

The wife of a minister sees much but, if she is wise, says little. Four wives however have been willing to write on what they see and do. You could call the series "Through the manse window" for they are able to look out on the work in which they share and we are able to look in on the life and home and family on which so many demands are made. If you look out of the window of the manse at Green Park, New Delhi you see two tombs (right), but Elsie Grose sees much more. (Below right) Mrs Elsie Grose standing with Dr. George James (headmaster of Agra High School) and Mrs Haider Ali (headmistress of Agra Primary School) and Rev. B. Amey outside the Kwalty Restaurant, Agra.

Family life is important

by Elsie Grose, with the BMS in India since 1953

WHEN I first sat down to write this article the paper went into the typewriter, the title was typed, and then the inevitable telephone ring followed by visitors, until the whole morning had slipped away.

I returned to the typewriter, not to complete the article, but to move it from the table so that lunch could be set. While I had been away my youngest daughter, always ready to help, had typed her own version of my activities. I quote: "A pastor's wife has to answer the telephone, take messages, make tea and go to prayer meetings."

New Delhi is a rapidly growing city. All around us new housing colonies seem to spring up overnight. And among the many people who come from all over India to work and settle here are many Christians. It is so easy for them, in a new place, so different from the close Christian communities of the smaller towns, to lose their sense of belonging. Visiting therefore has a very



important place in our work here. People look forward to a visit from the pastor and his wife.

Family life is still very important in India and the whole family gather for Bible reading and prayer. Many of these new housing colonies are quite far from the church so that regular attendance for all the family is difficult. Cottage prayer meetings help to meet this need to some extent.

Wedding invitations, Christmas cards, etc., usually come addressed to Rev. G. and Mrs. Grose and 'fly'. The 'fly' may raise a smile but it indicates something of the Indian way of thinking. The 'fly' (short for 'family', of course) belongs together and it would be unthinkable to invite husband without wife, parents without children to any social event. So, a pastor's wife here, I feel, is very much more involved with her husband in the work of the pastorate. If I am unable to visit at the hospital or attend a cottage meeting with my husband the question is always

asked, "Where is Mrs. Grose?" (Of course, there are visits which the pastor must make alone, but the pattern of work is such that in many ways the wife is more involved).

In India one learns never to be in a hurry. Shopping, no dashing into the supermarket, filling a basket and dashing home again. (Having paid at the cash desk.) Time must be taken. When buying vegetables, each potato is picked out separately to take only the size one prefers and no bruises; tomatoes chosen one by one for just the right degree of ripeness; sugar, rice, etc., carefully weighed before you while the shopkeeper carries on a leisurely conversation with his customers. It can be most frustrating, but it can also be lots of fun.

We have a Women's Fellowship at the church. A small group of women who meet once a month in our house, on the last Saturday of each month in the evening. Not a time many churches in the British Isles would choose for



their women's meeting perhaps, but chosen here because most of our women are working, teachers, nurses, typists, etc., and are not free to meet in the afternoons. With the evening meal to prepare, children's studies to supervise and other chores to do when they get home, they do not feel able to come out on weekday evenings. So, we meet on Saturdays and, though the group is small, the members are very keen especially in the matter of service.

Clothes for cakes

Just this week, one of the few non-working women has been spending her time making trousers to go with shirts that we are providing for patients at the tuberculosis hospital. At Christmas we bought sweaters for sixteen adult patients and now we have more money in hand for this other clothing. We plan to keep a supply of new clothing at the hospital, shirts and pyjamas for the men and saris for the ladies, so that those patients who come in with only the dirty clothes they are wearing and nothing to change into after a bath, may be given a set of new clothes to wear. We raised about Rs.600/- (£35) by making and selling Christmas cakes and should be able to purchase a good supply of clothing with that. (Members of the Women's Fellowship take it in turns to visit the TB Hospital each month to give soap and oil to patients who are too poor to purchase this for themselves).

Only three members of the fellowship, including myself, have ovens in which cakes can be baked, so this Christmas cake project involved me in baking over 40lb of cake, (apart from that which I made for family and friends). Many of you will have baked your own Christmas cakes too, but even here there is a difference. You probably went into your local shop and purchased your dried fruits all cleaned and prepared.

