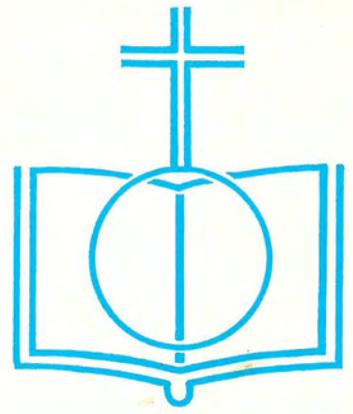


Missionary

# HERALD

The magazine of the Baptist Missionary Society



APRIL 1977

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**EASTER IN NEPAL**

**THROUGH THE JUNGLE IN  
FIFTY DAYS**

**YESU WENA MOYO**

Photograph on front cover by T Reeve

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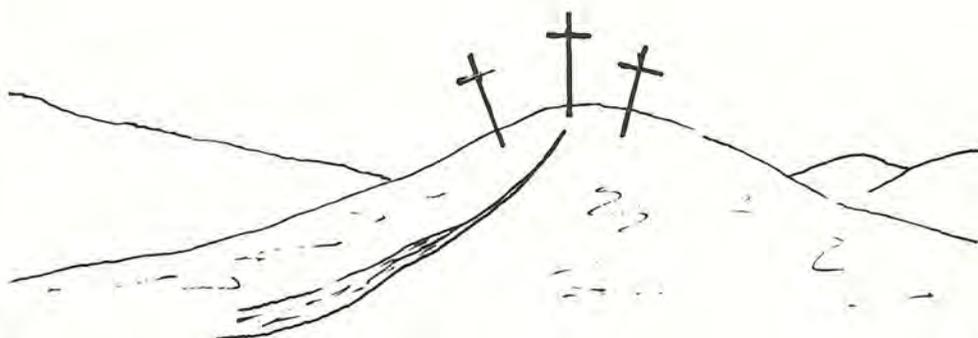
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# COMMENT



Professor John Knox of Union Theological Seminary, has pointed out that all the doctrines about Christ are merely 'an effort to represent the meaning of a salvation which had actually been bestowed and received in the fellowship men had with Christ'.

'When he said, "your sins are forgiven you," the sinner knew, in fact, he was forgiven and that the hold of the enemy had been broken.' Christian theology did not begin at the manger with the belief that Jesus was the Son of God and then move forward to the resurrection as the logical sequel.

It, in fact, began with the startling, unexpected fact of the resurrection itself. An unprecedented experience which led the disciples to work back to discover what manner of person this was who had been born in a stable, had walked among men, had been subjected to the cruelest torture and the vilest death and yet rose from these depths to appear again before them. 'The risen Lord restored the fellowship,' writes D H van Daalen. 'He did it by giving to Peter a new call, by conversing with the disciples, but above all by eating with them. A meal establishes the closest fellowship between people and at those meals where the risen Christ revealed Himself to the disciples their fellowship with the Lord was restored in the fullest sense.'

Still today people are confronted by the risen Lord who calls them by name, as He hailed Mary, and invites them to come in and sup with Him.

It is still possible to know Christ as a living reality and to experience at first hand His incredible power. Indeed if the resurrection is regarded as no more than an event in history some 2000 years ago, then it can have no power in our lives today.

The Christian Church would have faded into oblivion long ago if it had had to exist on no more than the memory of the first disciples. But it endures to this day and grows, reaching out to all parts of the world because the risen Christ, true to His word, has always been present with His people, is so now and will be to the end of time. He calls them, converses with them, and shares a meal with them still.

Our contributors this month share with us their experience of Christ's living presence in different parts of the world. They tell how the theology of the Saviour is being written yet in the lives of people differing widely in their circumstances and environment. People who can witness to a restored fellowship, an enabling power and a living joy in companionship with the One who has promised never to leave them nor forsake them, but to be by their side to the end of the world.

# The Living Lord in Zaire



by Winifred Hadden

Too frequently, in a hot climate such as Zaire's disease suddenly and fatally strikes. Jesus, the Prince of Life, has called His people to the task of caring and healing, but a Christian believer cannot expect that illness, even death, will not visit his family. Liotho was a student at the Yakusu Pastor Training School. His elder brother had died and the family belonging to his brother had been left to the care of Liotho. Now one of these adopted children lay as a little corpse on a low bed in one room of the student's quarters. The fierce fever had at last fled the little body and the child lay at peace.

As the sun set and threw the room into darkness Liotho tried again and again to coax an ancient paraffin lamp into life. At last the old pressure lamp ignited and as the room was flooded with light so it seemed to release a strange tension which we had all shared, and we were able to speak softly together as we felt the comfort of Christ flow in.

Student friends began to come in each with a word of comfort. The whole Christian community visited one by one to clasp the hand, to read from the scriptures or to sing, hour after hour until the time of burial in the little mission cemetery.

## Through the valley

Had we been able to read Liotho's thoughts as he struggled to light the lamp we might have found him asking, 'Is my brother's departed spirit upbraiding me for negligence? Did God not look with favour upon me as I took these little ones into my family? Where is the Master's kindness toward one who has given up all and answered His call to the ministry? Is it really worthwhile? Should I return to my people as they will expect me to do now and teach in the village? Lord, I am afraid and trembling with uncertainty now that death has taken away one of these precious charges left to my care. Help me.'

Then the soft light suddenly conquered the shadows. Christ seemed to enter that room and with His presence there came the strong certainty that this was not the final chapter. That would be written when we were reunited one day with this precious child in the family of God.

During the four years of training that Liotho was at Yakusu two more young children died, and then the wife of one of the students. She was an outstanding Christian. Finally a beloved member of the missionary staff was called home.

