



MISSIONARY

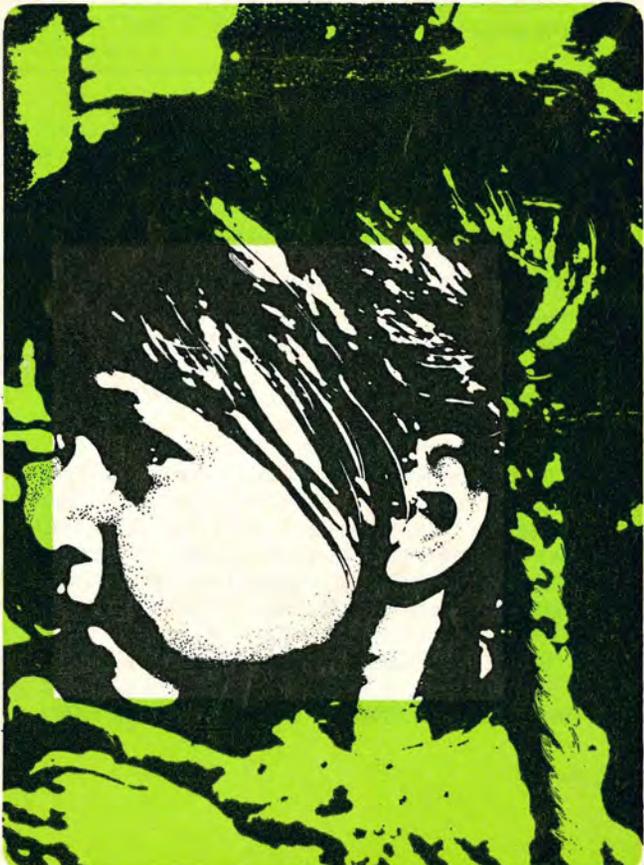
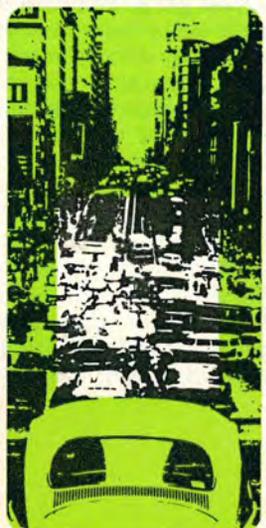
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AUGUST 1974



could only pass north to Calcutta when the barrage was repaired in December, or south when the Kathjuri was fordable. Although a new capital city for Orissa was founded at Bhubaneswar in 1948 the building of rail and bridges north and south of Cuttack has ensured the continued growth and influence of the city.

Past glory

The building of Hirakud Dam in the upper Mahanadi valley has temporarily relieved the city of the annual terror of floods, although with the remaining open lands and ponds all being built on the town goes partially under water each year as the monsoon rains do not have any where to drain away.

It is difficult now to imagine how the town looked in its full glory. Along the Mahanadi shore the fort area, maidan and Cantonment Road with its residences and offices each isolated in spacious grounds, still show the uncluttered lines of planned development. Elsewhere the two storied "*pukka*" houses of old rise from a sea of ephemeral but never changing mud walled, reed thatched huts.

Inside the crumbling compound walls there is a space and peace but outside there is nothing but chaos. Huts and market stalls are made of whatever material comes to hand, wood, brick, bamboo, mud, old kerosene tins, anything the cows will not eat.

Crowds of individuals

There is not an inch of space wasted. In front of the regular shops are the hand cart vendors selling toys, food, pens etc. while the remaining pavement room is filled by hawkers squatting down selling from a basket or an old shawl, by the cycle repair man who will also pump up your tyres, by the egg seller with his wire basket of eggs and bamboo cage of chickens, and by the beggars who turn up in bands whenever there is a religious festival in the town.

The roads themselves are even more crowded—everyone has a cycle, and everyone's wife travels by rickshaw, cows have the right of way over everything else, dilapidated horse cabs take children to and from school, cars, jeeps, scooters and motor bikes are becoming common sights in Cuttack and the single decker

buses bear the scars of many a tight corner or uncooperative bullock cart.

A native of Cuttack does not talk about his city, he will ask if you have been to his village. And this is the key to Cuttack. Through the ages each successive conquest or invasion enriched the language and culture of the state so that in the middle ages a great new culture was created in Orissa—but the people themselves never became integrated.

Varied origins

There have been governments of every religion in the past—Brahmin, Jain, Buddhist, Vaisnavite, Moslem, Christian and now the secular government enfolding all creeds. Each period is represented in the present population of 200,000, of which 80% are Hindu, 10% Moslem, 5% Christian, and the remaining 5% Jains, Buddhists, Sikhs and others.