The fruit we buy is very dirty and cleaning takes a long time. Four kilo of sultanas was reduced to three kilo by the time we had removed all the pebbles and dirt. Eight kilo of raisins had to be stoned. Nuts, (cashews, as almonds are prohibitively expensive now), peel, all has to be prepared and chopped. (Older readers will remember doing this in the days before the war). All this preparation work took place in



Green Park Church, New Delhi, showing the two flats at the rear. Rev. G. and Mrs. Grose and family live upstairs and their Hindi speaking ministerial colleague and his family live below.

our home where fifteen or so ladies chopped and dropped and spread stickiness everywhere. But how lovely it is to work together with this keen, happy group.

We live on the church premises in a flat at the rear of the building. This means that we are always available, be it 7 a.m. or 10 p.m. and our home is very much a part of the church. Bible Club, Youth Fellowship, Women's Fellowship, committee meetings, all use the sitting room for their meetings and gradually have taken possession of drawers, shelves, etc., for their own use.

Home for all

I quote another sentence from my daughter's article: "Our sitting room furniture is always being used in the church. For every drama produced, for every wedding reception, (the bride and groom must have a settee on which to sit), for every church social, the sitting room is emptied of most of the furniture." Living on the spot is most convenient, for everyone else.

One other aspect of my life that probably differs from that of most pastors' wives in the British Isles is in the matter of family separations. The daughter who tried to write this article

for me could do so because she is home from school for the long winter holiday. Nine months of the year she is away at boarding school and, because of this, I spend three months or so in the summer in the hills where her school is situated, in order to be with her.

Rich not poor

We are fortunate to have good schools here in India which our children can attend and so we do not face the long years of separation that many of our predecessors experienced. But still there is some separation to be faced, husband and wife sometimes, or children from parents, not only in these school years but later too, when the children leave school and may have to face the new experiences of college life or business life separated by many miles from the country in which they have grown up and where many of their friends are. But, by the grace of God, all these experiences become not deprivations but enrichments to our lives as we experience in new ways his sufficiency for all our needs.

A pastor's wife in India! So much is the same as a pastor's wife in the British Isles. Some differences, but the same Lord who has called us all into his service and gives us his strength wherever we are for the work which is his.

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Mrs Joan King with her husband and family pictured before leaving for Bangladesh.



We must be real people

by Joan King

What is the role of a minister's wife? Five years ago when we arrived in Huddersfield with our two young children to begin our first pastorate, I found nobody could give me an answer to this question.

Now, while enjoying a few days in the peaceful atmosphere of the Oxford Mission Hospital, Barisal, Bangladesh, following the birth of our third son, I wonder what is expected of a pastor's wife with five children in Bangladesh.

In this country the practicalities of living, cooking, washing, travel, take up so much more time. Nothing is as convenient as in England. Servants (a necessity dreaded while preparing to come to Bangladesh) make it possible to do things other than just running the household. On Sundays, when Clement and Shumallah have their day off, we get up at 6 a.m. in order to fit in the chores and get to church for 9.30 a.m.

Educating our older children takes care of four hours every morning. We are working from the Parents National Education Union Scheme and find lessons quite interesting. In the afternoons there is opportunity for me to do a little language study while the children play in the compound garden. Andrew (1½) has to be constantly deflected from the pond and he and the goats need chasing out of the vegetable garden, so not much serious study gets done. In the evenings I have a Bengali lesson for 1 hour, but drowsiness and mosquitoes make concentration difficult.

After two months here I find I understand very little Bengali and can speak even less. Our family still collects a crowd of spectators,

men as well as children, when we shop in the bazaar. We are still very much foreigners. In a country where most women go out very little and many educated women prefer to remain single than endure the restrictions of marriage, I wonder why the Lord called me to Bangladesh. Whatever can I do for him here?

Looking back over the past five years I have come to the conclusion that a pastor's wife is no different from any other Christian wife and mother. God wants us to be real people enjoying the life he has given us to the full and not just busy do-ers of Christian work. Even when we are in hospital enjoying rest, good food and all the loving care Christian nurses can give, we are not unproductive Christians if we are living each day for Jesus. We are to be gracious in receiving love as well as in serving others. Our desire in coming to Bangladesh was to share God's love with others. Instead, so far, we have been very much at the receiving end, especially now that our five day old baby is ill.

God calls us as Christians to be part of a team with other believers called the church in which all have a part to play, so that the team grows together in love and makes Jesus real to the world. The minister and his family are part of that team, with gifts that can be used and shared, making their contribution to the spiritual life of the church in the same way as all the members should.

