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They must say why they have become Christians

Barbara Bond, *B.M.S. missionary, writes about new churches in South Bangladesh.*

When **Sudhir Singh** was first approached by a large group of local Hindus who said that they wanted to be baptized, he, not unnaturally, suspected their motives. Sudhir is the secretary of the Faridpur Baptist Union (equivalent to a county association in England) consisting of 32 village churches, some very small, and some with several hundred members. He is a landowner, much respected in the area. His father died fairly young leaving Sudhir head of the household, responsible for a large joint family.

In addition to these responsibilities and his secretarial duties, Sudhir is responsible for relief work among the churches of the F.B.U. and also for relief in the area.

The Union had already had some contact with Hindus in 1971. One young man had said that he had noticed that most of the people helping them were Christian and he had started to read the Bible to find out what made them tick. Also there had been a number of Hindu visitors to the Baptist Union Assembly meetings. One of them had remarked that he was impressed with the way the Christian leaders were concerned about the poorer members of the community.

The first tour

None of these contacts had been followed up to any effect and now here were a whole crowd of Hindus, out of the blue, asking for baptism.

Sudhir told them to go away. He did not feel that the church should be accepting new converts whilst still involved in relief work. (He found out later that they had received the same reply from the local Catholic leaders). But they were not to be put off. They went to Dacca to call on the Rev. R. N. Baroi, the secretary of the Baptist Union of Bangladesh, who took quite a different view. He got in touch with Rev. Subash Sangma, a noted evangelist and wrote to Sudhir to arrange a tour for them in the south of Faridpur district.

In the meantime another group of Hindus from Saurabari and two other villages in quite another part of the district had been to Sudhir's home asking to become Christian, so the two Evangelists visited these villages as well as the others further south, accompanied by a group of local pastors and workers. They found a great deal of interest and response which was followed up by the local workers. In February 1974, Rev. Rajen Baroi arranged for a baptismal class at Santi Kutir and promised to be present himself to give some of the teaching. Nearly one hundred people turned up for the two-day class, but some left again when they found they were not going to be given any blankets or clothes. Those who were disappointed in the lack of material benefits started to stir up the Hindu leaders against the converts. So that when the day for the baptisms came only five people had the courage to be baptized, Kamai Biswas and his wife and three other men in Bhairabnagar.

Opposition

During the next few weeks other men from Bhairabnagar and the near by village of Dumaria went to Santi Kutir and asked to be baptized there. At first they met with a great deal of opposition; day labourers found they could get no work, the owner of a small shop found no one would buy from him, a boy who was about to sit his school-leaving exams was told that he could no longer attend the Hindu school now that his father had become a Christian. More people were baptized, including some of the wives and a church was constituted in each of these two villages and accepted into membership with Faridpur Baptist Union. The local people are beginning to accept the idea of a Christian community within these two predominantly Hindu villages.

However much the Hindu leaders may deplore the breaking up of their community, it does not stop the interest of the ordinary people. Leading Sunday worship in one of these new churches is a stimulating experience. There are likely to be more Hindus standing round listening than there are believers sitting (on mats in the courtyard) in the congregation. In the older established Christian communities the neighbours take no notice at all of the church. It is so long since the original converts were baptized that the immediate neighbours and all the relations belong to the Christian community. But the new Christians are all the time in contact with their former community. Their relations want to know why they have become Christian.

More inquirers

Two or three months after the first baptisms in Bhairabnagar two women from across the river in Jhulna district travelled alone to Sutir Kutir. They said that their cousins had become Christian and they too wanted to be baptized. They were keen enough to visit Bhairabnagar whenever the evangelist was there, staying overnight out in the open or crowded in with their relatives in the colder weather. Eight families from this village were baptized and another new church accepted into the Faridpur Baptist Union.

An increase from thirty-two churches to thirty-five within the year is not a very big percentage, but Sudhir Singh and the other officers want to be assured that people are coming for the right reasons. From Saurabari and two near by villages came a petition signed by one hundred and seven people asking to be baptized. But no church has been formed there yet. After visits by the evangelist, one of the pastors went to Saurabari for a baptismal service. He told them quite plainly that if they had come for "relief", or if they were expecting to be looked after for the rest of their lives, they could just go away again. That day only twelve of the candidates were willing to come forward and give their lives to Christ whatever the cost. There are many people coming, who want to join the Christian community but do not know what they are asking for.

Families divided

A few miles away from Bhairabnagar over

the boundary in Barisal district another new church has recently been constituted. Fifteen people were baptized last October, among them only one woman. Since then more men and some of the wives have been baptized, but many wives are standing firm by their Hindu religion, even to the extent of refusing to cook for their husbands so that their own and the family's food is not contaminated by contact with a non-Hindu.

