. Unfortunately most village schools are very mediocre in their teaching, so it is good that the Bangladesh Baptist *Sangha* (Union) has recently begun to assist some Christian groups to run schools for their children, and indeed any children in the village. Although we have no direct link with these schools, we are hoping to have their masters to come in for a period of time and observe in our school. Also we want to make frequent trips out to see them in action.

After our Class V, the children have to leave and attend high schools in the town. We should like to be able to provide education right to the matriculation examination (O levels), but at the moment this is not possible. In the meantime, we are trying to give our children the best possible education that will enable them to live helpful and purposeful lives in the future. We pray that while with us they may hear of Jesus Christ and learn to love Him as Friend and Saviour. We give Him praise and thanks that we have the privilege of serving Him in this way and for the knowledge that friends in Britain are remembering us regularly in prayer.



Bengali boys outside the hostel at Dinajpur named after John Fountain

The place where races meet

by Joyce Lewis



The minaret of a mosque, symbol of Islam

One day, some time in the first half of 1973, two new boys looked around a little uncertainly as they mounted the four steps on to the veranda of the boys' hostel in Dinajpur. The new school session begins in January and each year a number of new boys come in from the different village churches to join those just returning for the new session from their annual Christmas holiday. Most of the latter move up a class but any who have not managed to get pass marks in at least all but two subjects have to repeat the same class a second year.

New and different

These two new boys were different in a number of ways. Different because they came in the middle of the session. Different in appearance. They did not have the very sharp features of the natural Bengalis, yet neither did they have the different features of the Uraons or Santalis, the two tribal groups in the area. Their eyes had just a

tendency to a slant and reminded one of the Nepali type. And when they spoke, although they did not have the unmistakable accent of the Uraons or Santalis, yet their Bengali was just a little different.

These two new boys were the first children to come into the hostels from the new Christians of the first years following Bangladesh Independence in December 1971. This new movement has been mainly among a group who by race are essentially Bengalis, as distinct from the very different tribal groups in the area, and who by religion are Hindus of the Khatria (or farming) caste. But they preserve a separateness and are very conscious of their particular group. One or two of their villages had been contacted about 15 years earlier with some response but had largely fallen away. Among them

continued overleaf

THE PLACE WHERE RACES MEET

continued from previous page

an anti-education attitude had prevailed and most of them were illiterate and unable to read the Bible themselves. Perhaps this was one of the reasons for the fall away.

Increasing numbers

Now, with the coming of these two boys, we hoped there would be a new and real interest in education among the Christians of this group. They had to be encouraged by the promise of particular financial support and this led to their arriving halfway through the session. But this has indeed proved to be just a beginning. Each year since, we have

had a few more until now about one third of our present total of 48 boys is from this group. There is an increasing number of girls too in our girls' hostel. And the parents are now willing in most cases to pay the low and still subsidized rate we ask from all parents. In cases of true individual hardship, with these as with any of our children, we give additional help and where really necessary we may try to get a child completely sponsored.

Both the boys' and girls' hostels in Dinajpur were originally started to help children of the non-Bengali tribal minority groups to get a good education. These children are often at a disadvantage in ordinary government schools even where there is a school near their home, because Bengali, the national

language and the medium of education, is not their mother tongue. This purpose is still served and about a third of the children at present in the hostel are Uraons or Santalis.

But a wider purpose is also served in enabling others to benefit. Firstly, Bengali children from village areas without a good school nearby are helped and now the children of this new group too. The overall number of children in the two hostels has more than doubled in the last three or four years and we have had to add new rooms to the existing hostels. Further additions are underway again this year. We have been fortunate in being able to get financial grants for these buildings from other sources, particularly those interested in helping educational work. When one looks around anywhere in Bangladesh and sees the proportion of children, it is difficult to visualize anything other than an increasing demand for places in the hostels.