In Huddersfield we offered our home and family life to God. Looking back we can see how he used our family as the nucleus round which he gradually added more children and families for family worship on Sunday mornings.



Mr P. Halder, Mr B. Singh and Rev. R. Baroi standing by the pond to which Joan King refers. This pond constitutes the water supply for the school and houses on the compound.

I found that I was doing all sorts of odd jobs that fitted in with the children's routine. Visiting some of the elderly and housebound who enjoy the antics of young children, making posters and helping with the church publicity, teaching in the Sunday school, attending the ladies Bright Hour, helping at Sunday school camps and door to door visiting, when we could find

a baby sitter. The great thing was doing it as part of a team of people who really cared, who prayed for one another and every aspect of the church's work and were eager to see others converted and growing in the faith.

As someone permanently encumbered with four young children and a husband who was always out, I found God could use willingness to be useful to him in an amazing variety of ways, not least in showing other adults as well as children how to commit their lives to him.

What are my plans for the future? During this year of language study we think and pray and wait for the Baptist Union of Bangladesh to decide where to send us. David could be doing church work as a minister or help with theological training course. Either of these avenues of service will mean him being away from home. I will certainly have to spend a lot of time with the family and their schooling, but I look forward to joining a Bengali church and becoming as active a church member as my Bengali permits and opportunities are given.

Already in the Christian Fellowship at the language school there has been opportunity for teaching a Sunday school class and helping with the crèche. The important thing seems to be to keep awake as Christians (it is very easy to happily do nothing in the tropical sunshine here) and live each day to the full.

In the shadow of Kanchenjunga

by Ernest Madge

MOUNT Hermon School is beautifully situated at North Point, Darjeeling, with a clear view across the hills to Kanchenjunga, 28,000 ft. high and about forty miles away as the crow flies. A glorious sight, when it is visible, which is by no means all the time. We ran into mist about half way up the 7,000 ft. ascent from the airport.



The school was originally founded by an American Methodist missionary in 1895. It moved from the centre of Darjeeling town to North Point in 1926, into a fine stone building which still provides most of the accommodation. A little later it changed its name to Mount Hermon School, and so it remains.

B.M.S. began to be involved in the 1950's when a few missionary children started to attend the school. Later, ties were strengthened when B.M.S. missionaries, Rev. Jack and Mrs Wilde, and Mr and Mrs John West, joined the staff. Other British Baptists, Mr and Mrs Duncan Wainwright, also worked there for a number of years. The present Principal, Mr Graeme Murray, and his wife, are New Zealand Baptists and a number of New Zealanders and Australians are on the staff.

My visit coincided with the end of term and Speech Day. It was quite fascinating to look over the scholars and see their varied racial origin and to watch the prize winners and try to guess their nationality. Only one prize winner was actually known to me, the son of Mr Lal Rema, a Baptist from Mizoram, now serving with an American Baptist group in Assam. There are a few B.M.S. children in the School, Peter and John Skirrow, and Brian and Jane Mardell, from Bangladesh, as well as Karen and Mark West.

There are 540 boys and girls in the school, 410 of them in boarding. They are listed as Indians 384, other Asians 121, Europeans 35 and Anglo Indian 10. The Indians include a son

of Rev. C. L. Hminga, former General Secretary of the Baptist Church of Mizoram, and Naga children. The other Asians include Tibetan and Thais.

The school is a very valuable Christian witness to children of wealthy families who otherwise would have little contact with Christianity. Religion is built into every part of the school's life and daily prayer and Sunday chapel are required of all the children.

At Speech Day the main speaker was Bishop Ghose, of Darjeeling Diocese of the Church of North India. I found myself sitting next to Tensing Norkay who, with Edmund Hilary, reached the summit of Everest in 1953. Tensing Norkay is now Director of the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, which is near Mount Hermon; he is a good friend of the

school. The last I saw of him was in the midst of a crowd of boys seeking his autograph.

Sunday morning chapel was a farewell to the leaving students, seven of whom told us what the school had meant to them. Two of them were testimonies to Christ's work in their lives. Some of the leavers had been at the school for ten years or more; and for nine months of each of those years, as the children do not usually go down to the plains in the hot weather. The place of the school in their lives is tremendous. Many former students now occupy high positions in government and the professions. Even if they have not accepted Christ, they have been deeply influenced by the Christ way of life.

We pray for the school, the Principal, staff and students especially remembering Mr and Mrs John West.