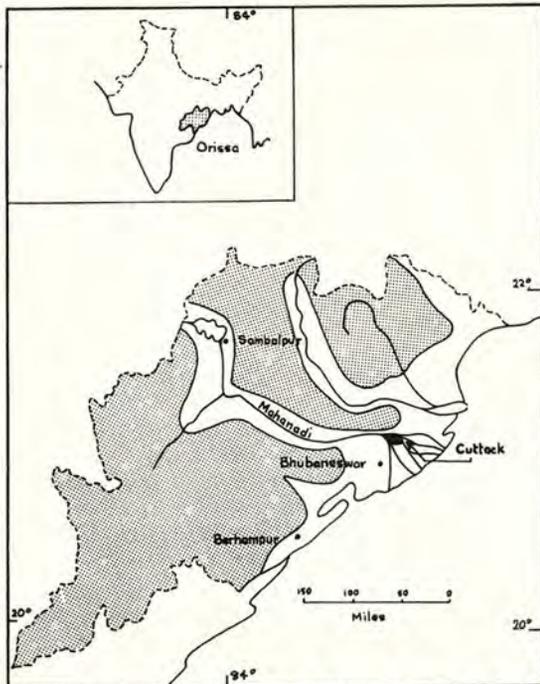
The population is equally mixed in its point of origin. Natural Oriyas are the majority but others have lived for generations in the city. Moslems from the days of the Nawabs, from Pakistan and from Bangladesh play a big part in the trade of the city as do the Gujeratis and Chinese.

Most engineers and transport mechanics are Sikh, the rickshaw pullers are Telugus from Andhra Pradesh, a few Anglo Indian families remain, and an all-India assortment of Government and Services personnel help to make up the ranks of the elite. Each group has its own villages, usually centred on place of work or place of worship. Moslems and Christians often live in adjacent villages, more because of their common minority status than out of harmony of outlook.

Church growth

Christian activity in Cuttack began with the coming in 1765 of the East India Company. Once the British Government had control of Orissa in 1803 the way was open for clergy of the established church and for missionaries to take up the challenge of Cuttack. Monuments in the Church of the Epiphany and the Christian cemetery indicate active worship and service from the early days of the nineteenth century.

The Church of the Epiphany is over 170 years



A map featuring the State of Orissa with its four main centres. Each of the areas have been originated as a result of the Hirakud Dam constructed on the Mahanadi.

old, the Baptist church celebrates its centenary this year, although missionaries have been in Cuttack for considerably longer. The first book printed in Oriya is said to be a New Testament

SIR CLEMENT CHESTERMAN

Clement Chesterman was a member of Manvers Street, Bath, when he was appointed a missionary of the B.M.S. in 1919. From 1920-1936 he was a medical missionary at Yakusu; returning home in 1936 to take up his appointment as Medical Secretary to the B.M.S.

Writing in the *Missionary Herald* of September 1936, Dr. Chesterman reviewed his fifteen years at Yakusu. "Over 62,000 out-patients have paid

half-a-million visits; 1,500 of the considerably over 5,000 in patients have undergone major operations. A thousand cases of sleeping sickness have been sought out and treated, and nearly 3,000 cases of yaws, which is also now a disappearing disease in our district.

Our medical school was the first private one in the Colony to be recognised officially by the Government, and we are now supplying trained boys for State and Commercial service and have two accepted for the

Higher Medical School at Leopoldville."

From 1947-63, Dr. Chesterman was Medical Officer to the B.M.S. on a part time basis and in addition he served as a lecturer, consultant, and examiner in tropical medicine and diseases. His book "In the Service of Suffering"—Phases of Medical Missionary Enterprise, was published in 1940.

Many B.M.S. supporters will join in congratulating Sir Clement Chesterman, O.B.E., on his knighthood for "service to medicine overseas".

produced at the Orissa Mission Press; full time education was provided from primary to college level in English and Oriya; new pastors and their wives return to their villages after training in Cuttack.

Most outstanding in any consideration of missionary work in Cuttack is the fact that although even twenty years ago there were as many as ten missionary families working in the city the leadership of the church has for a full generation been in the care of Oriya Christians. Missionaries today work here at the invitation of and under the direction of the Diocese of Cuttack in the Church of North India.

The joining of Baptist and Anglican within Orissa, and the larger fellowship of the Church of North India as a whole, has given a much larger pool out of which to find the personnel needed, but in highly specialized work in school or hospital, in pastoral or lay training, the need for missionaries continues.

In these days of reduced numbers even the psychological benefit of a few missionaries to sit on diocesan committees and show that B.M.S. is still involved in the struggles of the church cannot be disregarded.

As we rejoice that the church in Cuttack is fully indigenous, controlling its own destiny, we can remember also the tremendous challenge to love and serve thrown at this tiny community by a largely antagonistic city.

Boys of the Stewart School team which won the prize for marching in the Annual Children's Day Competition, held at the Barabati Stadium, Cuttack.



Christian Schools will still be needed

Stewart School, Cuttack, was founded some ninety years ago by a Dr. Stewart, a local resident. The original buildings were erected by public subscription.