Different races intermingle

The multi-racial nature of our Dinajpur hostels is one of their most challenging and interesting features. With four distinct racial groups represented, there are at times some strains and tensions. In a way we seem to be cutting across the latest trends in thinking concerning evangelism and church growth, that for lasting results this should be done along natural racial and ethnic lines. There may be a lot in this, but we feel there is real meaning too in Paul's assertion that 'In Christ there is neither . . . Greek nor Jew. . .'

So our children from the different groups work and play, eat and sleep, and make friends freely. Besides getting the chance of a much better standard of education in our own primary school or the Catholic Mission High School which our older children attend, they also have the advantage of acquiring a much better Bible knowledge through consistent teaching in our Sunday school. In their own villages there is a real lack of people able to run Sunday schools. Indeed, it is from these children themselves that we would hope to find Sunday school teachers and other workers for our village churches in the future. John, one of the two boys who were the first of the new group to come to the hostel in 1973, will take his School Certificate examination in 1980, and Usha, one of the first girls of the group to come to the girls' hostel, will take hers in 1981. They both have a fine chance of doing well, being good pupils academically. We are still praying for them, and for many of our other pupils too, that they will come to a personal faith in the Lord Jesus.



Santali girl



Above: Compound at Dinajpur showing boys' hostel on left

Below: Work in progress to extend the boys' hostel





The majority of the women in Bangladesh are illiterate

'I believe, therefore my wife will believe also,' is an attitude which has regrettably been all too noticeable when our evangelists have been working among inquirers. The thought that both men and women have to make their own response to the call of Christ is definitely not part of the culture here. In this country, where the majority are Muslims, people think that the women



More and more women are finding that they can read and write

should automatically do as their husbands do. This is reflected in the answer we frequently get to the question, 'Why do you want to be a Christian?' 'Because my husband wants to be,' the woman replies. It is therefore difficult at first for the inquirer to grasp that each person, man or woman, must make a personal response to Jesus Christ.

It is difficult to reach the women

Very often the man does not see the necessity for both him and his wife to attend any meeting that is held. He is quite content to stand in for them both while the wife is busy cooking and looking after the children, but fails to share with her what he has learnt. Consequently we find the husband is well informed, while his wife understands very little. When we do go especially to meet with the women, it is almost impossible to get a group together before 9 or 10 p.m. when the day's work is over, but when the missionary is thinking longingly of bed!

This makes work among women somewhat difficult and, added to this, we just do not have sufficient workers. In Dinajpur district there are 34 churches and in the Rangpur district 16, and these are scattered over many miles. Some can only be reached by bus, train and/or rickshaw with a walk through the rice fields of five, ten or fifteen miles.

For this vast area of N W Bangladesh, we have one full-time worker for women, Miss Hemalini Baidya. She has worked for many years in this capacity in various parts of the country and so is very experienced. However, she faces an impossible task for she is based in Dinajpur town, and therefore can spend literally hours reaching a village group.

A part-time worker in Dinajpur district is Mrs Baroi, wife of Rev P C Baroi, who lives at our sub-station at Ruhea. She travels with her husband in that area and is doing a fine job as far as she is able among the churches established in the villages, as well as among the Hindu inquirers. Mrs Baroi, along with a few other educated women, is taking a correspondence course with the Christian College of Theology, and attends regular camps held here in Dinajpur. I should like to see many more attending these classes, but have to remember that the majority of our women are illiterate.

Illiteracy does not prevent evangelism

Apart from these ladies, there are some who do what they can within their own churches and in those nearby. Several of the newer Christians are keen to evangelize their own relatives and neighbours. One whom we know



Women's adult literacy class

well is illiterate but goes to the nearby market and gives out tracts. She finds out beforehand what the tract says and speaks boldly about it.

We hold camps for the women of these two districts from time to time but with pressure



'I believe, therefore my wife will believe also'

CHRISTIAN BY PROXY OF THE HUSBAND



of work in other directions it is only possible once or twice a year. When held, they are well worthwhile. The women enjoy fellowship and listen to Bible Studies and talks on such topics as prayer, the Christian family, first aid and child care. How important it is that our women should be well trained for they

are the ones who have the most influence on their children in the early years.

