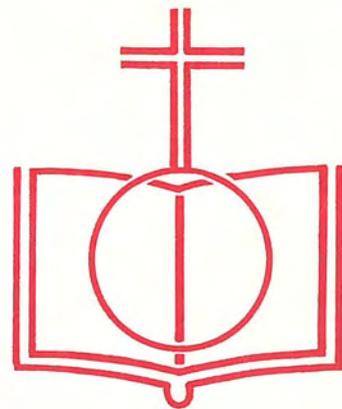


Missionary

HERALD

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SEPTEMBER 1977

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LIVING IN DACCA



*Tea time on the veranda and street scene
in Dacca*

by Susan Le Quesne

It was just three years ago that I and my colleague, Veronica Campbell, moved out from the old mission compound at Sadarghat and came to live in a rented house in a newer part of Dacca. It has been refreshing to get away from the compound and to have as neighbours some Muslims as well as Christians. The move has also brought us nearer to many of the folk with whom we work, and the house has proved a good centre, not only for us, but also for the many visitors who come.

The longer one lives in a place the more one gets involved with it, and as I look back over 15 years in Dacca I realize how my contacts, interests and opportunities have widened. It is difficult to say exactly what I do as each day is different, and very often plans have to be changed when something new arises. But there are main areas in which I am involved that I would like to share with you now.

Bengali determination

Shortly after I came to Dacca a YWCA was formed here and I have been interested in

this right from the beginning. It has been thrilling to see the way in which it has developed. Having started as a group largely dependent on expatriates it became a very diminished but determined band of Bengali women yet has now grown almost beyond recognition, having its own property and expanding programme of service which reaches out beyond Dacca. I have held various posts, and still serve on the Board of Management, but seek to play a back-up role where help is needed.

Learning about education

When the school for missionaries' children was opened I was asked to be Secretary/Treasurer. I am no educationalist so this has been very much a learning experience for me. I am also involved in the organization of Bengali exams, held twice a year, through the Bangladesh Language Examination Board. The necessity for a fluent grasp of the language has become increasingly clear to us. Such a mastery of the native tongue is essential if one is truly to relate to people and share with them the love of God.

Sharing Christ

Whenever possible I like to get out and visit the people in their own homes. I believe there is real value in this, and by just sitting and chatting, seeking to understand their joys and sorrows, genuine friendships have been forged between us. Many a time I have been humbled by the problems they have shared with me, and, in turn, I have had opportunities to share with them what I believe to be the Christian way.

Inevitably in the capital city there are administrative jobs to be done and I find myself kept busy in obtaining visas, making travel arrangements, meeting people and seeing them off. Then there are the many visitors that we have coming and going all the while.

Job satisfaction

Yes, a very full and varied life, in which I am constantly challenged by my failure to be what Christ wants me to be. Yet I rejoice in the privilege of living and working here, in seeking to share the forgiveness and new life which is ours, and for all men, in Christ.

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COMMENT

In the light of so much to discourage us the population explosion, especially in India and Bangladesh, with each Christian having to make his or her witness before vast numbers: with the closing doors and the difficulties faced in obtaining visas for entering some spheres, together with the resurgence of national religions and the spread of communism, the Church is faced with a number of questions. What is the best strategy to use for the propagation of the gospel? Will it be possible to carry on missionary work along New Testament lines in the future? Should we spend more of the money available to us on, say, broadcasting or the printing of Christian literature so that we can reach so many more than on the one-to-one basis?

These and many more questions have to be faced. The secretary of the Australian Baptist Missionary Society, Rev John Williams speaking to the General Committee of our Society, said he felt it was wrong to withdraw from evangelizing on the mission field and leave it, as some were suggesting, to the national believers to convert their fellow countrymen. He believed that it was not enough for the missionary to devote himself solely to a teaching ministry for clearly the risen Head of the Church expected his followers to 'Go . . . teach . . . baptize'.

'If the time had come for us to withdraw in certain areas,' he said, 'then we should, as it were, withdraw horizontally and not vertically.'

The phenomenal spread of the gospel after Pentecost is accounted for by the working of a risen Christ. There was little literature and no broadcasting. The good news was spread by individuals telling others about

the Lord. Having experienced the saving power of Jesus they could not refrain from telling their neighbour, and yet the number engaged in spreading the gospel was, from a man's point of view, absurdly small.