The people come in the first place asking for material help and then they hear the gospel. One man said at a prayer meeting, "We were amazed when we heard about Jesus who died for us and rose again. This is what we talk about all the time." This man and his wife have both been baptized. The family is still in the same economic situation as before, but now they have hope and it is reflected on their faces.

Call to prayer

At the last Council meeting of the Baptist Union of Bangladesh the remark was made that very often an opportunity of this type lasts only about five years and already half that time has gone. Sudhir Singh was one of those who took this remark to heart. As soon as he returned home from the Council meeting he was met by leaders from three more villages where another one hundred families want to become Christian. There are not enough pastors and evangelists for the existing work and none for following up people like the man who was baptized whilst visiting his married daughter and then returned to his Hindu home, or the widow who went to a living-in job in a Hindu home directly after she was baptized.

This is why the Baptist Union of Bangladesh has issued a call to prayer. The men and women to do this work are there in the Bengali church. The opportunity is now. Will you also pray that the men and women of God's choosing will respond to His Call?

* * *

Here are the latest figures which we have of baptized church members in the area:

Bhairabnagar	24
Dumaria and Boro Barea (in Khulna)	54
Saurabari, Kumaria, Paisur	70



Pamela Smart

While training at Dundee College of Education I came in close contact with Christian students, and through this, along with the preaching and fellowship of Rattray Street Baptist Church, I came to know the experience of new life in Christ, of which they all spoke in their various ways.

The people in Church laughed when I said I had not been called abroad so much as been given a push from behind. I had found myself in a situation where the next step seemed to be overseas work.

Eventually, I offered my services to the B.M.S. and I will be going to Bangladesh later this year having completed two years training at St. Andrew's Hall in Birmingham. I am a primary school teacher and will be employing these skills in some way—probably in women's work. I said "Yes" in faith that God would open or close the way, and so far the way has been and is open.

**Margaret Bishop, S.R.N.,
S.C.M., H.V.**

I came to know the Lord in the Cote Baptist Church, Oxfordshire where I was baptized.

During my general nursing training and when training as a health visitor in London I was only vaguely interested in the work of the Church overseas.

It was while I was working as a health visitor in Spalding, where I am a member of the Baptist Church, that I first felt the Lord was calling me to work overseas. That was in 1972. I contacted B.M.S. who suggested midwifery training. During this extra period of training in Glasgow the belief of God's calling became stronger.

I am now studying at St. Andrew's Hall for one year. I hope then to go to Belgium for language study and the Tropical Medicine Course before service in Zaire.





A baptism in the Sadargat Baptist Church, Dacca, Bangladesh.

(Photo: S. Le Quesne)

The churches receive many inquirers

Sue Le Quesne, *B.M.S. missionary*, writes about the situation in Bangladesh.

IF you were to come and visit Bangladesh today I wonder what you would be expecting to see and hear? A country devastated by floods, or perhaps dried up through lack of sufficient rain? Would the streets of Dacca provide a heart-rending picture of people dying of starvation? Would you get an overall impression of a tense, and trouble-torn country?

During the last nine months the political scene in Bangladesh has seen major changes; first of all, the parliamentary form of government was abolished, and Presidential rule established—Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who up until then had been prime minister, became the first President after this alteration. Then a few weeks later the President announced that all political parties were being abolished, and there

would be just one national party—referred to as BAKSAL (Bangladesh Krishak Samiti Awami League). These changes have taken place without causing any major re-action in the country as a whole, and one waits to see whether they will be able to bring about a control of the frightening inflation, the growing corruption, and the unstable law and order situation. These are formidable problems and challenges for any government to meet.

Your first impression from a drive through the streets of Dacca would probably be one of surprise at how normal everything is. The population of Dacca has grown rapidly during the past twelve months, with people flocking there from the countryside in the hope of finding work; and you will see more beggars than previously, and you may see one or two very pathetic cases on the pavements of people suffering badly from malnutrition, and in a serious condition; but just going about every day one does not see dying people all around, although one knows there are very many in great need.

On the outskirts of Dacca there are several camps where the government have taken thousands of squatters, and beggars from the streets, mostly just allotting them a few square



A family encampment on a traffic island, Sadargat, Dacca, Bangladesh.
(Photo: S. Le Quesne)

feet of ground, on which they have to erect their own hut. Various organizations are providing medical aid social help, and some rations are distributed.

We have to remember that in the present-day world, inflation is not a problem just of the western world, but that many countries are affected by it. Bangladesh is no exception, and the rate of inflation here is much greater than in the United Kingdom and wages have not risen, and do not rise, as they do there.