With all this in mind, I was very pleased to hear of a new scheme for adult literacy, which was introduced here early in 1977 by the Intercontinent Literacy Fellowship. It is a method by which people are taught to read from the very beginnings right through to reading the Bible. There are numerous opportunities to witness to the saving and keeping power of the Lord Jesus. It is generally thought that each person should teach only one other at first and so, for a time, there is a close contact. This course has been used successfully among Christians and also Hindus and Muslims, it being a very real means of evangelism as well as a way to learning reading and writing. It is also something which the women can do in their own homes, their lives being too full to be away from home, travelling about sharing their faith.

When this scheme was introduced in the northern area, several women took instruction and have been patiently teaching others in their villages. Despite the vast distances involved, this is something we hope to encourage more and more by regular contact and by follow-up camps held here in Dinajpur and Rangpur.

by Valerie Hamilton



Valerie Hamilton



THE OLD BOX PULPIT OF DINAJPUR

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little or nothing about the origins of the religion they profess to follow. The result of the stirring for the Church of Jesus Christ has been an influx of new Christians from this group as they search for an identity. They are anxious to learn a new religion which will give them a measure of security and respect in a predominantly Muslim country. Many of these people have come genuinely seeking a Saviour, others have just followed the crowd, yet others have been seeking only their own personal advantage. There have been persecutions including a Hindu backlash, and other groups have sought their allegiance, but the door to preach the gospel remained open through the 1960's.

The late 1960's and early 1970's saw the growing storm clouds of tension which lead up to the liberation war of 1971. On 25 March of that year the whole country was plunged into chaos. Millions of refugees fled to India where they were cared for in relief camps. The Khatrias, including the little Khatria churches of Dinajpur as well as many other Christians in the border area, went with them. It was whilst in these camps that many people came into contact with the gospel through preaching teams that visited the camps. When asked later how they came to become Christians they testified that it



A stirring among the Khatrias in the early 1960's resulted in many becoming Christians

was through the witness of these preaching teams, who came 'not bringing relief', which the refugees regarded as their right, but 'just teaching and preaching and caring'.

'And the Lord added to their number'

When they returned to their ruined homes and neglected lands in 1972 many came back with a new found faith. Of the original 'new' churches of the 1960's seven were reformed by the returning refugees. These, together with the seven remaining 'old'

churches from the 1930's and earlier, formed the post-liberation Dinajpur Baptist Union (DBU). But soon other churches of convert Christians were springing up spontaneously. These being mainly of the Khatria group linked naturally with the original seven 'new' churches. By 1973 the number of churches had doubled. Since then there has been a steady increase and now in 1978 there are 42 worshipping communities linked with the DBU. Some, with less than twelve members, are too small to be classified as



Dinajpur church



When war broke out in 1971 millions of refugees fled into India

churches under the constitution of the Bangladesh Baptist *Sangha*, but they are made up of scattered families around which a number of inquirers are already gathering. So expansion continues in the midst of trials and temptations.

During the first six months after the liberation war there was a generous spirit of co-operation between the three missions operating in the area, Italian Catholics, Norwegian Lutherans and British Baptists. The task before them

was that of helping the poor folk of every section of the population, whether Muslim, Hindu or Christian, to rebuild their homes and restart the cultivation of their land. There was no question of helping one group more than another. No pressure was brought to bear to persuade any to change their allegiance. The only criterion for help was need and all was done in response to our Lord's own assessment, 'In as much as you have done it unto the least of these my brethren you have done it unto me.'

This spirit of generous co-operation persisted after the relief period when evangelistic preaching teams moved into the district with nothing but a Bible and a song. All three missions welcomed them and there was no attempt on their part to form separate churches. There was never any persuasion for people to change from one denomination to another. At that time it was a joy to know that our Catholic brothers were buying and distributing the Bible to their people.