Many who have written about the apostle Paul have pointed out what a great missionary strategist he was and have instanced as part of his strategy his repeated practice of establishing a fellowship of believers in the great cities of the world. They have pointed out that Corinth, Philippi, Thessalonica, Colosse and the other sites of the New Testament churches were astride the great trade routes of the Roman Empire with their constant movement of people into and out of these places. Therefore the witness of active Christians in these towns was naturally carried further by caravans and ships as travellers heard, and then repeated what they had been told.

One commentator has claimed that often the church has seemingly failed in this place or that because it attempted to make its witness in some small out of the way place instead of in some great strategic centre where people met and went their way bearing news of the things they had seen and heard.

So this month we have focussed on a city. The city of Dacca, capital of Bangladesh, and we look at the witness which is being made in that place.

'What God requires of His whole church now, as of the early Christians, is total obedience to His command to evangelize the world and at any cost. We have no options. This has always been, and remains the *raison d'être* of the church.' (Leslie Lyall in *A World to Win*.)



The City of a Tho

by Susan Le Quesne

Dacca was only a provincial town at the time the Indian sub-continent was divided in 1947, but when East Pakistan came into being then Dacca expanded to become the provincial capital. With the birth of Bangladesh in December 1971 it became the capital of the new State and grew even more important.

No shortage of mosques

This centre of the nation's life has been described as 'the city of a thousand mosques'. I, personally, have never counted them but there are certainly very many. Big ones like the University mosque or the central one at Baitul Mukurram and little ones which can be seen down back streets, but each summoning the faithful to worship five times a day at the hours of prayer.

In the early morning the calls to prayer come floating clearly over the city as it awakes to a new day and on Muslim festivals, especially that of Eid-ul-Fitr at the end of the holy month of Ramzan, the crowds of worshippers spill out across the roadways and fill the sports grounds. A very visible reminder that the vast majority of people in Bangladesh, at least 85 per cent, are Muslims.

The old has disappeared

To anyone returning to Dacca now, having left it a decade ago, the changes and developments must be very obvious. As the traveller leaves the airport the improvement in the roads is immediately noticeable. They have been re-surfaced with white lines and pedestrian crossings painted on them. True, as in many other countries, some other department may come along and dig the new road up again to lay some cable or pipe, but that's life.



The traffic police come on duty in the early morning and remain on duty until late in the evening making great efforts to enforce more obedience to the road laws so that the traffic will flow more freely.

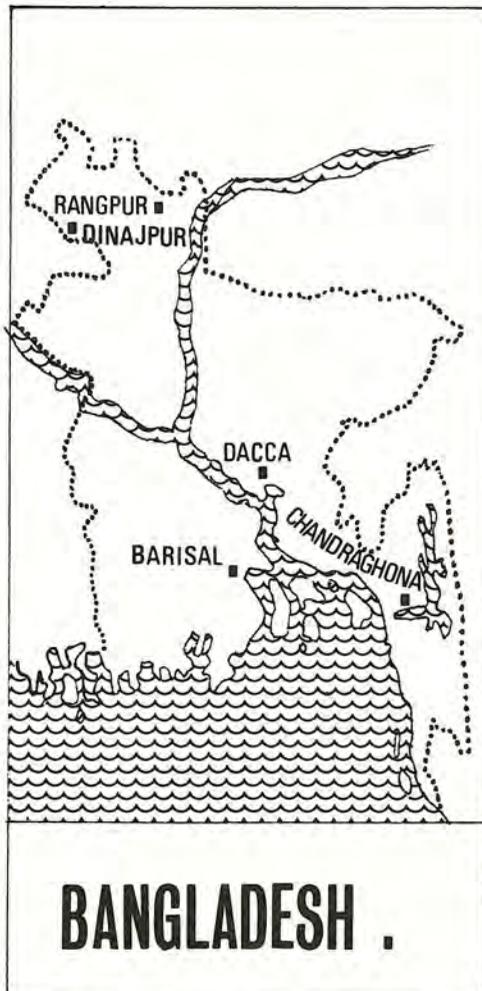
Property development

In all areas of the city, apart from the old town, a great deal of building is taking place. In the business area multi-storey office blocks are appearing. New shopping precincts with parking spaces are being created and *pukka*, that is brick built instead of the former *kutchra* or tin and bamboo, shops are being built and one or two large modern hotels are being erected. Everywhere houses are going up as vacant plots are being built on in the residential areas and the suburbs of the city are stretching further and further out. Even in the old town some areas are being cleared to make way for wider roads and a huge new airport is being constructed 16 miles from the city in order to accommodate the large jet aircraft of modern air transport.