It was at first a school for Europeans, then also for Anglo-Indians, but in the course of time has changed to a school catering for Indian children who require an education in English. Today these are the children of central government employees, forces and police personnel, doctors, lawyers and company representatives who may be transferred from one state to another so cannot continue their education in their own state language.

Shortly after the death of Dr. Stewart the school was placed in the care of the Baptist Missionary Society, which has played an active part in the growth of the school by providing a succession of teachers and headmasters.

Fifteen years ago the capital of Orissa was moved from Cuttack to Bhubaneswar and the

boarding section of the Stewart School at Cuttack was moved to Bhubaneswar to form the nucleus of a Stewart School there. Cuttack Stewart School has continued as a day school only.

The Stewart Schools are similar to grammar schools in England (except we are an all age school taking pupils from 4 years to 16 years), but we do not have the facilities in terms of teaching aids that one expects of a school in England.

Our pupils study for the Cambridge 'O' Level in at least six subjects, and when one considers the vastly different cultural background from which they come it is surprising how well they do in a westernized examination.

While we have adequate laboratories for the science classes our sports facilities are poor. This is partly due to the climate which is too hot for outdoor activities for much of the year, partly due to the long distances some of the pupils have to travel which rule out most sport after school hours, and unfortunately partly due to indifference.

What is the future of such schools? Let us consider this first from the academic and then from the Christian point of view. Despite the rivalry between the northern Hindi speaking

states and the southern states, whose common language is English, the demand for good English medium schools continues to grow in all parts of the country.

We shall shortly be changing over from taking Cambridge 'O' Level papers to a new examination using question papers set and marked here in India, but under the supervision of the Cambridge Syndicate. This will be more flexible and will be able to adjust to changes in the education systems of the individual states of India so that we are a fully integrated part of the educational system. If this country is to maintain a supply of well trained businessmen, administrators, doctors, lecturers, etc., then the growth and maintenance of schools like the Stewart School is essential.

On the other hand we are helping to swell the ever increasing numbers of "educated unemployed" who feel that if they cannot get jobs suited to their training, i.e., white collar jobs, all other work is beneath their dignity.

As in England the cost of education is rising monthly, as it is such a labour intensive profession. How long schools such as Stewart

School will be able to continue as private institutions is now open to question.

To maintain our standards we have to employ more highly trained staff than the other schools in Cuttack, and must pay salaries comparable to the colleges where they might otherwise find employment. Also, in a backward state like Orissa sufficient teachers are not available so we must be able to attract teachers with a good command of English from other states.

What is the best way?

The pupils of Stewart School are mainly from non-Christian homes; we have Hindus, Moslems, Sikhs, Buddhists, and a very few Christians; so the opportunity for Christian witness is great, but it must obviously be a quiet and unforced witness.

The staff represent Baptist, Anglican, Catholic and Pentecostal churches, Hinduism, Islam and atheism; being a headmaster in such a community can be very tricky.

Why do people who are not Christian like to send their children to a school run by Christians? The usual answer to this is that it is only in these schools that corruption and power politics do not rule, and where there is a genuine concern for the welfare of the children. What greater witness to the love of Jesus could one ask for.

The fact that most of the good schools in India are run by Christian organizations presents a problem for the church in India. There is a great deal of resentment and political opposition to these schools. At times one wonders whether the church would not bear a greater witness if it were to give up its rather exclusive schools and expensive hospitals, and at other times one sees the great witness that these institutions give in spite of the opposition they arouse.

This is a problem that must finally be decided by the church in India, but it is a problem that you might remember in your prayers for the Indian Church.

David and Christina Hampshire with their four children, Pansy James and Lily Quay, pictured with Beris Saunders before her return home.



Sahitya Sadan is the centre for Christian Literature

BUILT in 1971 the property consists of five rooms, with the possibility of a second storey being added later. At present it houses a book shop, the offices of the Cuttack Publishing House and the Bible Society of India, Cuttack Branch.

The work falls into two main categories—(a) book sales and distribution (b) publishing of books and all other material used in the work of the Church in Orissa.

The bookshop is housed in a large pleasant room, with a very wide range of books in both Oriya and English avail-

able. Besides religious books in both languages it stocks one of the most comprehensive selections of childrens books available in Cuttack. It also supplies text books used in the near by colleges, a full range of Indian and Western paperbacks, exercise books and stationery, and calendars, texts and posters. The shop is rarely empty, and caters for a wide range of the local population.

It also acts as the distributing centre for the whole of Orissa, supplying regional book centres. Special book exhibitions at schools, colleges and churches, book stalls at church assemblies and State fairs all help to reach a larger section of the public. The average monthly sales are Rs 3,500 (£220).

The publishing side of the work is growing rapidly. So far 13 original titles have been published, with more ready for printing. Plans are under way for the publishing of an Oriya hymn book, for production of Gospel calendars, texts, motto cards etc., in Oriya, as well as the continuing production of books and magazines in that language.