(left) The swimming pool at Mount Hermon School with Mount Kanchenjunga in the background, and (below) the school buildings.



Di and Michael Woosley have often shared in B.M.S. Summer Schools. Here Mrs Woosley (fourth from right) is pictured with a discussion group at Bexhill, and (below right) Mr Woosley with a group of Summer Schoolers resting during a walk from Bexhill to Battle.



We have learnt island life

by Di Woosley

MY husband and I, with our family, have spent the last eleven years or so living on islands in the West Indies and Europe. We started off in Jamaica in 1964 and went from there to the Turks and Caicos Islands, still in the West Indies, and more recently to Guernsey, one of the Channel Islands.

All of them very different to live in and with their own ideas on ministers and ministers' wives! It goes without saying that our present home and church life in beautiful Guernsey hardly differs from that of any manse in England, except that upon leaving the manse, no matter in which direction one drives, it is only a matter of minutes before we reach one or other of the different beaches and the sea, cold by West Indian standards, warm by English comparisons!

We had the same situation in Grand Turk, except that as the island is only $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles wide and 7 miles long, most of the time you can see the sea as well! Jamaica is much bigger than either Guernsey or Grand Turk, even so, the Baptist community was close and with a name like ours it appeared we could not travel far without being known. This was perhaps the

hardest thing to live down (or up to!). In Grand Turk, an island with a population of 3,000 people, very little of importance happened that was not soon heard about by everybody.

This grape-vine system of communication often added large chunks and incorrect assumptions to the story with the result that many insignificant things were blown up quite out of proportion as it passed from person to person. Being fairly well known in a small community I was a good target for such gossips and very soon learnt that vehement denial constituted a sign of guilt, whereas if the rumour was totally ignored by the person concerned it was very soon forgotten.

Schooling

I suppose this lack of privacy rankled a bit at first, there was only one community on the island so you could not even go 'somewhere else' for a meal. Also with only a few hundred cars on the island one's movements were easily observed. This was further complicated by the fact that my husband had twelve churches in the other five islands and so every three months or so he would be away for three weeks. I felt that though the other churches were always asking if I could go along too, that my job was to be the anchor at home with my three children, all of whom were at school in Grand Turk.

Schooling caused its own problems. There are two government primary schools in the island and we placed the two eldest children, then aged 7 and 8, in one of these when we first arrived.

They had made good progress at school in Jamaica up to this time; Jonathan our youngest had only just started school and appeared to have some difficulties, so after much prayer we placed him in a private school run by an English lady.

Now the problems started, the two eldest were far in advance of the local school standard for their age group, and we did not think it ideal that an 8 year old should study with the 9/10 year group so we switched over the two boys and then the eldest did exceptionally well and the youngest nothing! It ended up eventually with all three at private school and people saying we had our children at the 'white' school, however we knew they would have to be able to fit into the British system and this they have done, except for the youngest who still needs extra help.

Ideas and enthusiasm

As far as work with the women in the church was concerned I always had the fullest co-operation from all the ladies. They were always willing to give my next idea a trial. I never once heard anyone say, "the last minister's wife did . . .", or, "we always do it this way. . .". Needless to say the new ideas got me into some awkward places, have you ever cured your own ham and then smoked it over a huge fire of pimento leaves: or done your carol singing from the back of a truck being driven over bumpy ground at what feels like 100 mph and trying to sing the same carol and verse as the truck ahead!

Definitely in the West Indian Islands they expected the minister's wife to come up with the ideas and carry them out, though I had tremendous enthusiasm from my ladies, who of course form a large part of the membership of the church. When drawing up items for sacred concerts the hardest part was leaving people out, not that they could always do well the things they offered to do, but were always so willing to tell others of their Lord, in verse or song or by personal testimony.

Our women's meeting belonged to the Women's Federation of Baptist Churches in Jamaica. I was voted on to the National Committee with special responsibility for the Parish of St. Mary which has seventeen Baptist churches

in it and through the association we had several excellent day conferences. Because of the committee work I became involved in programme planning which entailed writing programmes that could be used by any group in their own meeting. We felt it was not reasonable to form new groups in the smaller churches, who had very few leaders and expect them to run themselves without some guidance. This work I found most interesting and very rewarding personally. Three of us worked on these programmes and I learnt much about running meetings from actually writing and working through such material. To be effective it had to be simple and thought provoking, not an easy task and we were not always successful, but on the whole I felt my time spent in this direction was not entirely wasted.