But always, always in the sorrow of these events the comfort of the Living Lord was there to hand, sometimes in the most spectacular ways, but mostly just in the quiet assurance that He was there rekindling our faith and increasing our love for one another.

The great Easter truth that Christ is alive, and that whosoever believes in Him, though He die, shall come to life, has transformed the terrible fear and hopelessness which naturally seizes the soul at such moments. The sweetest note in the telling of the gospel is struck with the proclamation that the Risen Christ has conquered death and that



Pastor Gbamo

the grave is impotent. This is the message which has wooed and won the African heart to staunchest loyalty.

Liotho is now the pastor in charge of the large plantation parish at Binga in the Upper River Region. Another of his babes has died, but Christ continues to uphold and strengthen His young servant using him and his wife in a telling way as ones who have been tested and not found wanting.

#### Not two masters

Another of the College's students, its most gifted student, found himself appointed to spend a fortnight at a political congress. He travelled to this conference by plane in the company of the most ardent leaders in the nation's most powerful revolutionary party.

Gbamo was profoundly impressed by the speeches of these men completely dedicated to their aspiring country. He watched and took part in the daily ceremony around the national flag and found a new loyalty born within his soul. Yet he was aware of his loyalty to Christ in whose name he had been baptized.

So, boldly after each session he approached the speakers and attempted to convince them that the authority which they had was delegated to them by God and that they were answerable to Him. Gbamo was an audacious young man but he received a courteous and interested hearing and an opportunity for frank discussion followed.

Gbamo returned to Yakusu to ponder, to write, and to discuss these loyalties with the students in their final year, and he emerged triumphantly sure that the Lordship of the Living Saviour would remain undisputed in his life and that he would best play his part as a loyal citizen of the new regime as he walked and talked with Christ.

Today, with his wife, Gbamo ministers to a huge area of the Upper River forest region which is a difficult task given to him by Christ his proven friend and guide.

#### The Easter programme

The heaviness of spirit brought about by the end of term examinations quickly lifted as the Easter vacation began and the Land Rover lurched forward over the pot-holed road to Irema, 200 kilometres south of Yakusu. Irema stands by the enchanting Lomami River but it is too remote for regular pastoral visits, and so the vacation was used by six students and three members of staff to carry out direct evangelism in the area.

The Irema church welcomed the visitors and eagerly laid before them the plans for the Easter programme. There were to be services in the church, children's meetings in the villages around and women's groups to address. The theme throughout was to be 'Christ is Risen'. What a welcome there was. What crowds. What joy!

#### The perplexity of fear

Then late in the evening of that busy Easter Day five of the school teachers asked us to come with them to a leafy shelter by the river so that they could talk with us.

They had difficulties and fears they wanted to share. They had just learned that their school was to receive a State subsidy and that the teacher's remuneration was to be paid by the government but only if the teachers held certain qualifications. If the teachers did not have these required qualifications then they would be replaced by those who had.

These five men were experienced, and they were Christians who served God through their teaching but they had not attained this government required standard.

'What are we to do?' they asked. 'What will happen to our wives and children? We love our teaching because it is our service to Christ and those who replace us may not be Christians.'

continued over

## The birth of peace

As we listened and talked and tried to counsel these friends, the forest and the river became alive with the stirrings of nature at sun set. The high pitched singing of myriads of insects accompanied by a chorus of croaking frogs and in the background the repetitive calls of some wild creature.

The moon shone silently across the flowing water bringing a silver path to our feet, and gradually we fell silent at the wonder of God's creation. Our problems seemed to matter far less and suddenly one of the teachers said, 'Let us sing God's praise. We have practised this for you!' First one and then another took up the tune until out across the night air in increasing volume went the haunting melody of an Easter hymn and the Lokele words, which are music in themselves, were sung again and again.

'He has triumphed, He is risen, our Saviour.' And in the lantern glow their faces shone with a deep radiance. There followed a prayer of commitment, then off to sleep. Jesus there in the midst had given His resurrection peace and all was well.

These are but three episodes, out of hundreds, which show the Living Christ at work in grace and power dispelling the terror of death to give His own resurrection victory. Pushing through the testings of youthful doubts, aspirations and ambition to woo to consecration to Himself and His purpose of self giving for others. Caring through the bewilderment of change, frustration and poverty – perhaps even persecution – to the building up of the splendid Christian graces of patience, trust and a praising heart.

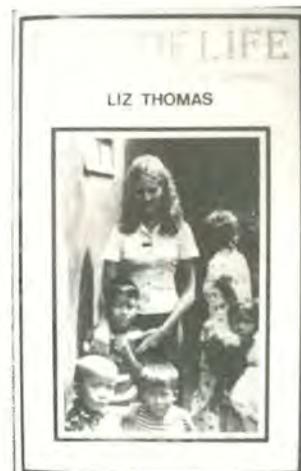
These students, all now pastors serving in many parts of Zaire, will be singing again this Easter their favourite hymn with joyful gusto.

A Toi la gloire,  
O Ressuscité,  
A Toi la victoire  
Pour l'éternité . . .

Thine be the glory,  
Risen, conquering Son,  
Endless is the victory  
Thou o'er death has won.



**Dust of Life** by Liz Thomas. Published: Hamish Hamilton £4.50.



Liz Thomas, moved by the reports of the war in Vietnam, trained as a nurse with the particular purpose of going to Vietnam to do what she could to alleviate the suffering. In September 1972 at the age of 20 she was on her way to help in an orphanage supported by the Ockendon Venture. The book is Liz Thomas' own story of what took place over the next three years until she finally left Saigon in December 1975, over six months after the Communist takeover. As well as her work in the Orphanage she helped in the State hospital, in prisons, refugee camps and behind the fighting zones. She also started the first home for girls in Saigon. She experienced the squalor, sickness and despair brought to the people by war. This despair is exemplified by the title, the name the young inmates of a small Saigon prison gave themselves. This is a shocking yet compelling



Winifred Hadden with Bible students

account of a young woman's courage and determination, inspired by compassion for the suffering caused by war. The suffering of civilians in time of war is put starkly before the reader and gives the author's questions to Western Society particular poignance. 'Did they ever stop to think about the suffering in the world or see it as I had done? Did they ever know about Vietnam, or care?'