An international centre

Compared with the sleepy city of twenty years ago the place is now humming with activity because many international business concerns and organizations have offices and personnel here.

There has been an increase in the number of schools and colleges and in these areas at certain times of the day the locality is teeming with students on their way to classes. While the country was still East Pakistan an area of Dacca was known as the 'Second Capital' because this was being developed with administrative offices. Now that Dacca is the capital of Bangladesh this development has



usand Mosques



continued because government administration has increased and therefore more offices and official accommodation has been required. In the middle of this area a new Assembly Hall is nearing completion.

Here to stay

In the aftermath of the war of liberation there were superabundant needs and opportunities for social and uplift schemes. So since 1972 many new Christian organizations, especially those concerned with relief and development, together with missionary societies have begun work in Bangladesh and set up offices in the capital. Many of them have a number of staff centred on Dacca.

Some short term relief has changed into long term projects and some organizations which came to help in an emergency situation have now adopted permanent programmes. A few years back it was possible to know all the Christian workers who had come to Dacca at the call of Christ. Now it is impossible to count them, let alone know them. This mushrooming of Christian bodies has inevitably led to tensions and, alas, confusion in the minds of national Christians. New organizations which offer larger salaries can cause problems for long established church bodies and so on, but there is yet a very real sense of fellowship present.

The meeting point

The National Council of Churches has its headquarters in Dacca. It serves as a meeting place and focal point for many church bodies in Bangladesh and on occasions acts as the mouthpiece on behalf of the Christians in this country. It works in many different areas of the church's life. Women's work,



Rajan Baroi, Secretary of Bangladesh Sangha



Road making in Dacca

Youth and Sunday School, social concerns, economic development, and family planning. All of these are aimed at service in the name of Christ and to the building up of the church.

There is good co-operation among the churches of the city and this produces such united efforts as the Sunrise Service in the main park on Easter morning. At the present time all are engaged in the 'Dacca Penetration Plan' through which Christian literature is being put into every home in the city.

A change is needed

The BMS began work in Dacca in the early years of the 19th century and there is still the original compound in old Dacca at Sadarghat. In days gone by this was the area where the District Commissioner and many high officials lived, but some of the early missionaries lived in other parts of the old city. The first Baptist Church in Dacca, originally for an English speaking congregation, is on that Sadarghat compound and is the central church of the Bangladesh Baptist *Sangha* (Union) in Dacca. In the beginning the members of the church would all have lived fairly near in the old city but as the city has grown and spread, so the Christians have become a much more scattered community. Some now live in new areas up to ten miles away from Sadarghat.

Distance, with the problems and expense of transport have made it vital and necessary to establish churches in the new areas of Dacca. A permanent site on which a church can be the focal point of Christian living is urgently necessary in such areas together with a well qualified pastor to nurture the Christians.

The City of a Thousand Mosques

(Continued from previous page)

The General Secretary of the Bangladesh Baptist *Sangha* is the Rev Rajan Baroi who lives with his family on the Sadarghat compound where the headquarters of the *Sangha* is located. From his office he maintains contact with the churches and institutions in various parts of the country. Sadarghat in the old days, was very much at the heart of the city and near the centre of communications because it is near the terminal for the launches arriving from other parts of Bangladesh. But today other forms of transport such as road and air are taking over and so the hub of the city has moved. This has created a problem for the *Sangha* as, all the main headquarters of the other church groups and organizations are in the new centre and it feels a need to be near them. It is therefore in the process of selling part of the old compound and seeking a site in the new area of Dacca to develop a headquarters complex.

Looking outward

There is also a hostel for college students on the compound. This is so necessary to provide accommodation for boys coming from our churches to Dacca to study. Then situated on the compound at the corner of a main road junction is the Regent's Park Hall which is mainly a reading room. Thousands pass its doors each day and not a few come in.

In a new suburb of Mohammedpur there is the College of Christian Theology with which the Baptist *Sangha* is associated. The college is playing a vital part in helping to meet the need for more trained pastors and lay readers for the churches.

Dacca is a large city of about two million people striving to become a modern 20th century capital and facing all the complexities which this involves. The problem which confronts city dwellers in Bangladesh are much the same as those met in any other part of the world. Loneliness and a sense of nonentity are the experience of so many. Without the security of a welfare state life, for the majority, is one long struggle to support and bring up a family on very inadequate means. In Dacca there is a vast crowd of people who do not know Christ as Saviour and Lord, so the challenge of this city to a Christian is great and exciting.