In my own churches the Christmas play always seemed to be my job and neither were they satisfied with a cast of six or eight, at least twenty had to have parts and at least five would be missing from each rehearsal, so by the end I could play almost any part! The week before





The Oracabessa Education Centre, an extension at the back of the church.

we performed the play, off the bed would come all the bedspreads for the innkeeper, villagers and kings, the sheets for the angels and blankets (always scarce in such a warm climate) for the shepherds! In time I learnt to adapt same into robes and gowns with the aid of a couple of packets of safety pins. All the men demanded beards, also any girls playing men's parts; I used to end up with fingers so sticky and hairy I could hardly turn the pages to prompt!

The ladies in the church visit the sick and shut-ins, not only those of our own church either, much more than I had met in England. Three or four of us, sometimes more, would go together and take eggs, oranges, bread, milk, etc., some of which we would leave behind in each of the houses visited, after we had sung a couple of hymns, had prayer, a reading and a few words on the reading, which I had to give. The first time it came as a surprise, but God helped me through and the next time I was better prepared.

Another of the things I found hard to accept was that when people came to see the minister, they came to see the minister and his wife could not be of any assistance. Often they would have walked for some distance and they would prefer to come again than to leave a message with me. I think there were two main reasons

for this, usually in the West Indies the wife has a full time job so she would not normally be at home and secondly, that the minister had been to college and therefore he could help. What could the minister's wife know about church and personal matters! So I had to learn to accept that most often only the minister would do, but on such occasions I did have a job, in supplying the visitor with a cool drink and cake. Jamaican hospitality is very good and it would be considered impolite not to even offer refreshment.

There were of course times when I was called upon to do things that I wished I knew more about. I was asked to help ice a wedding cake for one of our young people and not a two or three tier one at that, but about four tiers and four or five other cakes besides. They were all made and iced at home, the finished result I felt was decidedly amateurish but the cost for it to be done professionally was prohibitive. We put an extension on our church in Jamaica, an education centre, and felt this should be used full time, so a school of business studies was started, a teacher found for shorthand and typing, my husband did book-keeping and I was roped in to teach spelling and dictation, however, this soon turned into spelling, dictation, English grammar and remedial reading, a fairly demanding role, but we did manage a few passes in the Pitman examinations.

In both Grand Turk and Jamaica I had experience of committee meetings as a member and chairwoman. Every meeting, is minuted and at every women's meeting the minutes of the previous meeting are read. I tried to have this done just at business meetings but somehow it just crept back in! I cannot think that my friends in Jamaica and the Turks and Caicos Islands would really approve if they knew that my present Ladies Fellowship does not even possess a minute book! I found that everything had to be down in writing and meticulously correct, down to the last amendment, casting vote and hymn number. I am sure all I learnt in this field will one day be put to good use again.

I have been so grateful for these my West Indian friends who have taught me such a lot during the time I spent in their countries and pray that God will continue to use this minister's wife as, with my husband, we serve him in Guernsey.

Walk slowly into variety

by Sheila Brewer, in Trinidad from 1970

ONE of the first things you have to learn to do in Trinidad is to walk slowly. The temperature is around 82°F the whole year and whether or not it is pleasant depends upon how humid it is. Perhaps this is one of the hardest things a missionary has to learn. All around there are needs waiting to be met, and the temptation is always there to try to meet them! Some of them obviously cannot be met, but there are still a million and one things which we can do. Is it possible we attempt to do too much?

Just Living takes a lot of time. Weekly trips to the grocery can take time when there are shortages of essential items, like rice, flour, chicken or oil. It seems there is always something missing and substitutes have to be found. Always there are queues and one has to learn to exercise Christian graciousness with firmness or wait all day! At present repairs are being made to the Navet Dam, and this means that our water is cut off from about 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. every day. Sometimes there are power cuts and earlier this year there was a strike by the Texaco oil workers and the sugar workers, which meant that for a while folk could not obtain gas for cooking or to run their cars. Many folk resorted to the coal pot or the kerosene stove, when they could get kerosene! All of these are a part of living—they are only a problem in so far as they slow us down!

What does a missionary do? Some very ordinary things, just like many of you are doing. I have a varied list of jobs that have come my way, and if I had been asked in England what I thought I would do, I doubt if any of them would have been on my list.