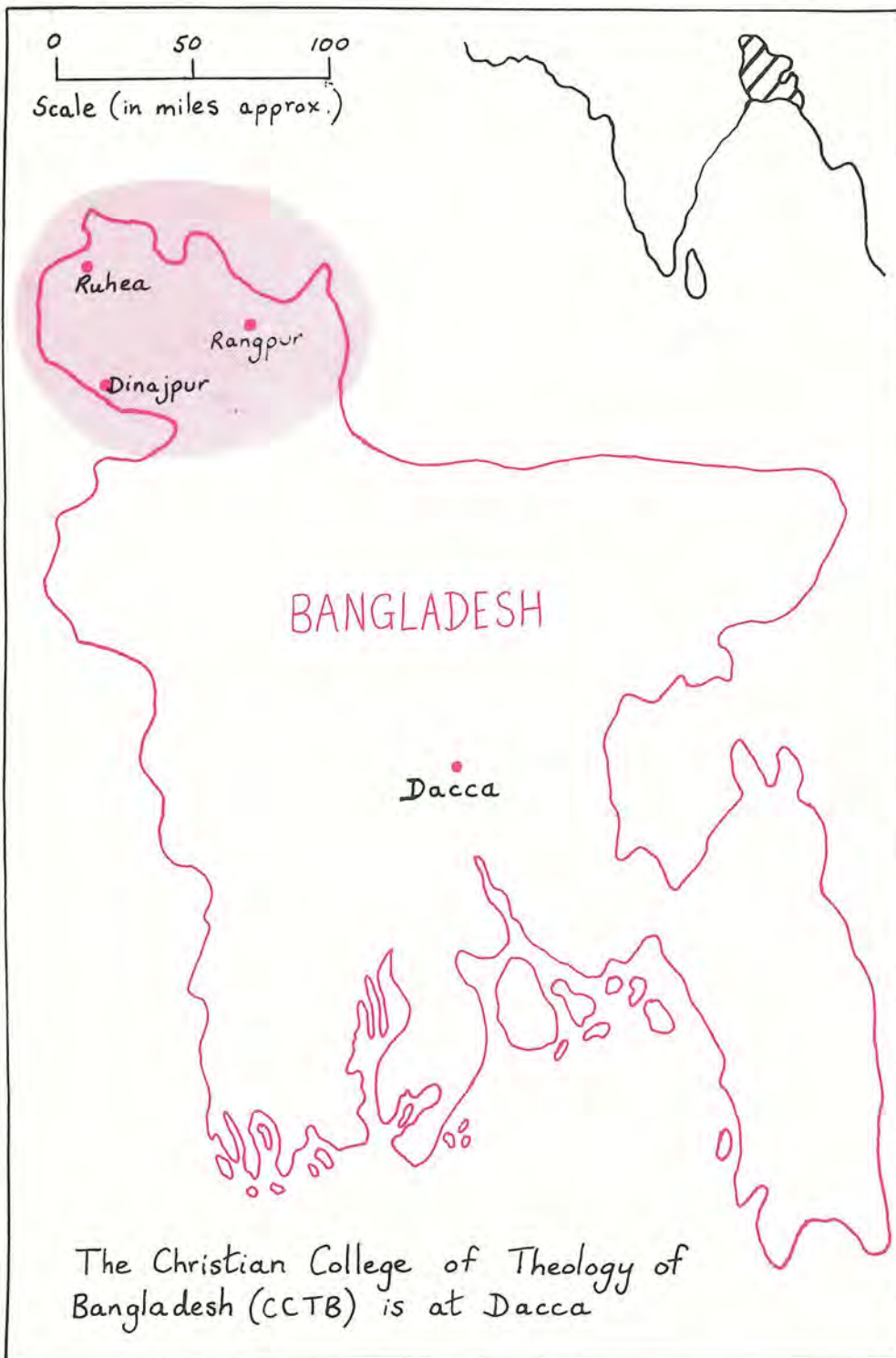
Co-operation breaks down

Sadly, of recent years this spirit of co-operation has broken down. Subtle inducements have been creeping in to persuade Christian folk to switch their allegiance. New Christians and inquirers are confused and often fall to the temptation of playing one mission off against another. 'Yes, we want salvation, but if we can have eternal salvation for our souls and also temporal advantage for our bodies, that is the mission to which we will turn.' Who can blame them? Are not we the missionaries to blame?

Please pray along with us that we may deal rightly with these, 'His brethren'. Pray for the expanding Church. Pray for a renewed spirit of unity, for sound Bible teaching, for provision of material and spiritual need. Pray that the Church of Jesus Christ in Northern Bangladesh may be indigenous and strong.



Dinajpur town



T.E.E. IN NORTH-WEST BANGLADESH

by Gwyn Lewis

What is TEE? Is it just another 'in' jargon designed to make those who are 'in' feel they know something that others do not, and to make those who are not 'in' think that something very important and mysterious is going on?

Theological Education by Extension, to give the initials their full title, is a method started in Latin America and developed in Africa for extending theological education beyond the narrow confines of the Bible Seminary and thereby reaching people who would not otherwise be able to avail themselves of it. One such class of people are educated laymen engaged in full-time secular occupations who cannot afford to leave their jobs to go away to a seminary. Another group, and this is the people we are dealing with in Dinajpur and Rangpur, are village pastors and evangelists who cannot leave their land or their homes nor be spared from their pastoral and evangelistic duties.

Programmed study