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Rev Robert Sarkar preaching in the Farmgate church

The Sunday School, the Bible study for the older ones and the Women's Prayer Fellowship are all going well.

However, there are still many Christians who are not attached to a church and it often seems impossible for one man to cope with all the responsibilities here. The opportunities in New Dacca are many and there is a real need for more energetic young men to give themselves to the Lord for full-time service in this area.

Members Old and New

by Rev Robert Sarkar

After I was ordained in January 1976 I was given the responsibility of the work in New Dacca, an area covering approximately ten square miles and consisting of Maghbazar, Farmgate, Mirpur, Gulshan and Banani. At the beginning of my pastorate there was a Baptist Church of 50 members at Farmgate and a sub-church at Mohakhali. The latter was almost dying because for such a long time it had not been in contact with any other church and for this reason its members were usually linked with Sadarghat, the Baptist Church in old Dacca.

Discovering the church members

During my first year I spent much time just getting in touch with those church members staying in Dacca who had no spiritual contact with any of our churches. I also used to visit some of the other churches in this new area of Dacca, two of which were the Assembly of God and the South American Baptist Church. Both of these were well frequented by our members because not only were the church buildings spacious but the spiritual nourishment and pastoral care, of which we were greatly lacking, were very fine there. When I first came to the area I felt almost like an intruder amongst these

older church leaders but I was given a warm welcome by them and by our church members and have enjoyed good fellowship with them both.

In the Mohakhali and Farmgate churches there has already been much progress for which we can praise the Lord. Membership has grown at Mohakhali from 18, when I first came, to 30. We have had four baptisms and applications for membership are still coming in. There are now at least ten families who regularly attend the church worship service and partake of the Lord's Supper. We have rented a room and fitted it with seats and a pulpit, as well as starting a small night school for children.

Young men wanted

The church at Farmgate was founded in 1968 and recognized by the Bangladesh Baptist *Sangha* (Union) in 1974. When I came there were 50 members, now there are 85 and, as at Mohakhali, requests for membership are still being received. A room has been rented where more than 100 people regularly attend the service. Of course, the room is not ideal and we are in great need of a permanent place for a church building.

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Monday, 10 October, 1977

7 p.m.

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Rev Raymond H Whitfield
(President, LBMU)

Speaker:

Reginaldo Krukilis
of Brazil

Singer:

Graham Kendrick

Valediction of missionaries

On 2 April The Baptist *Sangha* (or Baptist Union) School for Blind Girls in Dacca was officially opened. The occasion was a very happy one and Mr Mizanur Rahman, the Director of Social Welfare for Bangladesh, was the chief guest. Tara, Kohinoor, Shahida, Halema, Shanti and Rashida, girls aged seven to twelve years, sang and welcomed the guests with garlands. Kohinoor read some Bengali Braille and little Rashida, aged seven, recited a poem about a fox. The school had in fact been functioning since 10th January, but in April we were officially opened!

Sleep a waste of time!

In the fortnight that followed the opening two more girls came to the school, Suma, aged eleven, and another Kohinoor who is eight. Suma is rather backward and seems to have been so watched over by a nursemaid that she has never had to walk or use her hands much. The first things she needs to learn are how to feed, dress and generally look after herself and she must have more exercise in order to strengthen her legs. Little Kohinoor, on the other hand, is a live-wire! She always wants to be doing things and is not even very keen on going to sleep at night!

No armed guard

The need for a school for blind girls has been very evident for some time. Boys were catered for by the government blind schools but there was nothing for girls until the school in Dacca was set up. We are therefore very grateful to the Christoffel Blindenmission (a German Evangelical Foundation concerning itself with the blind, but not exclusively so) who are sponsoring it. Little Kohinoor's mother told us she had been enquiring about a school without success for about three years. Having looked over the school at Dacca she said she was very satisfied and would happily leave Kohinoor with us. In Bangladesh parents do not find it an easy

decision to let their daughters live away from home in a hostel. The father of one prospective pupil asked us whether we had an armed guard! We assured him that this was not necessary, although we did have an unarmed nightguard. Mrs Roy, the housemother, has proved to be ideal in running the hostel. She and her assistant treat the girls with the right amount of firm discipline and love.

When we first opened in January we had four girls in the school. (We can take 15 this

year.) Joli Ghosh and I were teaching them and on the second day the girls were overheard saying, 'We've been in school two days now, and we've been naughty, but they haven't hit us yet!' Not to be hit was obviously contrary to what their friends had told them about school life.