D Rogers

**The Psalms** by Peter Levi. Published: Penguin Books 95p.



The author, who is a Jesuit Priest, has mainly followed the traditional Hebrew text in his translation and has put this into the words of our common speech. So for those who are not really at ease with the modern translations, but who feel they would like something a little easier to read and understand, this book of Psalms will be received with pleasure for it contains the dignity of the Authorised Version yet has a freshness about it which comes from using the contemporary way of phrasing. To quote:

The law of the Lord is perfect, it refreshes the soul. The witness of the Lord is steady, it makes the simple wise. The teaching of God is straight, it gladdens the heart.

Psalm 19

Shout to God all the earth, serve God with rejoicing, come to him with shouting and gladness. Know that God is God, he made us, we are his, his people and the sheep of his flock. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him and bless his name. God is good and his mercy is everlasting, and his faithfulness is for every generation.

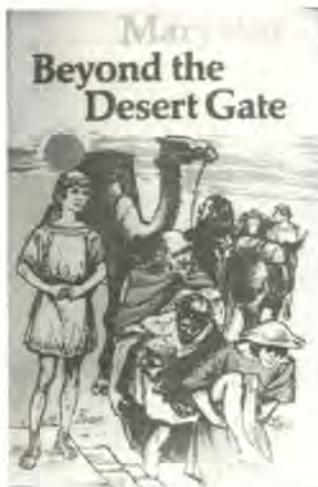
Psalm 100

I shall bless God in every season, and his praises will be always in my mouth.

Psalm 34

DIW

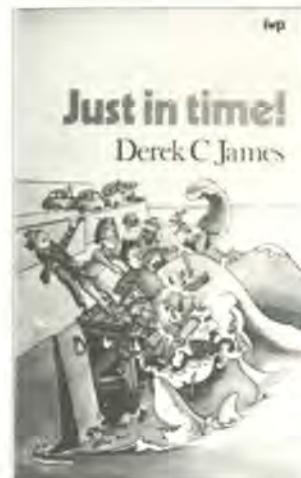
**Beyond the Desert Gate** by Mary Ray. Published: Faber and Faber £2.95.



Set in the year 69AD the author tells the story of a young Greek who finally makes a journey outside his home town of Philadelphia, that is 'Beyond the Desert Gate'. Philokles, Philo as he is known, becomes involved in the political tension between Jew and Roman culminating in the siege of Macherus. The loyalties of Philo and his two brothers are divided between the two warring factions as their grandmother was a Jew. Into their life comes a stranger, staked out under the sun and left for dead by the Roman Legions. He has lost his memory and stays with the family till he can remember who he is. The narrative moves swiftly and all the characters are well drawn. This is a book for those young at heart for whilst it is written for the young teenager Mary Ray never talks down to her readers and this makes it a book to be enjoyed by all who like a historical yarn. Although there is no Christian 'message' in the book it is interesting background to a period when the young church was finding its way in a very difficult world. One of the major characters it transpires is a follower of 'The Way' and a poignant parallel is drawn between a crucifixion that is the climax of the book and the crucifixion of Christ. I thoroughly enjoyed the book and warmly recommend it.