Dark background—new hopes

During the last three years, the price of rice—the basic food of the country—has risen by 300%; flour is 35p. for 2lbs., sugar on the ration is 25p. for 2lbs., but the ration is very small—4ozs. per head per week, and rationing is only operative in some of the larger towns. On the open market sugar is anything from 60–75p for 2lbs.

The shops do not look empty, even if not as full as previously, and at a price you can buy most things; but the prices are way beyond the buying capacity of the ordinary person.

Bangladesh is the poorest country in the world, and with a steadily rising population—which

family planning has been able to do little to check so far—has now 80 million people living in just over 55,000 square miles; and you have the natural hazards of floods, cyclones, and drought adding to the difficulties of supporting adequately such a large population.

This is the background against which we set many exciting openings and new opportunities which have arisen in the last three years. The Church is faced with the positive challenge of people clamouring for teaching about the Christian faith. This is the situation which many people have longed and prayed for through many years and we have the responsibility and privilege of seeing this, and of trying to meet these expressed needs.

Various possible reasons could be given in explanation of this, but the important fact is that there is a new interest in the Gospel. The Secretary of the Baptist Union of Bangladesh has a file of letters from individuals and groups of people asking for pastors and teachers to be sent to their villages to teach them about Christ, and saying that they want to become Christians, and receive instruction. In many instances this is a whole village, or group asking for teaching, and these requests are not just coming from one area alone, or to one church body alone. All the different church organizations in Bangladesh

are experiencing the same thing. There are opportunities for outreach and expansion in many parts of the country, and a real thirst to hear and learn of the things of God.

For the Baptist Union of Bangladesh it began in the north, in the Dinajpur district, in 1972. It was largely among those returning from refugee camps in India, where they had come into contact with Christians—helping through relief organizations—and village after village is continuing to come forward in that area. This flood can be almost overwhelming, and stretch limited resources too far, for after the initial teaching and baptism, there is a need for sustained longer teaching, if these new church members are to grow in their Christian life and experience.

Waiting for Good News

Then came the requests from villages in the Barisal and Faridpur districts for teaching—and there are a large number of people involved in these areas. And so it goes on, from Rangpur in the north comes the plea for more workers and support in order to be able to go into the villages. Khulna and Jessore in the south have new opportunities too. In Dacca district one hears of the same thing happening; and across the river

in Dacca a man has been baptized from a Hindu village, and here again is an open door.

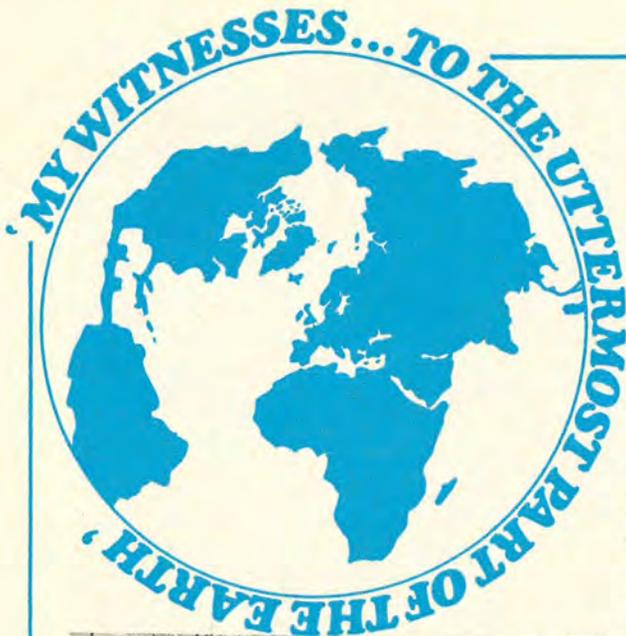
With this news, and request, from so many different areas what is the Church to do? It is hard to say “We will go here, but we have not enough resources to go there”. And how do you make such a choice? Is it one that you would like to make?

Faced with all this, I wonder what your reaction would be after a visit to Bangladesh? It is a tremendous privilege and responsibility to be called to serve in Bangladesh at such a time; but the Church there also looks to each one of you for your help in meeting this challenge.

“A great and effectual door” is open before us. In spite of the economic pressures, the possible political uncertainty, and the crying physical needs—we must go forward to reap the harvest, and to be faithful to our Lord who has given it. So much to do—we must try to alleviate human suffering wherever, and however we can; so many people waiting to hear the Good News—we must tell them. If we are obedient then, for carrying out this commission, there are all the resources and unsearchable riches of God.