Leading a Church Choir. The San Fernando Baptist church asked me to lead their choir, which consists of between fourteen and eighteen young people. This is a joy to me because I love

music and singing. We have put on Easter and Christmas programmes over the last two years including cantatas. This is notable because only a few of the young people read music and the rest have to learn their parts by heart.

One of the problems which I face is to try to get across that singing in worship is not a 'performance', but worship to God and leading the congregation in such a way that they are caught up in this worship. There are many opportunities to counsel these young people, many of whom have problems at home and are of course going through the usual process of growing up, writing G.C.Es, and 'A' levels,



Mrs Sheila Brewer (right) standing outside the Training Centre to which she refers. Miss Eva Waggott pictured with her is now in retirement in this country after serving twenty eight years in Trinidad.

coping with the knowledge that even if they pass their examinations there may not be jobs for them. In schools they have to combat criticism from Muslims and Hindus.

Many of them have serious financial trouble, others take for granted that everything will be handed to them on a plate, and expect missionaries always to provide for them. Some work in the church, others act as if the work in the church is to be done by the minister only and their commitment to Jesus is not worked out in their everyday lives.

It is a constant challenge to my own personal life as I see the problems these young people face and how they look to us and our lives. Jesus said, "to whom much is given, much will be expected". They expect us to live exemplary lives.

Administration and Teaching. Quite a lot of my time in Trinidad has been spent typing, correcting, cutting stencils and duplicating study guides for my husband's Training Programme. Much of this administrative work has been done to enable Peter to get on with the more important work. At one time I worked for the Home Department of the B.M.S. Little did I think that I would still be typing when on the 'overseas' side!

Vacation Bible Schools are an annual event in most churches and I have been able to help with a couple of these. I am now responsible for B.M.S. accounts in Trinidad which is another job, and for this year I am an auditor for the Union's accounts. One of the things which is always happening is that one 'helps out' and finds that the job has become permanent and has grown, like the mustard seed, out of all proportion. This is what happened when I took the minutes of the School Board for the Baptist Training Centre for Girls. Now I am secretary of this Board, and it has involved quite a lot of work, letters, minutes and working out, as the School has changed its emphasis and become more of a vocational school.

Visitors. From time to time students and others visit our home and there is opportunity to share with them in their joys and problems. In fact the more I think about it the more I feel there are many people in Trinidad who need someone just to listen to their problems. Fellow Chris-

tians have financial needs which we can never meet. Often help, because of time, is grudging, and it is a challenge to remember that whatever we do, we are to do 'In His Name', Jesus had time for people. He had more people than He could cope with, and He knew how to do His work according to His Father's will.

I have a family too! In between, my family see me. A listening ear to husband, or even 'not another committee! Talk to me about anything but work'. The children coping with school friends who don't believe in our God. 'But mummy', says Helen, 'there is only one God. Why don't they believe in Him and go to church!' Rachel's comment to a neighbour's child, 'I am going to tell Jesus you told a lie.' Teaching them to love Jesus and not to 'use Him for their own ends', is quite a task.

Learning to be responsible. When children are small, we teach them to tie shoe laces. Sometimes they grasp it quickly, other times they have to be cajoled into doing it for themselves. They cannot rely on their parents all the time. In Trinidad there are many people who need cajoling into being the responsible mature Christians that God would have them be. For too long they have relied on outside finance and leadership.

We have to stand back and let them tie their own shoe laces, and encourage them. The potential is there, but it needs to be harnessed. Our problem is to refuse, with love, to tie the shoe laces any more, only to guide and help with those jobs for which no one can possibly be found. Pray with us that we may indeed be co-workers for the Kingdom of God with our Trinidadian brothers and sisters, encouraging them to full responsibility and maturity.

There are still many openings for ministerial work with the B.M.S. overseas. If you would like to know about these write to the Rev. (Mrs) A. W. Thomas, B.M.S. 93 Gloucester Place, London, W1H 4AA.

Last month we published a selection of articles on worship. Here is the last in the series.

Worship in Jamaica

by William Porch

WE cannot consider all the West Indies as a missionary situation, for some of the islands of the Caribbean, especially in the matter of their Christian life and witness, have long since matured through childhood and adolescence to Christian adulthood. When we consider the worship of the Baptist church in Jamaica, this is particularly true. Here we see a virile adult community trying to cope with the immense problems arising in third world countries, reaching out into the community in many different evangelistic ventures and building their own church fellowship and worship in a way that suits their present situation.