D Rogers

**Just in Time** by Derek C James. Published: Inter Varsity Press 75p.

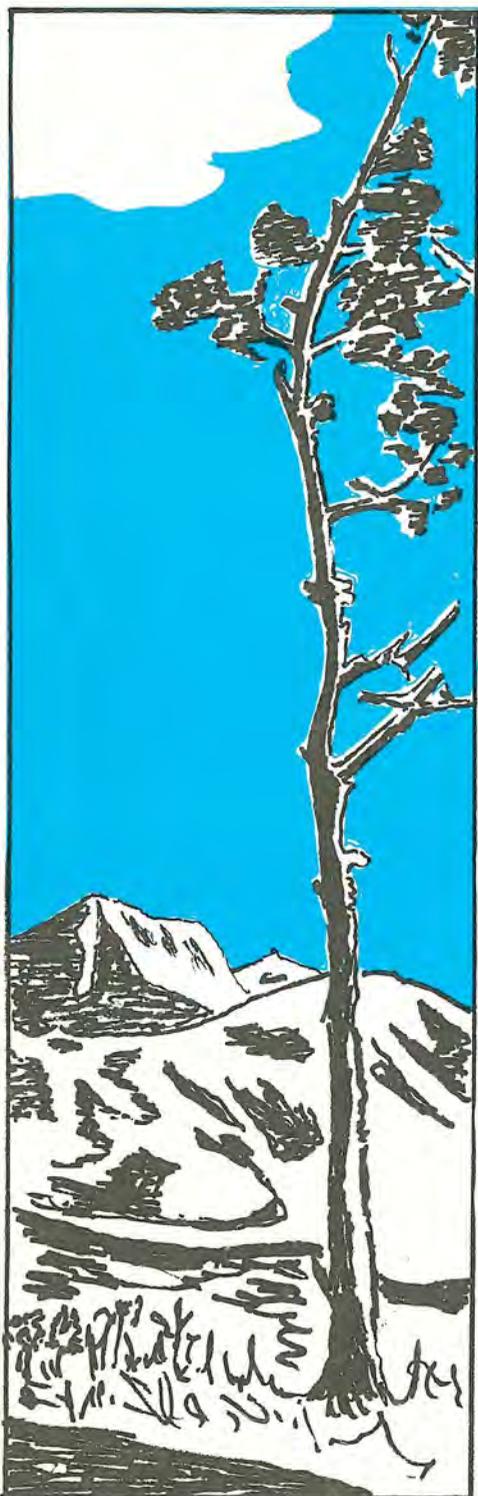


The purpose of this book can be summed up in an alternative title preferred by the author in his preface, 'How to find out all you need to know what a good many other people discovered a long time ago'. Mr James considers the basics of Christianity in a very practical and down to earth way. He begins with discussing the question of whether there is a God and continues along the path of conversion concluding with advice on how to choose a church. Though clearly aimed at the non-Christian I do not believe the various questions are dealt with fully enough to 'convince'. Its greatest use would be for an enquirer who is on the verge of conversion, confirming in his mind the various arguments that he had already begun to accept. However, even the converted can gain a lot from reading this book. Mr James says much that is thought provoking. This is especially true in the chapter where he gives advice to the new convert on how not to feel too much like a fish out of water when joining with other Christians. One is made to consider whether this is not the fault of the churches. Certainly our entrenched ideas can be off putting at times. This little book does not attempt to give the whole answer to all the questions that could be asked, rather by the use of anecdote and a light hearted style of writing it tries to give sound advice to the enquirer who is willing to listen. The book is very readable and should be bought by the 'converted' to pass on to those who are in need of such a guide.

D Rogers

# EASTER IN NEPAL

by Anna Weir, Sister at Okaldhunga Hospital



Placed in rather an isolated part of the country, rarely stimulated by visits from other Christians, national or foreign, a tiny branch of the church can easily stagnate. Its few members work together day by day, at the same kind of work, they worship together week by week, become used to one another and often fail to come up to what they expect of each other. In such a situation we must strive to 'live together in unity'.

## Harmony through work

As everywhere, life has its barren stretches, and relationships sometimes become strained. Perhaps this is especially true in a place like Okaldhunga when, although few in number, the community is mostly made up of people of different nationalities and not always too much at ease in another's languages. However, the harmony that is often achieved and the ability to work together and to feel concern for one another is a matter for praise. In the good times we need to be saved from the satisfaction that prevents new effort, and in the arid spells to 'remember the day of old', to 'meditate on all His works', and to continue to love one another.

## Realities of life

In this pattern of life the keeping of the Christian festivals has perhaps even more significance than in the city with its diversions and various interests within and without the church. Further, I am sure that an underdeveloped country where the realities of life are less clouded, and the basic needs of life are always to the fore in men's minds, the message of hope seems more real and urgent. We are enabled to glimpse anew the glory beyond the current reality of monotony and struggles which we see going on all around us. You may say this is experienced or should be experienced all the year through. It's true of course, but the main events of the calendar seem to be useful to us too, adding joy, deepening faith, and bringing us back to the basics of what we believe.



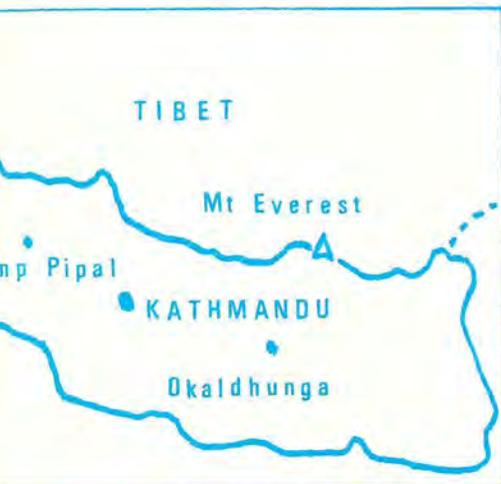
Wherever there are churches in the United Kingdom, Good Friday and Easter services are held, and the congregations look forward to attending special events and hearing special speakers. Sometimes I think we in Nepal are fortunate in that we have just the celebration itself to look forward to, although we sometimes feel the need to hear a fresh message and would enjoy fellowship with other friends at that time.

## Singing in the rain

Nevertheless, even if a little cut off, we are still subject to the established traditions, and it's amazing how quickly they are established even in our fairly young situation. Easter in Nepal, in the various places where the church exists, usually begins with a sunrise service on the Sunday morning. It always seems appropriate to begin this first day praising God for His love to us in the resurrection, in all the beauty of His creation. Accordingly, last year despite pouring rain our little congregation in Okaldhunga, armed with Bibles, hymn books, and umbrellas, tramped out via the rice fields and, trying to shelter by some rocks, we held our service of praise. There we sang the Easter hymns and heard the Easter story told by one of our church members. The Nepalis are a hardy race, so undeterred by the deluge the service

was followed by a time of fellowship, picnicking on an Indian bread called *cell roti*, which is a favourite delicacy and this is accompanied by very sweet tea.

Sometimes we feel far from anywhere, but we represent many nations, Nepal, Tibet, Japan, Canada, England and Scotland, and this year they will be augmented by a German and a Finn. This in itself is a constant reminder that we are part of something much bigger than our own little local gathering. In some ways our effort seemed a little pathetic. Not more than twenty



people, including children, rather bedraggled, singing somewhat raggedly, 'He rose again for you'. These words had deep meaning for some but for others they were merely a lovely thought.

#### A sense of what is vital

It is a fact that while others seem to grasp something of the spirit of Christmas, Easter interests them little, even though they may have heard the message many times, and joined with us in the annual celebration. This must surely be a reflection of our western style Christianity. Christ risen does not appear to excite in us the same anticipation and joy as Christ born. Nevertheless most of us seemed conscious of a common bond binding us all as we worshipped the Godhead and realised the need for new beginnings with God and with one another. Moreover we appreciated the importance of retaining and acting on these feelings through the coming year.