Tongi camp, Bangladesh.
(Photo: S. Le Quesne)

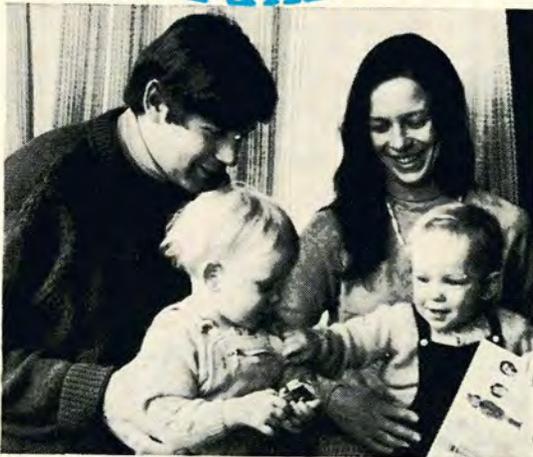


David King, B.A.
Joan King, B.Sc., Ph.D., Dip.Th.
 Stephen, Mary, Janet and Andrew

Ten years ago first Joan, and then I, found in Durham City Baptist Church a group of young people who believed the Bible to be God's Word and loved the Lord Jesus Christ and we were glad to join them.

The help the church gave us led us on to want to know more about the faith which we had inherited from childhood and had accepted personally as young people, so we left Durham for London Bible College and the fellowship of Roxeth Green Free Church in Harrow. Here again we knew the leading and guiding of God's Spirit. This time the call was to leave the teaching profession for full time work in the Baptist ministry, and it has been our joy to minister to Primrose Hill and Longley Baptist churches in Huddersfield over the last five years.

Now the Word, the Spirit, and the situation have spoken again and God has set our hearts on the Baptist Churches of Bangladesh.



Adrian Hopkins, M.B., Ch.B.,
D.Obs.R.C.O.G., D.T.M. & H.
 Sylvia Hopkins

A gradual, but in many ways, a separate calling to work for the Lord overseas was experienced by both of us. A knowledge of spiritual and physical needs gained through Summer Schools influenced us and my visit to Zaire while still a medical student helped to confirm my call.

Our home church is Emmanuel Baptist, Gravesend, Kent, but we have many other connections. Sylvia was baptized at Stockwell

Baptist Church. During student days I attended Ward Road, Dundee, and Sylvia, Holton Road, Barry, Glamorgan. After our marriage at Gravesend we attended Tetly Street Baptist Church in Bradford and then Moortown in Leeds.

I look forward to becoming involved in the medical work at Pimu, making a second fairly permanent doctor which may give opportunities to develop the work further. Sylvia, a teacher, will obviously be involved in looking after the family, but hopes to become more involved in the church life, possibly in women's work.

**Ken Russell, F.R.C.S., M.B., Ch.B.,
D.Obst.R.C.O.G.**

Missionary life has never been far from my mind since my parents and aunt served with the B.M.S. at Tondo. As a young Christian in my teens, I often thought of serving Christ abroad but rebelled against it. It was not until 1969, just before I qualified in medicine, that my mind was finally decided and since that time I have been preparing for missionary service. I now look forward to what is in store in Zaire.

Maureen Russell, M.A.

Unlike Ken, I do not come from a "missionary" family, but I can remember telling my

parents and my Sunday School teacher when I was about nine years old that I wanted to be a missionary. I forgot about this statement for many years and, in fact, it was not until I met Ken and he told me of his call that I really considered the possibility seriously. After prayerful thought it seemed right for us to offer to serve God abroad together.

I was baptized in 1972 at the Baptist Church, St. Andrews, and since our marriage later that year we have worked in several places in Britain. I continued to work as a medical social worker. We are now in membership at the Baptist Church, Perth, where Ken is a deacon.

Colin Foulkes

Travel round the world in the navy exposed me to the shattering experience of hungry men as they fought for the contents of the ship's rubbish bin, and scratched to grow crops with inadequate tools.

Such experiences, as well as reading about the inequalities in the world, led to a deep conviction that I must do something towards changing things. This I later recognized was a message from God that gave a purpose and new direction to my life, in farming.

Doreen Foulkes

I grew up in Basingstoke and at nineteen took up child care. During my first year at the nursery I started going to church and was converted some months later.

I felt God's call to work overseas but doors which I tried remained closed. I met Colin and we were married in 1968 and now the door has opened and we go forward together, with Paul and Peter, to serve in Bangladesh. We are at present members of the Thomas Cooper Memorial Church, Lincoln.



We may learn from the churches overseas

David and Christine Hampshire have been working as teachers in the Stewart School, Cuttack, Orissa, India. David has been responsible for the physics teaching and for building the school laboratory so that the school was independent of the local college, whose laboratories it formerly used. Christina has been teaching such subjects as art, geography, health science and needlework. For the past two years David has been the Headmaster of the school and is planning to return to this post in September for a further period. David also serves on the Executive of the Diocese of Cuttack, Church of North India, as the education Convenor.