The Orissa Sahitya Sadan is working in full co-operation

Christian artists drawn together

The **Christian Cultural Association** was formed by a group of young men in the year 1970. Its aim is to give scope for the development of the abilities of Christian writers, musicians, dramatists etc. It also helps these people to have fellowship with each other.

It has branches in almost every city and town of Orissa. It organizes conferences, drama and musical shows and art exhibitions in different places and invites non-Christians to participate.

It seeks to honour Christian writers, musicians, dramatists and artists of outstanding merits in its annual conference.

with other Christian agencies, Orissa Christian Cultural Association, Adult Education Committee, Theological Literature Committee, Christian Service Society, Church of North India Diocesan Literature Committee and the Christian Home Committee. It is already publishing most of the publications of the above organizations and envisages the time when it will become the sole publishing agency for all major Christian organizations in Orissa.

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USE YOUR BOXES

Miss Wright of Southfields Baptist Church has been urging members to make use of their missionary boxes for more than twenty years.

In 1952 she started with 11 boxes representing about £13. By 1954 this amount was doubled and by 1960 she had

30 boxes, including torches, out representing around £70. From this time onwards she maintained the number of 30 boxes and torches, always seeking a new donor as people moved or gave up. The peak period of giving was in the late 1960's when the total neared £100 a year. Since then the average per year has been £70. She has walked miles in this cause.

The Christian School that offers much to Indian girls

COMING out of the busy Cuttack railway station, I find the rick-shaw men waiting for customers. Paying off the coolie who puts my luggage on the rick-shaw, I climb up and sit down.

The rick-shaw man looks at me enquiringly. "Buckley House", I say. His face remains blank. "Mission School", I try again. His face lights up—he knows the way.

So off we go, through the congested streets and bazaars, dodging cows, goats, dogs, cyclists, pedestrians, other rick-shaws, the odd car or scooter, until we come to an area of wider streets with large compounds on each side.

The rick-shaw man stops hopefully by one gate—no, that is the Stewart School. So we go down the road, past the Baptist church, to a compound where various buildings show up amongst coconut palms and mango trees. Yes, that is the place, we go in through the drive gate and up to the house.

I pay my rick-shaw man and take my luggage inside: a big old house, dark high-ceilinged rooms, two dogs capering round me, teachers' voices on the back veranda, voices of children chanting their lessons—I am back in Buckley House.

Over a thousand

Here on this busy compound, nearly always full of noise and activity, are three schools, two hostels and one missionary's house. About one thousand day students come and go, while nearly one hundred and fifty girls reside in the hostels.



Students of the Thomson Women's Secondary Training School

There is the Wigner Primary School, taking in boys and girls in classes one, two, and three. Then co-education disappears and boys are banished. The Buckley Girls' High School caters for girls from classes four to eleven, when those who have successfully passed the obstacle of an annual promotion examination take their High School Certificate examination.

The Thomson Women's Secondary Training School takes education one step further, as successful H.S.C. candidates can go there to do two years' of teacher training. The Training School has its own hostel, compulsory for most of its students.

Girls who come from outside Cuttack to study in the High School or Primary School can stay in the Buckley Girls' Hostel. On the compound there are also rooms for resident teachers, hostel



The present Headmistress, Mrs. B. K. Panda, took up this post after retiring from the headship of the largest government girls' high school in the town. She brings to her task the skill and experience of many years in the teaching profession, the advantage of contacts made in years of government service and a real determination to keep up the standards and the Christian influence of both school and hostel. She is supported by a qualified and able staff.

Little money

The Primary School Headmistress, Miss S. Santra, is also a dedicated Christian and has a real concern for the Christian atmosphere of her school. The Primary School, unlike the other schools, receive no government grants and have to rely on fees collected from the students, on donations, and a grant from the Diocese of Cuttack. The Primary teachers especially work very hard for a salary which is not really adequate and would seem the merest pittance to any similar teacher in England.

Those of us in England who have had the great, though often unappreciated, privilege of studying in well-equipped schools, in good buildings with all books and other materials supplied, may well be surprised at the lack of facilities in what are considered good schools in Cuttack.

There are many schools who do not have as much as our mission schools, as I found when I visited other schools to supervise our training school students' teaching practice. But even in the Buckley High School there are classes on verandas, and crowded into small unsuitable rooms.

Open air

In the Primary School most children sit on the floor, and it is only recently that junior classes in the High School acquired desks and benches. There is no school hall, all prize-givings and other public functions have to be held in the open, using an open-air stage.

There are school libraries, but the students do not have free text books, exercise books or anything else. All they need have to be purchased, often at considerable sacrifice, by their parents.

superintendents, matrons, gardeners, night watchmen and office peons.