Living in such a lovely country, we were able to marvel on that day, as on many others, at the wonder of God's creation. To many of us, in difficult times, the ever changing beauty of the scenery around us acts as a great solace though we feel very small in the vastness of it all, knowing that

we are actively serving in the creation. The message of Easter is that God cares for us however small we feel.

#### Our eyes are opened

In the evening we take communion in the room set aside as the church room. Here in the intimacy of this hour, God draws us closer to Himself and we become conscious of how little we know of another person's heart or of how little we bear one another's burdens. How easy it is to retreat into one's own private life and escape the need to reach out to the others. How quickly we feel irritation in place of understanding for each other's weakness and not conscious enough of our own. Again we realise something of our humanity and our relationship to God, knowing both what that relationship actually is and what it should be, and can be.

Of course, all through the Easter season the ordinary work of the dispensary goes on. This is appropriate. Where we serve under an agreement with the authorities the church is called to serve mainly in the working day tasks. These tasks easily degenerate into dull routine. We need many timely reminders, to illuminate them both for ourselves and those with whom we work, that our burden is meant to be light.

#### The light still shines

Whatever else they may do over the Easter season, all the congregations of Nepal remember those solitary Christians scattered throughout the country and completely isolated from all fellowship with others, yet remaining faithful. May you also remember them this year that they may have joy in the midst of loneliness, and be strengthened in their faith.

At Easter too, our thoughts turn to home, to family and the traditional services, to spring and all things new yet familiar. In Nepal, as at home, for most people it is a non event. Life goes on as usual seemingly untouched and unaffected by it all. To me it is always an amazing thought that in the midst of all the indifference and sometimes hostility the light shines on and nothing can quench it, whatever we may feel or see. That is an important reality for those who have faith. The truth of the risen Christ, who through the Holy Spirit is with us daily in the knowledge we want others to have and in the message God uses us to spread.



A patient at Okaldhunga Hospital



Sister Anna Weir

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## A MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE

*Vision*, the magazine of the Australian Baptist Missionary Society, reports that Malvern Baptist Church in Melbourne is the centre of a remarkable missionary enterprise. Every week services conducted by the fellowship are beamed by radio across the entire Soviet Union. A weekly half hour devotional programme is recorded and transmitted by Trans World Radio, Monte Carlo, and a one hour church service from the church is broadcast via Friendship Radio in San Francisco. What news there is from Russia praises the broadcasts and stresses their importance to Christians in that country.

## SRI LANKA

Eric Sutton Smith, writing about his work in the Pallehelle prison, tells us that one ex Hindu and four ex Buddhists are ready for baptism. 16 faithful and keen prisoners attend Saturday evening Bible studies and discussions on the basis of Christianity, and more are wishing to join the group. In their spare time many of the prisoners are making bricks for their new chapel.

## WELL DONE!

Mr D E Cross has recently relinquished his responsibility as BMS secretary of his church at Hill Street, Swadlincote, Burton upon Trent, due to age and health. Mr Cross has faithfully served his church in various capacities for many years and has been BMS secretary for 58 years. We are grateful to God for friends like Mr Cross who give of their time and their talents in the work of the Society in their home church.

## BAPTISTS IN PORTUGAL

Mr and Mrs P Rowley are members of the International Fellowship. Mr Rowley has responsibility for two factories in Portugal, one a resin factory and the other a wood mill. They attend the Baptist church in Bagra once a month, and on the other Sundays have a Sunday School in their own home. They will shortly be moving to Viana do Castelo and hope to attend the church there.

## FROM CHILE

Another member of the International Fellowship is Mr Nigel Strang. He has been very busy with Outreach which has meant providing gas stoves, powdered milk, and vitamin pills to assist in supplying nutritional meals to local children; distributing 100 New Testaments to schools and Catholic or Evangelical Padres, and helping in dental care. The church at Santiago is experimenting with the All Age Sunday School system and Nigel will be helping in this.

## A MORAL ISSUE

Rev T Bokeleale, the President of the Church of Christ of Zaire, says the government of Zaire has returned the schools to the churches, not for economic reasons, but because morals and discipline in the schools has declined since they were taken over some two years ago, and there has been public concern over this.

Personnel to staff the schools, now in church hands again, will be recruited first from Zaire, but also, if necessary, from abroad.

## HAVE YOU A ROPEHOLDERS' CLUB IN YOUR CHURCH? WHAT IS IT?

It is a Club for boys and girls aged 8 to 13 years and members are asked to do four things:

**STUDY** to learn more about mission, the BMS and its work.

**PRAY** for the Society and the work of missionaries and Christians in the churches overseas.

**GIVE** what they can to help the work.

**SERVE** the Society in any way they can.

If you would like to know more about the Club write to Mrs Janet Bartrop, c/o Mission House, for details.

## STILL BROADCASTING

OIA News Service claims that Radio Ecclesia in Luanda, Angola, is still broadcasting religious programmes 24 hours a day with no interruption, but since the government has prohibited commercial advertising this station is facing financial difficulties.

## LOOK!

The BMS magazine for children, aged 8 to 12 years, is published monthly, at 3p a copy. It contains eight pages of stories, competitions and information about missionary work. Ideal for using with your Sunday School group for activity work, or with your weekly youth organization. Write to the BMS Young People's Department for sample copies.

THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY HAD A  
**£37,500 deficit**  
 LAST YEAR

**How did it happen?**

Rampant inflation in countries where we work caused increased costs and the support from the churches at home, though marginally up on the previous year's giving, was much less than hoped for.