Arithmetic for fun

Joli does most of the teaching but we are hoping to have another Bengali teacher after the summer holiday. In addition we shall have the help of Miss Anna Rosa Giese of the Christoffel Blindenmission who has come to help for one year. She is doing a short course in Bengali at present, but has already shown us some new ways of making arithmetic more interesting for the girls. Helpfully the materials needed to make the equipment for the new method were only cardboard, glue, string and paper!

The school is planned as a primary school with just five classes and then at 12 years of age, if a pupil proves to be extremely bright, we will consider her for high school, probably sending her to an ordinary school and giving her extra help in the hostel. But for most girls it will be vocational training



by Veronica Campbell

Director of Social Welfare



Joel Ahmed setting up Braille type for printing



Opening the Blind School

when they reach the age of 12. We are fortunate that the National Society for the Blind are opening a workshop and training centre for adult blind people three-quarters of a mile away from us. This is the first adult training centre in the country and it has been agreed that blind girls and women should also be able to train there. So maybe in a year or two some of our older girls will be learning to weave bandages or make chalk at the centre.

Looking beyond the children

In addition to the primary school, we began, in July to give short courses for older blind girls and women. One of our students comes from as far away as Khulna (80 miles). Others come as day pupils from the 'colony' just a mile away where 21 blind families were rehabilitated after their homes were destroyed some time ago.

For all the teaching, whether children or adults, the only medium is Bengali and there is a great lack of Bengali Braille literature. We are fortunate in that we have received sufficient copies of the Bengali Braille school textbooks for classes one to four but apart from these textbooks there is no

Bengali Braille literature at present being produced for schools. However, with the newly-acquired Marburg Braille roller-press we are beginning to provide some extra material for the children to read. Joel Ahmed, a blind university student, has been working four afternoons a week to set up the Braille type and print this material, which includes Book 1 of a New Reader series and some short stories for children. The next booklet to be tackled will be 'Extraordinary Prophet', a new Bible Society publication in Muslim-Bengali. This will have a wider

circulation as it will also be read by the many educated adult blind men. The Scripture Gift Mission booklet *Daily Strength*, has been produced in Bengali Braille by the Torch Trust for the Blind and we have received a good number, while Mr Kadoya of the Word of Life Press, Japan, has asked us to choose a book and prepare the master copy in Braille and they will print it for us. We are thankful for the help we receive from the world-wide fellowship of those engaged in reaching blind people with the Gospel.

Boys also interested

Many blind boys have shown an interest in the Bible and this has led us to braille a Bengali Good News version of Luke's Gospel. This is being printed by the Lutheran Braille Writers in the USA and its completion will mean that there are three gospels available in Bengali Braille. Again, in response to interest shown, we have produced courses for a Bible Correspondence School. Several blind young men enrolled for the course and a number finished one course while a few even completed two. However, at present we are going through a stagnant period as many correspondents have lapsed. We are therefore working to revive interest and to stimulate new enquiries.

Since August 1974 the Dacca Torch Fellowship has met each month for fellowship and outreach. Recently we decided that we should divide into a Junior and Senior group as it would be better to meet the needs of different ages. The Junior group continues to meet in the World Vision Blind Home on the outskirts of Dacca and the Senior group meets in our new Christian Centre for the Blind.

(continued over)



House mother, Mrs Roy, with the girls

Veronica Campbell speaking at the opening of the Blind School



Tomorrow is a new day

The Braille printing work is based in this new Centre (which consists of two rooms) and the 30 blind young women who produce jute knitted bags for Tearcraft now bring their work to the Centre twice a month, instead of to our house. Recently they have had to halve their production as, understandably, the market for them within

the locality has shrunk. We therefore need to think of new articles which they can usefully produce. Plans for a reading room for the blind at the new Centre will hopefully materialize in the near future. Philip, a blind Muslim convert, finished his college course in May and since then he has been spending his time working at the Centre both on the

Braille printing and in the reading room. Several sighted girls have been requesting classes so that they can learn Braille and there are many blind young women in the city who would attend day classes if we arranged them. The opportunities are endless; we just need the personnel and the time to train them to teach others!