The method often uses a self-teaching principle called programmed study which unfortunately is another 'in' phrase. This principle is used in various fields of study and over a wide range of academic levels. It is used, for example, to teach air pilots the controls of their aircrafts but it can be used equally effectively to teach new readers or semi-literates some simple basic truths. There are variations of the method but basically it is a system of questions and answers which lead the student on by small steps, gradually increasing his body of knowledge as he goes. By being geared to the ability of the student it can be taken stage by stage at a pace at which he feels comfortable. In this way the student regulates his own speed. It is thus very suitable for use in a self-teaching programme such as TEE. In any teaching method it is the content that counts. It has been found that profound Bible teaching can be learned in a very simple form by TEE using programmed study self-teaching methods.

One of the most vital aspects of evangelistic outreach in any situation is follow-up teaching. Village evangelism is no exception, but how is this to be achieved? It is one thing to send out evangelists to bring people within the sound of the gospel. It is comparatively simple for a pastor to prepare a group of candidates with pre-baptismal teaching. But with a constantly expanding church how is it possible for a pastor to give in-depth, systematic Bible teaching, shepherd his increasing flock, and train helpers to stand beside him?

Shortage of trained pastors

In 1972 there were 30 churches in the two districts of Dinajpur and Rangpur being shepherded by eight pastors, only four of them fully trained, working under the direction of two pastoral superintendents. When you consider that they were operating over an area the size of Lancashire and Cheshire with only 250 miles of any kind of surfaced road you must realize that the task was quite big enough. At the beginning of 1978 the same number of pastors were looking after 60 communities. How was this possible? What steps are we taking to increase the number of trained pastors working in the area? The answer is TEE, using self-teaching programmed studies.