There are two large hostel gardens, two tanks (or large ponds) stocked with fish and school playing fields fringed by coconut trees. The grass is kept in trim by cows belonging to the gardener and office peon. Some of the smaller buildings are thatched with straw, thus adding to the rural atmosphere inside the compound.

The High School and its hostel had their beginnings in an orphanage started by the missionaries for abandoned children in the days of disastrous epidemics of cholera and smallpox. The School developed first as a Primary school, but over the years has become a full-fledged high school with two-form entry throughout. It has a good name in the town for discipline, academic results and out of school activities.

Of the students in Primary and High School, about one third may be Christians, while the others are mostly Hindus with some Muslims. For those who wish to attend in the High School there are daily school prayers and religious instruction and Bible teaching.

Regular prayers

In the Primary School and in the hostel all students attend morning prayers. In the hostel many non-Christian girls voluntarily join in Sunday School and the Christian Endeavour group. Thus there is opportunity for all to hear the gospel, as well as the daily witness in life and example of Christian staff and students.

In the Training School also there is opportunity to witness to the students. Among the forty students who take admission each year, sometimes one half, sometimes one third, are Christian girls. All students are quite free to take part in prayers, weekly Bible study and Sunday School if they wish. All activities of the School, such as the annual prize-giving, a school excursion, the final examinations, are prefaced by prayer in the name of Jesus and most students appreciate this.

The Training School started in 1902 as a small class training girls of under-matriculation standard. In 1965 it was up-graded to Certificate and Teaching standard. The students take a two year course for the Certificate of Training which qualifies them to teach up to class seven level.

The minimum qualification is the High School Certificate, but several of our students have read one or two years in college also before joining us. Others are experienced teachers who have not previously taken training.

A spreading influence

Our Christian girls come from all over the state of Orissa, many coming from rural areas like the Kond Hills and West Orissa. The present Headmistress, Miss N. Mohanty, took over just before the upgrading of the school and has led it through this time of growth and adjustment.

There are still problems to be faced as I write: especially in the relationships with the government education authorities. As the education

authorities have increased their grants of financial aid to the school, it is natural that their claims on the school should increase too.

There have been moves over the last two years for these claims to extend to the selection of students. But we are now hoping for a compromise whereby we shall still have some rights to select candidates of our own choice and thus maintain the identity of the school as a Christian institution.

From the Training School trained teachers, both Christian and non-Christian, have gone out for many years to serve their people and country in town and village schools throughout Orissa. We pray that this may continue in the future.

Thanks and hopes

Our schools and hostels on the Buckley House compound are grateful for the continuing prayer and financial support of friends at home. We are especially happy that in the last two years much needed extra rooms have been added to the Training School hostel and that the oldest building in the High School hostel has been saved from collapse and almost completely rebuilt with the aid of grants received from B.M.S.

We believe that Christian institutions such as this still have a valuable part to play in the total life and witness of the Christian church in Orissa. As our girls leave us to go out into various fields of work, or on higher education in college, we believe that their years of study within a Christian school and, for the hostel girls, their years of living together with us have not been in vain, but may bear much fruit in the years to come.

Those who shared in the preparation of this issue of the Missionary Herald are:

Mr. and Mrs. D. J. Hampshire
Miss Pansy James
Jatindra K. Mohanty

Photo credit: page 117 D. J. Hampshire
pages 118, 120/121, 123, 124 and 125 B. W. Amey

The Udayagiri caves outside Bhubaneswar. From here one looks to the opposite hill and the Khandagiri caves.

Young people share in personal evangelism

YOUTH IN ACTION—doing what? College students processing in the streets demanding their rights, demanding an end to the price rise, a change in the government and many other things; students on strike, refusing to attend classes, walking out of the examination hall, threatening their invigilators and examiners; young people protesting against injustice, against the social and educational pressures which become unbearable for them.

These are genuine pressures that do become intolerable, highlighted for us in Cuttack in April this year in the most tragic way, when one of our Christian boys threw himself under a train because he did not get the card allowing him to sit his examination.

There is a genuine frustration over the many problems facing young people in India today: lack of employment, the never-ending price rise, the unimaginative, indeed even boring, system of education, the widening gap between rich and poor, the failure of those in authority to carry out their promises. The unrest, the indiscipline, the violence have their roots in these things; we may deplore the methods of protest used, but we cannot but be sympathetic to the needs and aspirations of the youth of today.

But this is not the whole picture; there are young people in action in India, in Cuttack, in positive and constructive ways, acting in love and compassion for others. This has been clearly seen in times of emergency.

Many young people helped wholeheartedly in the relief work after the disastrous cyclone



in 1971, others gave their time and energy to helping in the refugee camps after the Bangladesh war.

Christian young people are also eager to serve in specifically Christian ways; many have a burning desire to witness to their Saviour and seek outlets through the churches, through Christian youth organizations and through their own small groups and teams.