First Impressions

The impression that is generally accepted among British Baptists concerning worship in the Caribbean is far from the truth. Conversing with many people during recent deputation visits has made it clear that the predominant impression of worship in the Jamaican churches is that of the Pentecostal type, with hand-clapping, foot stamping, local vocal responses and general disorder. Visitors to Jamaica quickly discover that this is not true, and often they are puzzled and pleasantly surprised at the dignified formality of the church services. During our stay in Jamaica we were privileged to receive visitors from London and Scotland and it was gratifying to see similar reactions to our own first impressions of Jamaican church services.

Formality and Dignity

Let us pay a visit to a Jamaican church on a Sunday morning by attending East Queen Street Baptist Church, Kingston. Not only would

the size of the building impress us but so would the size of the congregation. If it was Communion Sunday there might be 1,500 present. At the beginning of the service we might be surprised to see the opening procession starting with the forty strong robed choir and followed by the deacons and the minister. The Order of Service in the printed order distributed as you enter for worship is as follows:

- Worship preparation
 - Organ prelude
 - Processional Hymn
 - Call to Worship
 - Invocation and Lord's Prayer (sung)
- Worship through Praise
 - Hymn
 - Responsive Reading (congregation standing)
- Worship through Fellowship
 - Prayer of Intercession
 - Welcome and announcements
 - Offertory and presentation (congregation standing)
 - Prayer of Thanksgiving by a deacon
 - Anthem—Adult Choir
- Worship through Instruction
 - Scripture Lesson
 - Hymn
 - Sermon
- Worship through commitment
 - Hymn
 - Benediction
 - Recessional hymn

This order of service is more elaborate than the typical service of a rural church but the basic structure is the same.

From the items listed it is clear that the service would be longer than a British service, lasting at least one and a half hours and longer on Communion Sunday at the beginning of the month. For the preacher and the leaders of worship, the relaxed attitude to time is very helpful. The predominant feature throughout the service is making sure that every aspect of the service is well done, not in finishing within the hour! For me, this was a most important feature.

The Preaching Context

Having appreciated what Stephen Winward had said on the dialogue of worship and the need for greater participation in the worship experience, it impressed me to realize just how

the Jamaica approach had progressed along this road. In processions, in responsive readings and prayers, in the greater movement of the people in worship there is created a greater sense of dialogue and participation and consequently a greater sense of oneness and of life. The Jamaican services have formality and dignity, but throughout there is also a living vitality. Preaching within the context of this vital form of worship and with the encouragement of the natural warmth of the Caribbean personality is an exhilarating experience. Many fear that the introduction of a greater emphasis on worship especially through a liturgy of worship will succeed in replacing the importance of preaching but this is not my experience in Jamaica. Paying attention to worship is not a substitute for preaching but rather the finding of that true pattern in which the World of God can be proclaimed most effectively.

The Baptist Hymn Book

Arriving in Jamaica in 1969, having become used to the Baptist Hymn Book published in 1962, it was interesting to observe the introduction and growing acceptance of the hymn book throughout the island. It was not by choice that the new hymn book was accepted, but by the necessity created by the Revised Hymnal being out of print. My first impression was that the hymn book was admirably suited to the Jamaican pattern of worship, but unfamiliar words and particularly unfamiliar tunes caused much dissatisfaction. This was accentuated by the greatly increased price of the new hymn book. With so little opportunity to train congregations for the introduction of new hymns, mainly because of the lack of musical instruments, this seemed inevitable. One Association was attempting to produce its own hymnal based on the revised book, but it seemed that so much effort was being made to recreate the past rather than producing a hymn book that would make a distinct Caribbean contribution to the world of church music. Jamaicans have the ability to make a worthy musical offering and an effort is being made through the Caribbean Conference of Churches.

The Communion Service

The Communion Service celebrated once a month is held in high esteem. The churches being organized on a circuit basis anticipate

the minister's presence by arranging for the Communion Service on the Sunday of his visit. The presence of an ordained minister is necessary for Communion. The non-arrival of the minister on Communion Sunday would mean the postponement of the Communion Service. It was my experience to find that some deacons held their place at the Communion of such importance that while serving the bread and the wine they felt that each communicant had to receive the elements personally without the deacon relinquishing the plate or the tray. The order at the Communion is very similar to the usual Baptist order in Britain and this is not surprising when it is noted that most ministers use 'Orders and Prayers for Church Worship'. This service book has become readily accepted.