THE late Dr. Korula Jacob, whilst he was secretary of the National Christian Council of India, spoke to a group of missionaries in training at Birmingham in 1965. He stated that, in his view, India did not need any more missionaries and that no more should be sent. Amongst those students were my wife and myself, and we set sail for India in 1966.

Even whilst we were settling into what was to be our work for the next nine years we and the other newly arrived missionaries from Britain and America were conscious that we were not really required as the posts we were given could just as effectively have been filled by Christian nationals.

In 1968 the Government of India prohibited the entry of missionaries into India unless it could be shown that there was no suitable national to do the work. Was the hand of God acting after the Church in India and the West had failed to heed his prophets?

In 1969 most of the English and American missionaries working in Orissa met in Cuttack to try and hammer out with the Indian Christian leaders what, if anything, they could contribute in the rapidly changing situation. Most felt that there was little to be gained from staying as there was no work for them to do, and by 1970 all those present except my wife and I, had left.

We also have been on the point of leaving on three occasions, but each time something has arisen within the school to make us remain a little longer.

What was it that caused this collapse of normal missionary work? It was simply that the church in India had come of age, a process that was quickened by the changing political scene in a developing world. Just as the role of a parent must change when a child reaches maturity so must that of the Mother church.

Not only is the church in India self sufficient in manpower but it is attempting to become financially self supporting. When it reaches this goal, possibly within the next ten years, what is to be the role of missionary societies in India? The same situation exists, or will rapidly develop, in other parts of the world. Should our policy then be to wave goodbye?

A two-way faith

In the same address Dr. Jacob went on to say that what was needed was not missionaries but Christian ambassadors. He pointed out that these, like government ambassadors, should be reciprocal.

Both working in India and visiting churches in England I have become more and more conscious of the tremendous need for communications between churches to be improved. With the exodus of missionaries from Orissa the churches there were, and still are, faced with a communications problem. In this country I find it amazing that despite television and radio so little is known or appreciated of what is happening in the old missionary fields.

In his letter to the Romans Paul writes—*“for I long to see you, that I might impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you, that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each others faith, both yours and mine”*. Paul was concerned that not only did he have a mission to found new churches but also to act as a link between old and new congregations; to help with the flow of ideas and to bring encouragement in times of trouble.

If I am able to return to Cuttack in September, as planned, I will be very much aware that I am not returning just to work in the school. What

B.M.S. Chairman 1975-76 . . .



Dr. Ian Acres, this year's Chairman of the B.M.S., served as a missionary of the society at Bolobo, Zaire, from 1933-46. He went to Congo from the Ramsden Road Church, Balham, in south London. When he returned to this country to enter general practice he settled in north London and, with his wife, linked with the Ferme Park Church, where he has served as a deacon.

He became a co-opted member of the Medical Advisory sub-committee of the B.M.S. and was elected to the General Committee in 1954. He served as chairman of the Medical Advisory sub-committee until his appointment as Medical Director of the Society in 1967. This appointment he combined with his work in general practice.

In 1972 he revisited Bolobo at the time of the opening of the new hospital buildings and the following year visited the hospital at Chandraghona, Bangladesh.

I have been doing could have been done by a national, what improvements I have been able to make will probably disappear on my departure. I return to continue to share in the Christian life and work of the people there.

I feel that besides sending missionaries as ministers, doctors, teachers and farmers we ought to be concentrating on exchanging personnel in areas where none of these are working. Is it not time we thought more of exchanging ministers, doctors and nurses—we do it between developed countries, why not between developed and developing countries. Is it not time we invited a deacon from one of the new overseas churches to become a deacon in our own church, or we went to be a deacon, secretary or treasurer in an overseas church for a year. This would involve expense and sacrifice, but I am convinced that many people would willingly give . . . would you be willing to go, or to invite? It is important that if we are to "be mutually encouraged by each other's faith" it is not only young people who must be willing to participate.

Besides the encouragement and help that the old churches could give to the new, there is much that the new churches could say and

show to us. At the present time two matters come to mind immediately.

One, is the great movement towards church union and united witness that is taking place on the old mission fields. What is happening in India today puts our efforts towards church union to shame. The actions which the church members and leaders have taken in faith to build a strong united church make us appear as babes in arms in the spiritual world.