**What does it mean?**

The reserves of the Society are reduced at a time when they ought to be increased.

Also the work may need to be curtailed and opportunities left unused.

**What must be done?**

The support from the churches must be raised by at least 26% on last year's giving if a really serious situation is to be avoided this year.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Secretaries acknowledge with grateful thanks the following legacies and gifts sent anonymously or without address. (6 January-10 February, 1977)

**General Work:** Anon: £5.00; Anon: £30.00; Anon: £3.00; Anon: £1.00; Anon: £0.15; Anon: (R P) £5.00; Anon: £5.00; Anon: £30.00; Anon: £0.22; Anon: £1.00; Anon: (L & K) £8.00; Anon: £0.60.

**Medical Work:** Anon: £5.00; Anon: £2.00; Anon: £5.00; Anon: £2.50. Correction — Anon: £7.00. 'In loving memory of Margaret and Arthur — MMF'.

**Agricultural Work:** Anon:(Folkestone) £5.00; Anon: (Vernon) £4.00.

**Relief Work:** Anon: £10.00; Anon: £2.50.

**Legacies**

Miss K Cook	£ p
Mr A J Hedley	100.00
Mrs G A Hilton	250.00
Mrs P Holmes	400.00
Rev C S Lower	25.00
Miss G I Makepeace	10.00
Mr J D McMillan	2000.00
Mr A B Palmer	500.00
Mr W Parry	1407.59
Mrs J L Reynolds	1000.00
Mrs M M Shepherd	100.00
Miss R G Stevenson	1008.50
Mr W C Tanner	500.00
Miss E H M Tebbutt	500.00
Mrs M E M Tomkins	200.00
Mr F G Wheeler	1000.00
	100.00

**MISSIONARY MOVEMENTS**

**Arrivals**

Mr O W Clark on 18 January from CECO Kimpese, Zaire.

Miss S M LeQuesne on 30 January from Dacca, Bangladesh.

Mr and Mrs D B Pendrill on 1 February from Pimu, Zaire.

**Departures**

Miss E Talbot on 11 January for Kathmandu, Nepal.

Rev D W F Jelleyman on 16 January for UTCWI, Kingston, Jamaica.

Rev J and Mrs Passmore, Dr Suzanne Roberts, and Miss M Wood on 26 January for Barisal, Bangladesh, for language study.

Miss L Howes on 28 January for Kathmandu, Nepal.

Mr O W Clark on 6 February for CECO Kimpese, Zaire.

**Deaths**

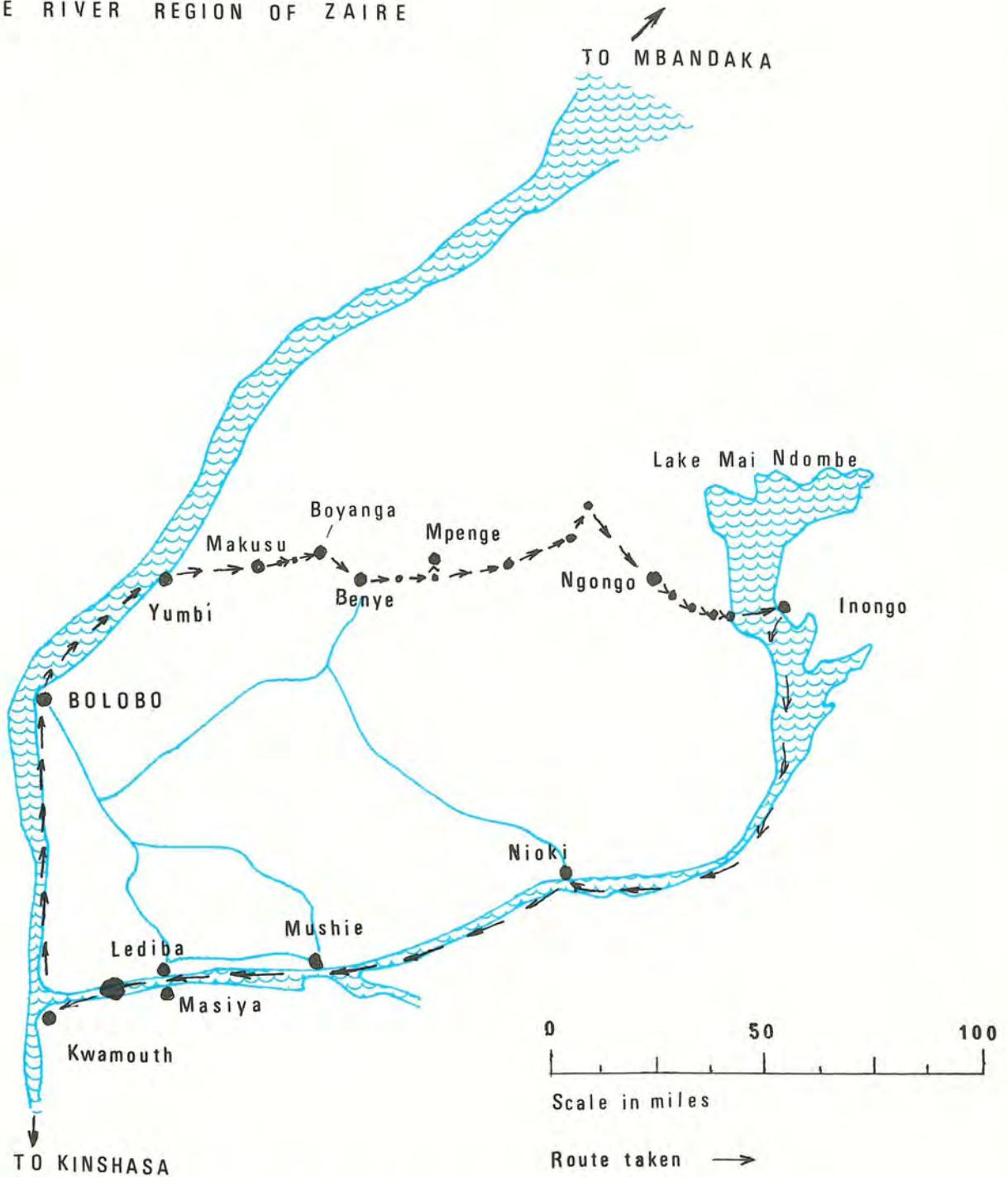
In Bristol, on 7 January, Miss Iris Doreen Johnson, aged 72; India Mission 1934-1966.