The Christian Year

The Christian year is a strong factor in the church's worship. Christmas services are held on the Sunday nearest Christmas Day and on Christmas Day. Imagine my surprise on being asked to preach at a Christmas Day service at 5 a.m. but I soon discovered that this was the usual time. Good Friday is considered the most holy day of the year with services in all the churches, many of them three hour services, and it is still the custom for most of the people to wear mourning clothes of black or purple for these occasions. The Broadcasting Companies yield to this attitude by broadcasting only suitable music throughout most of the day. Easter Day brings the people rejoicing to church, many wearing white. Baptismal and Communion services are held where possible. The Harvest Festival is also an important feature of any church year.

Historical Antecedents

It is interesting to take a brief look into the historical antecedents of this worship and to consider what factors will bring changes in the future. It is clear that the colonial anglican worship has played its part for it was out of this background that the new independent community arose from slavery. It seemed wise that much of what was familiar to the slave should be retained. There was also the desire of the new communities to outshine their masters. The early establishment of theological education soon after the abolition of slavery meant that the worship of the church was given

a sound Biblical and theological basis. The development of Calabar Theological College into a more inter-denominational setting helped to widen the church's concept of worship. This continues in the United Theological College of the West Indies established in 1967 and will surely be a factor in the shaping of the future worship of the church. In those early days there was also the need to give to the growing Christian community a structure which could be followed in the absence of a trained minister.

African Influences

One further factor must be noted, namely, the African influence. Most people would attribute the enthusiasm and the vitality of the Jamaican Baptist Church worship to their African heritage. I am not so sure that there are emotional factors lingering from such far off sources, but many believe that this has been

suppressed in the past and efforts are being made to recreate this aspect of the Jamaican heritage in the workshop of the church. The drum, the responsive chant and the dance are factors recently introduced into some services.

Training in Worship

A combination of a clear biblical structure linked to a vibrant life is much to be desired and we must look to the Jamaican churches to make a big contribution in the future, but Jamaica and all the Free Churches must take note of the need for training in worship to capitalize on its rich heritage. Let Bishop Lesslie Newbigin make the final comment, "It is one of the tragedies of the situation that the churches which have given their ministers the maximum liberty in liturgical improvisation are those which have given them the minimum training in liturgical principles".

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Acknowledgements

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(6th-23rd January, 1976)

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Relief Work: Anon., £10.00; Anon., £15.00; Anon., £25.00; Anon., £5.00.

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Mrs. D. I. Irwin	200.00
Annie F. Oliver	50.00
Mrs. M. Truelove	85.29
Mr. F. L. Weston	500.00

Missionary Record

Arrivals

22 January. Mrs. P. Riches and family from Yakusu, Zaire.
26 January. Miss M. Mills from Diptipur, India.

Departures

24 January. Miss J. Brown to Kathmandu, Nepal.
26 January. Mr. and Mrs. F. Gouthwaite for Curitiba, Brazil, via U.S.A.

Marriages

8 January. In Cornwall, Rev. Clifford J. Parsons to Miss Mary Rasmussen.
31 January. In Scotland, Mr. Peter J. Cousins to Miss Susan Gemmell, accepted candidates for Brazil.

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ANNUAL BAPTIST ASSEMBLY 1976

Programme of B.M.S. Meetings

Monday, 26 April

11.00 a.m. Introductory Prayer Meeting,
Bloomsbury Chapel,
Conducted by:
Rev. Aneurin Thomas

Tuesday, 27 April

1.30 p.m. Women's Annual Meeting
Westminster Chapel,
Speaker:
Mrs. G. Wotten
(Luncheon at 12.30 p.m. in
the Junior Hall.)

2.45 pm. Annual Members' Meeting,
Westminster Chapel.

4.15 p.m. Medical Tea & Meeting
Westminster Chapel.

Speakers:
Miss Marilyn Mills
Miss Mary Hutchings

Wednesday, 28 April

11.00 a.m. Annual Missionary Service
Westminster Chapel.
Preacher: Rev. Canon
Douglas Webster,
M.A., D.D.

4.30 p.m. Meeting of elected members
of the Committee,
Westminster Chapel.
(Preceded by tea at 4.00 p.m.)

6.45 p.m. Annual Public Meeting
Westminster Chapel.
Chairman: Dr. H. C. Bowker.
Speakers:
Rev. Michael Walton
Rev. E. G. T. Madge

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for overseas.