In this country we tend to be numbed by the idea that this is a Christian country. In some "missionary areas" a greater percentage of the population take an active part in the work of the church than in this country. Perhaps if we had greater contact with Christians working in non-Christian countries we would be more concerned for our spiritually dead, respectable, neighbour. In a materialistic society we tend to equate material poverty with spiritual poverty but the opposite is often true. The enthusiasm of both young and old in India to witness for our Lord, and the tremendous conflict that this causes in their lives would awaken us to how easily we have compromised with the world around us.

A new Director

Citizen Lufimpadio is the director of the secondary school, now known as the *Institut Nzolo*, at Kimpese, Lower Zaire. Lufimpadio Ndongala Bimbona-Mbona was born near Ngombe Lutete. He went to the village school and later to the secondary school at Ngombe. From 1961-67 he attended the school at Kimpese and it is from that period that he tells his own life story.

"I continued growing up in a Christian atmosphere, thanks to many missionary teachers, whom I shall always remember. (The names Lily Jenks, Ruth Page and Eileen Motley, with the Clarks and the Coxes (adding, I'll always enjoy singing!), the Manicoms the Bonds and many others of American or Swedish nationality). After secondary school I worked for one year as a teacher at Ngombe Lutete, with Mr. Secrett and Mr. Eayres, Miss Markwell and Miss Fuller. I

have known many missionaries of the B.M.S., like Miss Brain (my "grand-mother", who brought up my mother at Ngombe), Miss Stockwell, Mr. Couldridge, Mr. Drake and a lot of others.

"After one year of teaching I went to the University at Kisangani, where I did two years of Science and Dr. Carrington was my Professor in Botany. Then I finished my two years for the degree in Chemistry, at Kinshasa, in 1972. After my University studies I returned to I.P.E. Kimpese to teach chemistry there, and two years later I was appointed to the post of Director of the School.

"I praise God for all He has done for me and I am sure He has His plan for me, which I want to obey. Pray for me that God may accomplish His will in me, and that I may become more useful to the church, to my dear country of Zaire and to the world.

"There are many changes here. The State has taken over all the schools, and there is therefore a definite separation



between the church and teaching. Religion is no longer taught in class, but outside school hours, and that voluntarily, for the State has made clear its lay nature.

"The situation is really not one to be dramatic about, for the Church goes on, a large number of the pupils go to the church services. In addition there has been a change in methods of evangelization and a Department of Evangelism has been created. Everybody is well, and all goes well."

"He saw a tumult"

Christine Farrer, B.M.S. missionary in Zaire, interprets a well known text in the light of what she has seen in Zaire.

"He saw a tumult, and people weeping and wailing loudly". (Mark 5: 38). Hearing about the way people wail when someone dies, and hearing the

wailing for yourself are two very different things. It is impossible to convey in words the heart rending cries, shouts and sobs which begin, sometimes even before the person has drawn his last breath, and can continue for hours. If the person is well known, and there are a lot of family and friends the noise can be deafening!

However, although some Christians still practise wailing,

there are others who do not and they usually sing hymns. The reply of Jesus to the crowds recorded in Mark chapter five, was that the girl was not dead, but sleeping. In Thessalonians 4: 13, Paul says that we must not be ignorant concerning those who are asleep, that we grieve not as others do who have no hope. The conduct of Christian people in times of mourning is a valuable witness and can serve to remind us of the hope that is in us.

Joyce Brown, S.R.N., S.C.M.

I had always believed in God, but at the age of 15 years I was convinced during a Youth for Christ Rally that I needed to make a personal response to Jesus Christ and became a Christian. A few months later I was baptized and accepted into membership at my home church in Stockport, Cheshire.

Two years later I went to my first B.M.S. Summer School at Bexhill on Sea, and there felt

that God was calling me to work for Him overseas. I left my job as a shorthand typist with the Inland Revenue and began nursing training.

After general training, I did further training in Midwifery and neo-natal paediatrics in Scotland.

I then felt led to go to a Capernwray Bible School in Sweden, and after being accepted for the Winter School I felt it right to officially apply



Flora Morgan, R.G.N.

I came to know Jesus as Saviour when I was eleven, through my home and the Glasgow City Mission Sunday School which I attended. I was baptized and became a member of the Coatbridge Baptist Church in 1967 and began nursing training at Glasgow Royal Infirmary the following year.

I had been interested in mission from school-days and it was, in fact, the main reason for my beginning nursing. Later however, I tried hard to forget and always managed to miss the missionary meetings at Church and the Nurses Christian Fellowship. This avoidance of the issue worked well for some time until, while doing

midwifery, I could no longer ignore the growing conviction that God was speaking to me about this and after discussion and prayer with our pastor and friends, I contacted B.M.S.