Young men from Cuttack have formed their own evangelistic teams, going out to the village areas, preaching in the market places, distributing tracts and Christian literature, organizing correspondence courses and camps for inquirers. In so doing they are reaching out to places untouched by the organized churches. Young people also rallied round to help in the Operation Mobilization teams which came to Orissa in April, from the O.M. ship "Logos". Some will be going out this summer holiday in O.M. teams throughout the state.



The side view of the Stewart School, Bhubaneswar. The number of scholars in the school at present is 620 and there are 23 qualified teachers. The motto of the school is "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom". The school is administered through a local managing committee of the Church of North India and the present Headmaster is Mr. V. J. Rajkumar.

Within the churches also there are many youth activities. Large Sunday Schools and Christian Endeavour groups mostly work for the building up of Christian youth within the churches. The strength and vitality of C.E. in India was seen in Cuttack in 1972 when hundreds of delegates attended the All-India C.E. Convention.

Y.M.C.A. also plays an active part in Christian witness and service; their hostel provides accommodation, their halls provide facilities for sports, games, debates, competitions, as well as specifically Christian meetings. In this way

contacts can be made with young people who never come to church, and dedicated Christian leaders are making the most of these opportunities.

Among college students there are two Christian groups working: the Student Christian Movement and the Evangelical Union. Some people have expressed regret for this division, but it seems to me that even this can be turned to good use as the two groups cater for different kinds of people and God, who knows our varying temperaments and characters, can use both organizations for His glory.

Faith and service

S.C.M. has a strong emphasis on social service and many of their young people have gone out to help in relief work among refugees and cyclone and flood victims, thus expressing the love of Jesus in action.

E.U. with its emphasis on evangelism is being used by God to contact non-Christian students and to bring many Christian students to a full surrender to Christ. It is difficult to hold Christian meetings in the colleges, though E.U. were able to show Christian films in several colleges last year and distribute literature. But the main emphasis is on the personal evangelism and on building up small informal Bible study and prayer groups in the colleges.

Some students are very isolated, especially those who have to stay in hostels—the majority of our Christian students come from local families and live at home. I think of a very keen Christian girl, whose widowed mother recently died, whose only home just now is the hostel at the Medical College. There is only one other Christian girl in that large hostel, but Sheila continues to make a bold witness for her Lord in that situation and finds Christian fellowship in a small E.U. group of medical and engineering students meeting in someone's house.

Both S.C.M. and E.U. help their members to grow and mature in the faith by holding camps and conferences in the summer holidays and in the shorter break in September or October.

The Church of North India through its local area, the Diocese of Cuttack, has its responsibility for youth work in Cuttack and in the



Beris Saunders, former treasurer of the Cuttack Diocese, with Bishop Jugal Mohanty and Mr. P. Israel, diocesan secretary.

districts of the Diocese. Its Youth Fellowship was active in organizing a youth conference and rally in Cuttack last year and we look forward to their future contribution to youth work in town and district.

Outside these active Christian youth groups, there is also within the Christian community in Cuttack a great untapped source of service and witness, that is the young people as yet personally uncommitted to Christ, who take no active part in the church and are sometimes a cause of anxiety to the church and to their elders. If all these could be truly won for Christ and would use their energies, often wasted on worthless things, for Christ and His Church, there could be a real revolution in the life and witness of the churches.

We should pray that God will use those already committed to Him, both old and young, bring this about so that all our young people may bring their skills and energies to the feet of Jesus and find the satisfaction that He alone can give.

“thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory”

Ernest Stuart was born in 1890 in Leeds and was a life long member of Hunslett Baptist Church. He trained at Rawdon College and while there the claims of the overseas mission of the church impressed themselves on his mind and he volunteered to serve with the B.M.S.

Although he had originally thought of Congo, the Society directed him to India; a decision he gladly accepted. His college Principal rated him as a good scholar and in order to prepare himself to work in Asia he studied comparative religions under Dr. Wheeler Robinson.

While at college he suffered ill health, but on leaving for overseas he grew stronger physically. Appointed to Patna in 1917, in 1919 he married Miss Gertrude Thornton (a fellow member of Hunslett Baptist Church) and the young couple moved to Monghyr. The Stuarts moved back to Patna in 1927 and once more to Monghyr in

1935. From Monghyr Ernest Stuart also had charge of the important “English” church at Jamalpur. The Indian National Congress’ “Quit India Campaign” in 1942, with all its attendant excitements and inconveniences found the Stuarts still at Monghyr.

From 1945–1955 they were posted at Kasauli where in addition to caring for the local Baptist churches Ernest Stuart was appointed Senior United Board Chaplain to the Army. In the Kasauli military cantonment and beyond he helped many men on military service in India.

Independence for India in 1947 meant Muslim-Hindu riots and again the Stuarts were in the thick of it.

When the B.U.N.I. was formed in January 1948 Ernest Stuart was honoured by being elected the first Chairman.