Ever since 1972 frequent camps have been held which the leaders from new and old churches have been invited to attend for fellowship and Bible teaching. Gradually by trial and error those classes were developed and systematized. At the same time we become more selective as regards the people attending them. Later by affiliating with the Christian College of Theology of Bangladesh we were able to offer courses of study

working towards a Certificate of Christian Studies which students could follow at home, while attending a monthly camp for tutoring, testing and spiritual fellowship. In addition to this the more advanced students were able to attend seminars lasting six weeks, two or three times a year. In this way the principle of 'in-work' sandwich courses is applied to Bible training. Students have been getting their Bible training and gaining practical experience at the same time, and they have not had to be torn out of their own environment to do so. After completing 12 courses a student is given a certificate and after another eight courses he can gain an Advanced Certificate. Students who have passed Bangladesh Government Ministry of Education Matriculation, and also those who have completed an Advanced Certificate, may proceed to a Diploma of Theology and after that to an Advanced Diploma. Ultimately it is planned to offer a Degree Course (BTh) to students who have successfully completed an Advanced Diploma.

A spiritual, not academic, goal

Six pastors in the two districts have now completed the minimum eight certificate

courses required for accreditation as pastors by the Bangladesh Baptist *Sangha*. Twenty-two more are following courses at various stages. Yet a third group have completed a course of basic Bible teaching, prior to starting on a certificate course. Two students are pursuing diploma courses, others may join them during the current year.

A further advantage of the scheme from the pastor's point of view is that he need never feel his studies are at an end. A BTh may seem a long way off but it provides a goal to aim at stage by stage.

Needless to say, however, our aim in all this is not to transform our village pastors into academics but to give them a systematic knowledge of the Bible and to develop their skill in conveying that knowledge to their people. The goal is an informed Christian community who know what they believe and how to put over those beliefs, that by their life and witness they may draw others to Christ. This is not an academic but a spiritual goal. Pray along with us that the Holy Spirit will continue to direct the teaching and the learning.

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The Rangpur Pastorate

by Swe Hla Phru

In the month of July 1972 when I came to Rangpur the conditions were still unstable for the churches and for me personally. Those who had come from across the borders had received a great deal of help from India and the pattern of work in the churches, as indeed among other people, was social, such as relief, providing work, arranging house reconstruction grants, or bullock grants.

Social work

My predecessor, the Rev Keith Skirrow,

announced that the mission would stop giving relief, and redirected those seeking grants to go to the government agencies, which were set up to deal with such matters. But when Keith left I was overwhelmed by the number of visitors and inquirers coming to the Rangpur mission compound, all asking to be instructed in Christianity. Many asked also that I go to their village and teach their neighbours.

It was undoubtedly an opening for church workers to make a drive with the gospel. Many organizations such as OM and Every Home Crusade were invited to place their

teams in various churches and work in co-operation with them.

Do it yourself

In the later stages of this Gospel Drive we found our own preaching teams consisting of seven members in a group. The team at the moment is supported by the Bangladesh Baptist *Sangha* (Union) and the members do a considerable work acting as assistant pastors of the Rangpur Baptist Union. We came to realize that if these young men were trained, they could become leaders in an area where there is a shortage of pastoral care in the churches.



Church in the Rangpur district

Co-operating together

So we took up the College of Christian Theology, Bangladesh Certificate Course Training Programme by Extension. This course was run by Dinajpur and Rangpur districts working together. To this we added the basic course for new converts in order to instruct them in witnessing to their immediate contacts and relatives.

Answering the call

Another good effect of this pressure of inquirers is that a programme of outreach has developed. When an invitation comes from a village or a group of villages we respond actively by asking them to apply officially for Christian instruction and to give details of the educational level and the numbers of men and women seeking instruction. They are asked to fix a date when a group can come and learn and to sign the application with the signature of all who wish to participate. By dealing with it in this way we avoid any possibility of being accused of forced evangelism.

Since Independence many organizations and denominations have started work in Bangladesh and this has resulted in the affiliation of some of our churches being transferred to other denominations, but the Baptist work in the Rangpur District has progressed. There has been a breakthrough in Bengali work in the north of the district among the Khatrias. A work was begun among these people in 1974 but we realize now that we blundered in baptizing too quickly without a full understanding of the situation. As a result these converts reverted to Hinduism and heartbreaks were caused by these setbacks.