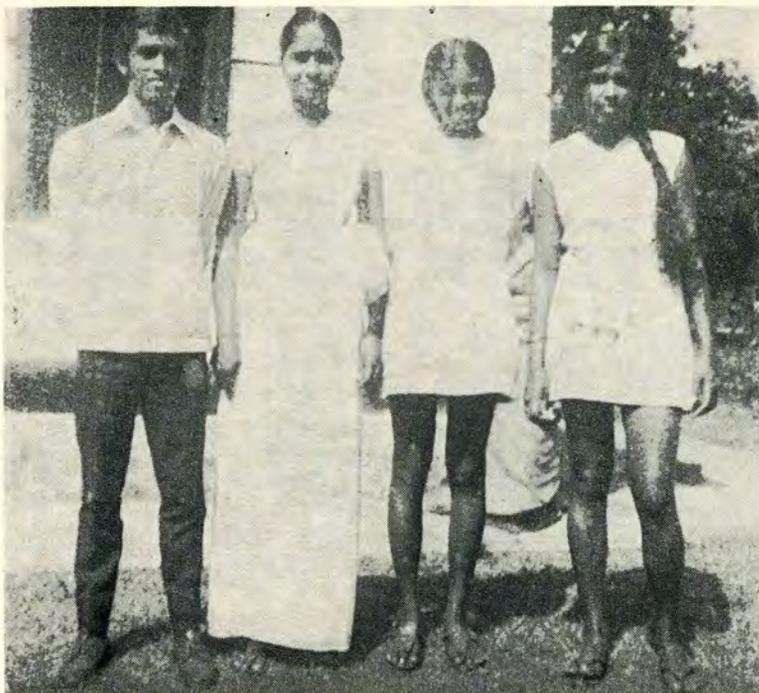
I have been at St. Andrew's and this will be followed by studying French and Tropical Medicine in Brussels in preparation for work in Zaire. God has brought me to this point and I am confident that He will continue to lead and sustain me in the future.

to the B.M.S. after being in contact with the Society for a number of years.

These last few years I have felt a leading towards service in Nepal. I have been at St. Andrew's Hall, Selly Oak, for the summer term and praise God for all His leading faithfulness to me despite past mistakes and failings on my part. I feel inadequate and unworthy for the task ahead and yet I go in obedience to His will.



The four baptismal candidates at Kekirawa, the first baptism held in twelve years.



Baptisms bring new life

Stephen Welegedera reports
from Lanka.

The Malawa tank is a natural tank which stores up rain water for irrigation and for the personal use of the 50,000 people of Kekirawa the northernmost post of Baptist work in Sri Lanka. For the last three years rainfall has been irregular and the tank was getting dry.

The small Baptist group, consisting of five Sinhalese families and three Tamil families, were keen that four of their young people who had asked for baptism should be baptized, when the Church celebrated its 93rd Church anniversary. For weeks they were in prayer and were also preparing to entertain to lunch and tea over two hundred Baptists from different Baptist Churches in Sri Lanka.

By 9 a.m. on Sunday morning there were over two hundred people in the Church compound and the President of the Sangamaya Baptist Union, Rev. C. D. E. Premawardena offered a prayer and the assembled Baptist folk lined up in rows of fours and marched to the tank about a quarter of a mile away, singing hymns. It was a glorious sight to see. The Pastor in the lead followed by the four candidates for Baptism, then the Kekirawa Church members and

families then visitors from Matale, Kandy, Hanwella, Biyanwila, Gonawela, Hendala, and Cinnamon Gardens Colombo.

Many non-Christian people had assembled along the way and at the tank. After a short service at which the significance of baptism and discipleship was explained, one young man, a teacher in a government school and three young girls were baptized in the tank. After that all the people marched back to the church singing along the way. Tea was served to all and soon after the worship service commenced with a crowded church and compound. The President conducted the service and received the baptized believers into membership. Then Rev. Dr. Wickramasinghe conducted the communion service at which over a hundred participated. Then there was a young people's rally and finally, giving glory to God, the celebrations ended and lunch was served to over two hundred people.

This has given a lot of vigour and enthusiasm to the Kekirawa Church members and has resulted in the inauguration of a sewing class which is attended by about thirty non-Christian girls. Please pray for us.

DON'T FORGET 'JERUSALEM'!

Fred's in Barnsley. David's in Guildford.
Sheila's in Canterbury. Lois is in London.
They're all missionaries. In 'Jerusalem'.
Mission matters at home and abroad.

See what God is doing in your own country
... through the

BAPTIST TIMES

Only 6p

Every Thursday

The PEACE is rebuilt!

The theme of the College Road, Harrow, Sunday School Festival was 'talents'. Each department prepared and presented items under this heading.

The Junior Department chose George Grenfell, as the example of a man who used his talent for engineering to serve the missionary work in the Congo, in the pioneering days of the B.M.S.