Retirement in 1955 was followed by a time as Warden of the Pilgrims Rest, a Christian retirement home in Gerrards Cross.

Moving to South Lodge the Stuarts have made a fine contribution to the fellowship in Worthing. Mr. Stuart died on 12 May, 1974, at the age of 83, leaving a widow and daughter.

A return to pioneer evangelism

by David Boydell

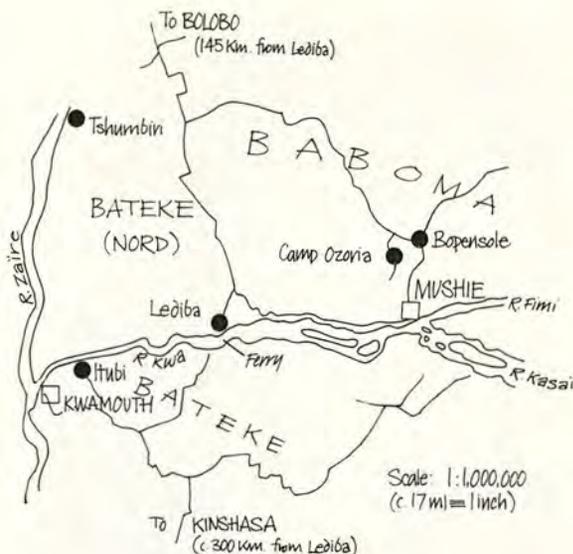
MOST of the area round Bolobo has been quite thoroughly evangelized over the past ninety years. Strong churches are to be found in nearly all the villages to the north and east of Bolobo.

Further to the south, however, among a large section of the Bateke tribe and part of the Baboma tribe, many villages have a mere handful of Christians and the majority have no Christian witness at all.

Pastor Eboma, the present Director of the Bolobo Bible School, visited the area of the Bateke (Sud) south of the Kwa river in mid 1972.

He told us that in Kwamouth, the largest town of the area, there were four churches, Baptist, Salvation Army, Kimbanguist and Roman Catholic, but all were small and the vast majority of the inhabitants were absolutely indifferent to the gospel, only a small minority being even nominal Christians. In the 'interior', to the south, the picture was even more depressing but at the same time challenging. In the entire area there was virtually no Christian witness at all, either Protestant or Roman Catholic and although the Salvation Army had founded one Primary School in the largest village of the interior, even there people were absolutely indifferent to Christian things. Nothing has been done for several years now so if the Bolobo Baptists were to try an offensive now, who knows whether the time might at last be ripe for the gospel to advance.

Pastor Eboma's words did not go unheeded, for two short week long campaigns have been held in these two areas since he first brought their needs before the Christians of Bolobo.



The first trip to the area was at Christmas 1972. Five people set off from Bolobo after the end of school term, in the school lorry. Two keen Christian lads then in the 5th form, Mpeti Mpia and Bokatola Mwanangoy; one elderly lay preacher, the school driver, and myself.

After a six hour journey over difficult forest tracks from Bolobo we arrived at our base village, Lediba, where there is a fairly large Christian community. There are seventy members of our own church and about the same number in the Roman Catholic church. It is at Lediba as well that the enthusiastic area evangelist, Kepene, is based. He is a young married man in his early 30's who graduated from the Bolobo Bible School in 1971 and is responsible for the oversight of the entire area between Lediba and Kwamouth.

After having sought to consolidate the work in the spiritual "bridgehead" of Lediba, we crossed the Kwa river by the ferry, this time a team fourteen strong, since as well as the five Bolobo people we had Kepene and a group of teenagers from Lediba, mainly girls, to help us evangelize their own area.

We arrived at Kwamouth in the afternoon and as the lorry slowly drove down the main street we sang "I have decided to follow Jesus" and other hymns to drum accompaniment, bringing most of the town to their gates. The

following day we split into groups of two, going into people's gardens and speaking with them, giving them a basic tract in Lingala produced by the Scripture Gift Mission, and inviting them to an evangelistic service to be held in the church.

Doubts and joys

As we went to begin this visitation work it was obvious that several of our young people felt very uneasy about doing it, but when I arrived back at the house where we were staying very few of them had got back. After a while, the two boys from Bolobo arrived, and one of them, beaming all over his face, said, "Truly God is real, we did not seem to do anything ourselves, He just gave us the words to say". Soon after, one of the girls from Lediba came back and said more or less the same thing and as we shared our experiences we realized something of what Jesus must have felt at the return of the seventy.

The next day, we had intended to hold a similar "door to door" campaign at Itubi, a sawmill further up the river, where we have just six church members who came originally from the Bolobo area and who hold services in a private house. Torrential rain soon put paid to that, but at 5 p.m. when people were "drying out" we began an open air service in front of the house and for an hour or so we had a most attentive "congregation" of over fifty people, some sat down, others standing at a distance, but all listening to every word which was spoken or sung.