Starting again

We hope we are wiser now, but one of the difficulties we face is the lack of pastors and workers who have been in the district long enough fully to be accepted. At present there are six full time pastors but only two have an unbroken service of ten years among these people, so the Christian community has experienced many changes of leadership and this is not helpful.

I, myself, although responsible for the work in the Rangpur District have to live in Dinajpur because, as yet, there is no accommodation available for me in Rangpur. We are, however, hoping that by the end of this year accommodation will be available in Rangpur so that I can live among these people with whom I work. We covet your prayers for this promising work.



NEW WORKERS

FOR ZAIRE

Ian and Hilary Coster grew up together in Park Baptist Church, Brentford where Hilary's father, Rev R H Layzell, was the minister. It was under his ministry that they came to know the Lord and were baptized.

After their marriage they moved to Iver Heath in Buckinghamshire and became members at Langley Free Church. It was during a service there that Ian and Hilary began to sense the Lord's call to missionary work overseas and after much thought and prayer this was confirmed to them through Scripture.

Ian, who is a compositor, and Hilary, a children's nurse, will be working with the Society in Kinshasa, Zaire. Here they will run the hostel for missionaries' children as well as look after their own two boys, Stephen and Richard. In addition, Ian will be using his experience as a printer in the press nearby.

After a term at St Andrew's Birmingham last year, Ian and Hilary took a six-month French language course in Belgium and hope to leave for Kinshasa this month.

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Last year Wallington Missionary Auctions held a record number of 10 auctions, with a record single auction of £10,100 and a record total for the year of £46,264. They believe this figure could be much higher if more Christians knew about the auctions. Donors may allocate the proceeds of their gifts to the missionary society of their choice. In his first letter to Timothy, Paul reminds us that we brought nothing into the world and can take nothing out of the world. Make a gift now to the BMS by donating your valuables through this auction service and saying you wish the proceeds of the sale to go to the Baptist Missionary Society.

For further information please contact V Hedderly, c/o Wallington Missionary Auctions, 20 Dalmeny Road, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4PP. The telephone number is 01-647 8437.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Secretaries acknowledge with grateful thanks the following legacies and gifts sent anonymously or without address.
(14 March-13 April 1978)

General Work: Anon: £4.00; Anon: £1,000.00; Anon: £135.00; Anon (Aberdeen): £10.00; Anon: £2.00; Anon: £82.25; Anon: £35.00; Anon: £15.00; Anon (Swift): £40.00; Anon (URC Rowlands Castle): £2.00.

Women's Project: Anon: £1.32.

Guide Project: Anon: £2.00.

Relief Fund: Anon: £15.00.

Legacies

Mrs C I Bendall	20.13
Mrs M R Blackaby	100.00
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Emmy Rose Coutts	100.00
Miss L M Ewing	150.00
Miss C W Gould	100.00
Mrs E L Holt	10.35
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Miss L A Osgood	50.00

Frederic John Smart	400.00
Miss J Sawers	739.18
Miss A E Smith	30.00
Mrs F Studholme	100.00
Mrs J I Wells	2,250.00

MISSIONARY MOVEMENTS

Arrivals

Dr S F and Mrs Thomas on 3 April from Diptipur, India.

Miss S M Le Quesne on 12 April from Dacca, Bangladesh.

Miss D M Smith on 13 April from Hong Kong.

Rev D S M and Mrs Gordon and daughter on 17 April from Fifth Company, Trinidad.

Departure

Miss C Farrer on 11 April for Pimu, Zaire.

Birth

At Maringa, Brazil, on 29 March, to Rev D and Mrs Grainger, a daughter, Cynthia Graziela.

Death

In Worthing on 5 April, Mrs Catherine Bryan (wife of Rev A K Bryan) aged 78 (Zaire Mission 1920-23 China Mission 1924-49).

The August issue of **THE MISSIONARY HERALD** will be concerned with BMS agricultural work and contain information which will be helpful to you for your harvest projects.