They learnt how Robert Arthington gave the steamer, which he called PEACE, to assist the work in the Congo, and how Grenfell assembled all the parts in Congo.

The members of the department carried the parts into the church and the steamer was assembled so that by the close of the service it was carried in triumph, emitting steam!

The photograph was taken when the children visited the Baptist Housing Association home for the elderly, built by the church. The residents, many of whom are not able to attend the church, enjoyed the repeat performance of both the primary and the junior items.

Acknowledgements

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

(23rd April, 1975 to 22nd May, 1975)

General Work: Anon., £1.00; Anon., £2.00; Anon., £1.00; Anon., £5.00; Anon., £10.00; Anon., £6.00; Anon., £5.00; Anon., £5.00; Anon. (Cymre), £19.00.

Relief Work: Anon. (E.M.W.), £5.00; Anon. (M.L.), £5.00; Anon., £1.00.

Chandraghona Appeal: Anon. (Prove Me), £5.00; Anon. (M.L.S.), £5.00.

LEGACIES	£
Mr. H. F. Burrell	75.00
Mrs. G. A. Campion	100.00
Mr. A. Charlton	25.00
Miss R. E. Collett	55.00
Mrs. G. O. Dingle	25.05
Mrs. H. Fenning	1,000.00
Florence A. Jones	500.00
Mrs. M. B. Margeson	1,640.00
Dorothy P. Martin	250.00
Miss C. S. McPhail	200.00
Lilian M. E. Morris	3,355.58
Miss H. Porteous	50.00
Rev. J. H. Sheppard	100.00
Mr. T. F. Simmons	1,187.06
Mr. J. Tate	50.00
Mr. R. Wills	250.00

"In loving memory of my dear sister Maggie"
(Beatrice Maggie Argyle).

Missionary Record

Arrivals

- 26 April. Miss S. M. Le Quesne from Dacca, Bangladesh.
7 May. Miss V. A. Hamilton from Dinajpur, Bangladesh.
27 May. Miss J. Sillitoe and Mrs. C. Sugg and children from Upoto, Zaire.

Departures

- 30 April. Dr. and Mrs. A. D. Hopkins and family for language study in Brussels.
13 May. Mr. J. G. Davies for Chandraghona, Bangladesh.
14 May. Rev. M. A. Churchill for Ratnapura, Sri Lanka.
20 May. Miss B. Bond for Barisal, Bangladesh.

Deaths

- 16 April. In Trinidad, Mrs. Agnes Ellen Poole (wife of Rev. J. H. Poole), aged

- 82, Nassau, Bahamas and Port of Spain Church, Trinidad, 1911-52, 1961-70.
4 May. In Sao Paulo, Brazil, Mrs. Lottie Parsons (wife of Rev. Clifford J. Parsons), aged 64, Angola Mission 1940-59; Brazil 1973.
20 May. In hospital, Rev. Harold William Nicklin, B.A., B.Sc., aged 64, Bangladesh Mission, 1939-72.
25 May. Mrs. Gertrude Mary Russell (widow of Rev. F. S. Russell), aged 88, China Mission 1915-49.



Pauline Weatherby, S.R.N., S.C.M.

I was brought up in a happy Christian family, and while quite young made a profession of faith, committing my life to Christ. As a teenager, I was baptized and joined the Church, and while still at school I became conscious God wanted me to serve Him overseas. With this in mind I trained as a nurse/midwife and took some Bible College training.

However, events did not work out as expected and on completion of my training it seemed right to stay in this country. I worked first as a district nurse/midwife, and later as a ward sister in hospital, learning through the difficulties and challenges of life to walk more closely to the Lord. Thinking that I was settled, I was surprised (but very pleased) when during the last year God showed me very clearly that I



further training at St. Andrew's Hall I hope to go to Brazil to share in the great work God is doing in that land.

These are exciting, if troubled, times and I believe that God is calling all His Church to deeper commitment and to look to Him "whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we ask or imagine".

should apply to B.M.S. for work in Zaire.

I shall be taking the Tropical Medicine Course in Belgium before going to Zaire. As I look back, I am filled with praise to see how God has been leading me this far; and with the promise of His presence and His equipping . . . I know that I can trust Him for the future as well.

Peter Cousins, B.Sc.

The great turning point in my life came while I was studying at Bristol University. Meeting a group of Christians, whose faith was real and living, I turned to Christ and asked Him to take control of my life also. On leaving Bristol I asked God what I should do with my future and the answer was both clear and unexpected—to serve Him in Latin America.

I returned home to Cardiff in membership at Pentyrch St. Baptist Church and spent a year teaching before entering London Bible College. After