The Word and healing

Our second journey to the area around Lediba took place in January 1974 during the school's semestrial holiday. This time, we had a larger team from Bolobo, as well as the two secondary school boys (now in the sixth form), the driver and myself, we had three students from the Bible School and two missionaries, Georgina Mackenzie and Paul Chandler. We again began at Lediba by taking the Sunday services and doing both Health Education and Scripture Union work and the original idea had been that we should again visit the area of the Bateke (Sud). We, however, received a "Macedonian call" in the other direction to the area of the Baboma tribe, north of Mushie.

There is a fairly large Christian community at Mushie itself, a town the size of Bolobo and of greater political importance, but most of the villages to the north have only very small and struggling Christian communities.

The first village to be evangelized was Bompensole, a village of about four hundred population, but with only ten Protestants and four Roman Catholics. Most of the inhabitants of the villages are polygamists and are indifferent, if not hostile, to the gospel. We arrived in the village at noon, singing lustily on the back of the lorry as had now become our custom and, after having unloaded our luggage and arranged matters for the night, we had a refreshing wash in a nearby forest stream.

The courage of faith

After our group Bible study and a time of prayer we set out in groups of two to go round meeting villagers on their "home ground". Most of them sat in the cool of the late afternoon sun and here, as at Kwamouth, we offered a S.G.M. tract, very attractively presented in Lingala, which was most eagerly accepted by most, but actually refused by some old women, suspicious of our Christian literature.

After our evening meal of *kwanga*, or rice with fish, or a little meat, we set out for the church building, a fine structure given by the Roman Catholic's when they closed their work in Bompensole. Despite the fact that there are only fourteen Christians in the village we had literally about half the village, over one hundred and fifty people at the service, as we sang newly learned hymns and heard the forceful message of Mbo Mikabo, one of the students from the Bible School. An appeal was made and one young man in his early twenties stepped forward, an act which must have taken tremendous courage, in front of over one hundred and fifty people with whom he mixes each day, most of whom are quite indifferent to the Christian gospel. Others as well seemed interested and suitable literature was left with local Christians for follow up work.

After the service we formed a sort of procession in the night, singing hymns to the rhythm of drums as we made our way back to the house and followed by a good number of villagers.

We then had a time of singing round a "camp fire", the words of each hymn being explained and the gospel thus being preached in a way very much in line with the culture of the people as well as in the more formal way in the evangelistic sermon at the church.

New vision

So the seeds were sown in Bompensole for local Christians to follow up. We then went on to a coffee plantation, the "Camp Ozorio" where we followed a very similar strategy to that employed in Bompensole.

On our way back we spent Sunday in Mushie where people had very generously given food and lent other things necessary for the journey to Bompensole. The church was packed for the service we took (not a frequent occurrence in Mushie, it seems) and during the service we gave news of the journey and made it very clear that the responsibility for regular follow up and continued evangelistic work in the Boma and Teke (Sud) areas lies with them, whether Bolobo folk can come now and then to help or not. There is quite a potential in the Mushie church and if they can be encouraged by help from others they may well get a vision of the task to be tackled.

Your prayers

Please pray then, for Christians in such strategic centres as Mushie and Lediba, that they might share the vision of the task that confronts them and be sent out to evangelize their own hinterland.

— for Christian leaders, such as Cit. Kepene and Pastor Nkossi of Mushie, that they may not

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be discouraged by the size of the work, or by the frequent incomprehension of those they are called to serve.

— for a moving of the Spirit of God in such places as Kwamouth, Itubi, Bompensole and the Camp Ozorio, where there are a few Christians.

— for the evangelization of the many villages, especially in the Teke (Sud) area without any Christian witness whatever so far: the unfinished task that lies before us.

Missionary Record

- Arrival**
5 May. Miss W. Gow from Baraut, India.
- Departures**
20 May. Rev. J. K. Skirrow for Rangamati, Bangladesh.
25 May. Mrs. J. K. Skirrow and sons for Rangamati, Bangladesh, via Mt. Hermon, Darjeeling.
- Deaths**
4 May. In Freshwater, Isle of Wight, Rev. Thornton Selden Howie, aged 83 (B.M.S., India 1921-1957).
12 May. At South Lodge, Worthing, Rev. Ernest Theaker Stuart. H.C.F., aged 83 (B.M.S., India 1917-1955).

Acknowledgements

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General Work: Anon. £30.00; Anon. (Folkestone) £5.00; Anon. £0.50; Anon. (Peggie) £5.00; Anon. £10.00.

Medical Work: Anon. (M.J.P. Pontypool) £2.00; Anon. (G.I.T.F.) £5.00.

LEGACIES

	£
Miss M. Baker	50.00
Mrs. M. L. Bentley	100.00
Mr. J. H. Buckworth	1,650.11
Miss E. H. Clappen	200.00

Mrs. M. R. Coote	1,144.81
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