In Dereham, on 15 January, Mrs Bertha Joy Pitkethly (wife of Mr G Ian Pitkethly), aged 46; Angola/Zaire Missions 1959-1975.

In hospital, on 7 February, after road accident, Miss Christina Manson, aged 76; India/Bangladesh Missions 1923-1962.

# THROUGH THE JUNGLE

THE MIDDLE RIVER REGION OF ZAIRE



# IN FIFTY DAYS

Places visited •

by Georgina McKenzie



**Georgina MacKenzie with two nurses**

It's six o'clock in the morning, just at first light in Central Africa, as we make our way down to the banks of the River Zaire at Bolobo. Our group comprises six Bible school students and their director, three nurses from the hospital, and myself. We are starting on a journey which will take some of us many hundreds of miles into the heart of the dense equatorial forest; a journey that will last about 50 days and involve us in travel by every means of transport available. By canoe, bicycle, landrover, river boat and on foot. We go to take some medical aid to outlying areas, but above all to proclaim the Gospel of Christ.

#### **We herald our coming**

Our first stage is by canoe from Bolobo to a village up river at Yumbi. We set out at six but did not get away till about nine. Three hours late! But that's not bad for Africans who have no sense of punctuality and no watches! As we travel up river the sun becomes hotter and hotter and we feel sleepier and sleepier. But the Bible students start singing as we pass various villages on the way. The people rush down to the banks to wave and to call a greeting. '*Yesu ndeko na bolingo*' we sing, telling all who can hear about the love of Jesus for them. Then the chorus echoes back from the folk on the



**A heavily laden canoe**

bank '*Ngai nalingi Nkolo Yesu*' I love the name of Jesus. Already we are making our witness and showing why we are on our journey. We arrive at Yumbi at about three o'clock in the afternoon and what a welcome there is. Children run out of their classrooms to greet us, much to the consternation of the teachers. Villagers hurry from the market eager to carry our luggage up the hill to the pastor's house where we are given chairs to sit and rest, even though we've been sitting all day in the canoe! The whole village comes to look at us and one hears the children talking about the '*mondele*' (white person) who has come to stay. The women bustle around and soon we all sit down to a feast of monkey stew, fried bananas, and *kwanga* the local food which comes from manioc roots and is about 99% carbohydrate, rather like a solid lump of porridge. But it's amazing what one can eat when one's really hungry! When we have fed and rested, we call together the pastor and deacons for prayer and to discuss the programme for the mission. The church at Yumbi has been established for many years but recently there has been much backsliding amongst the members. The team therefore decide that, as well as holding special services, we will visit from house to house especially where there are those known to have had an interest in the church. It is then that we meet many of the problems peculiar to the church in Zaire. One woman was a church member but is now excluded because her parents have married her to a man who already has one wife. A man is out of church membership because his wife left him ten years ago and he has married again making, technically, a polygamous marriage. Another has been found drinking alcohol and is out of the church. Then there is a woman who says she can no longer believe in God because all her five children have died . . . so the stories go on. Each of them heartrending, and each of them calling for a loving understanding. What a joy it was to see some of the young Bible students using so much love and concern in their approach to these people, and to see their longing to reveal the love of God to all.

#### **Self help**

All too soon our time at Yumbi was over. We left the Bible students to return to their classes in Bolobo, while the nurses and I continued by canoe through tributaries of the River Zaire, through marsh lands and through a forest growing in the water. Finally we walked about eight miles to arrive at the village of Makasu. This is the main village of the area where the Nunu tribe live. Again we were welcomed warmly, so



**Welcome at Makasu**

warmly, in fact, that we had to spend the night singing and dancing with the villagers! One of our reasons for going to Makasu was to visit the dispensary, so next day we donned our white overalls and went to the beautiful new dispensary building. This was built entirely by the village folk, collecting a small amount from everyone who would benefit from a new building. The men of the village laboured to fetch materials from the forest and to build this symbol of their concern for their own people. Nor was this the end of their labours, they are now building a new house in which minor operations can take place. The dispensary is manned by a nurse from Bolobo and his is the only medical help for many, many miles. Two of the student nurses from our party were to stay and help at the dispensary for six weeks, relieving the nurse in charge of some of the night calls and some of the routine work. Whilst there I also worked in some of the clinics, seeing cases which the nurse had saved for me. He is only a trained auxiliary nurse and yet the lives of so many depend on him. He has to diagnose their problems, deliver their children, and do minor operations himself. What nurse in Britain would expect to do half what he does? How desperately we need a full time Public Health nurse based at Bolobo. One who can



**The new dispensary at Makasu**

# THROUGH THE JUNGLE IN FIFTY DAYS (continued)



**Nkoko Bopaya**

regularly visit the villages and the dispensaries where so little medical aid is available.

## Cyclist at 85

But we could not stay at Makasu so, with a nurse, and accompanied by Nkoko Bopaya, we continued our travels through the region by bicycle. Nkoko Bopaya is a man about 85 years old who is 'not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ', a real saint. I often think how the Apostle Paul would have admired this elderly man who is like a loving grandfather to us missionaries, and who was willing to come so far with us by bicycle so that we could together preach the Good

News of Jesus Christ. From village to village we travelled, sometimes journeying all day to arrive at the next village. At times it meant arriving at nightfall, then the services had to be held by the light of the paraffin lamps. What joy all these people showed when they met together to hear God's word. How thirsty they are for the teaching, but how many there are who have never heard the name of Jesus. How can they hear without a preacher?

So we journeyed on through the Banunu tribe, through the Basengeli territory, eventually reaching the village of Mpengi, where for the moment our travels by cycle were over. We rested there for a few days in the home of one of my African families, where again we enjoyed rich fellowship with God's people. Then on by landrover through many other places, to Lake Mai-Ndombe, which formerly was called *Lac Léopold II*.

## Revival

In each village the welcome was warm, and when the time came to move on we left always feeling 'It was good to have been here'. For the next stage of the journey we left the landrover and travelled by water once more, down through the lake to Nioki and to Mushie. It was a special thrill to visit



**The landrover stuck**

again the church in Mushie on Easter Day and to share the joy of the Resurrection. Two years ago this church had been struggling. Now it is indeed alive. We were greeted with news of people coming to know Christ, and with lives re-dedicated to the Master's service and above all of a new vision of mission to the tribes in the area.

So we made our way back to Bolobo by canoe and by river boat. As we drew into the landing stage we were greeted by the folk there with the traditional greetings, *Nsango nini?* What news? . . . News of the joy of Christian fellowship; news of people coming to a deeper knowledge of Christ; news of people hearing the name of Jesus for the first time; news, too, of needy people stranded from medical help; news of the need for more people to go to these villages; news of a new hospital being built by the church at Ngongo, but no nurses or doctors . . .

This is news — What is our response?



**River boat**

# YESU WENA MOYO

(JESUS IS ALIVE)

from letters written by Pauline Weatherby  
and Gwen Hunter

All thoughts were of Easter Day, the great day of celebration, as we moved toward it through a week of preparatory devotional meetings covering the last week of our Lord's life here on earth.

At last it came and there was an air of expectant excitement as we prepared for our sunrise service to be held at 5.30 a.m. The air was filled with the noise of crickets and croaking frogs as the members made their way across the fields to the football pitch where the service was to be held.

We could not see the sun. A heavy cloud bank obscured it from view and underfoot the ground was very wet. But nothing could dampen our joy as we experienced the thrill the Marys must have known on finding the empty tomb, and realising that the Lord had indeed arisen.

The pastor led us in worship and we sang the first hymn in French. As the service moved to a period of open prayer the congregation were invited to pray in the language which was most natural to them. From prayer we moved into a time of praise, when the singing was mostly in Kikongo, and this was followed by a short talk. 'The Lord is risen!' exulted the pastor, and a great shout echoed back, 'He is risen indeed' as the people made their own convinced testimony, and the obvious joy of everyone there was reflected in their faces.

Then the whole company moved into a circle, holding hands, and sang a song about the oneness which we have in Christ Jesus. Not a passive rendering, but one in which the words were emphasised with actions.

'Jesus is alive,' whispered one to another, and this truth was taken up and passed on. What great news this is, and what a wonderful start to an Easter Day.



The site of the service

## EASTER

I got me flowers to straw Thy way,  
I got me boughs off many a tree;  
But Thou wast up by break of day,  
And brought'st Thy sweets along with  
Thee.

Yet though my flowers be lost, they say  
A heart can never come too late;  
Teach it to sing Thy praise this day,  
And then this day my life shall date.

# Thoughts for Easter

poems by  
George Herbert



St James Church, Franz Josef Glacier,  
New Zealand

## LOVE

Love bade me welcome; yet my soul drew  
back,  
Guilty of dust and sin.  
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow  
slack  
From my first entrance in,  
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning  
If I lack'd anything.

'A guest,' I answer'd, 'worthy to be here:'  
Love said, 'You shall be he.'  
'I, the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear,  
I cannot look on Thee.'  
Love took my hand and smiling did reply,  
'Who made the eyes but I?'

'Truth, Lord; but I have marr'd them:  
let my shame  
Go where it doth deserve.'  
'And know you not,' says Love, 'Who bore  
the blame?'  
'My dear, then I will serve.'  
'You must sit down,' says Love, 'and taste  
my meat.'  
So I did sit and eat.

# ANNUAL BAPTIST ASSEMBLY 1977

## PROGRAMME OF BMS MEETINGS AT NOTTINGHAM UNIVERSITY

### Monday, 18 April

5.00 p.m. INTRODUCTORY PRAYER MEETING  
The Great Hall  
*Conducted by:*  
Dr John F Carrington

### Tuesday, 19 April

2.00 p.m. WOMEN'S ANNUAL MEETING  
The Sports Centre  
*Speaker:* Miss Phyllis Gilbert

4.00 p.m. MEDICAL MEETING  
The Portland Lecture Hall  
*Chairman:* Dr Ian Flowers  
*Speaker:* Miss Kathleen Ince

### Wednesday, 20 April

9.15 a.m. ANNUAL MISSIONARY SERVICE  
The Sports Centre  
*Preacher:* Rev Dafydd G Davies, BA, BD

11.15 a.m. ANNUAL MEMBERS' MEETING  
The Sports Centre

8.00 p.m. ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING  
The Sports Centre  
*Chairman:* Rev E G T Madge  
*Speakers:* Miss Rosalie Harris  
Mr Stanley Mudd  
Valediction of Missionaries for overseas

### Thursday, 21 April

1.30 p.m. Meeting of elected members of  
the Committee  
Nightingale Hall