New Christian Centre for the blind in Dacca

The Problem Of Children

by Jacqueline Whitelock

What are the hardships, pressures, problems, or whatever you care to call them, that missionaries have to face when they go overseas? Oppressive heat is perhaps one of the first things that spring to mind. Then there are the inevitable hazards of snakes, cyclones, tidal waves or whatever else may come their way depending on which particular country they are in. On the other hand you may consider eating rice for more meals than you can remember to be one of the greatest hardships! These are the sorts of difficulties which seem to loom large in the minds of people at home, and indeed in our minds, too, sometimes before we come overseas, but these kinds of hardships do not take priority for the person who is actually on the mission field. One problem of which I have become aware since coming to Bangladesh is one that can cause much heartache to a missionary family . . . how can the children be educated?

A pressing need

Until September 1976 the majority of missionary parents in Bangladesh were faced with only two possible means of educating their children. They themselves could teach them using a correspondence course, or they could send them to boarding school in India several hundred miles away. During the last few years parents have thought and prayed much about the possibility of establishing a school right here in Bangladesh, and eventually a group of parents met together actually to plan the setting up of such a school.

Answered prayer

Last September, almost eighteen months after the initial meeting, the Christian Primary Education Centre was opened in Dacca. At that time there were ten children and just myself to teach them. The school is based on the British system of education and is sponsored by five Christian groups working in Bangladesh, BMS, Bible and

Medical Missionary Fellowship, Swedish New Life Centre, International Christian Fellowship and HEED (health, education, economic development). We had also hoped to have established a hostel by last September in order that children living outside Dacca could be offered a home. Unfortunately this has not proved possible, so the majority of the pupils at present are children whose homes are actually in Dacca. Three children come from other parts of the country, including two of the children of Dr Robert and Mrs Hart, BMS missionaries at Chandraghona. These three are living in Dacca with families who have offered to look after them. They are usually able to go home to see their parents at least once every five or six weeks.

Striking the right note

The total number of children in the school at present is twelve and their ages range from five to eleven years. Amongst the twelve are five British children, two Canadian, two Swedish, one German, one Bengali and one boy from New Zealand. I began by teaching all the children together but in April I was joined by another teacher who has taken responsibility for the older ones. One of her first tasks was to do some remedial work in singing; after eight months of listening to my dulcet tones the children were in need of some extra tuition!

Foster parents

For all of us who have been involved in establishing the school the last months have been a time of really trusting the Lord to provide all our needs. To equip a school here is not quite as straightforward as it would be in England and yet, from various sources, we have received so much. Nor is it easy for parents to send their children away from home but the Lord has given them a real peace about this and has provided loving 'foster-parents' to care for their children here in Dacca. Please join in prayer with us for parents and children who face this separation, and for the need of hostel parents to provide a permanent home. Pray, too, that the children will all be happy in their school situation as well as receiving a good education, of course!

Classroom in Christian Primary Education Centre, Dacca





Digging the foundations for the new clinic at Malikbari

GROWTH AMONG THE GAROS

by Veronica Campbell

After a three hour journey by train, followed by three hours on a cycle or in a landrover if one is lucky, one arrives at Malikbari village, the centre for our Dacca Baptist Union work among the Garo churches. Actually, these eight Garo churches are in Mymensingh district (with the exception of one church), but that does not confuse us although it does confuse some!

From Malikbari Rev Marcus Prem Adhikary has worked for over ten years as evangelist and now he is Area Pastor, too, for that district. For the oversight and teaching in these churches he has three other pastors to

help him, only one of whom has received pastoral training. New interest in the north of our Garo district has led to the appointment of a local Christian man, Mr Sangma, as a special evangelist among the Hindus there.

Learning to read

Recently a completely new set of adult literacy lesson books were printed and seminars to teach the voluntary teachers are in full swing in various parts of the country. These books will be excellent in evangelism, too, as they contain short Bible stories and include the account of the death and resurrection of Christ in the final lessons. The Bible Society's New Reader series are planned to follow on after these lessons have been completed and then the pupil will be able to read the Common Language New Testament translation.

In our Garo churches there is a very high illiteracy rate particularly in two churches. One in the north, where Mr Sangma has been appointed, the illiteracy rate is almost 100%. So we are looking forward to a new outreach programme to begin this year using these adult education books both among our own people and among non-Christians.

One young man in Malikbari church is training for pastoral work through the College of Christian Theology and will be attending a six week seminar later this year for more intensive study.

New hope for the Garos

At our annual district meetings, held recently, Rev Subash Sangma, an outstanding Garo evangelist, came to speak. He has offered to



Patients at the Malikbari Clinic



The women and children's clinic at Malikbari

send a team of ten Garo evangelists, men and women, to spend ten days in different centres, teaching and preaching to the churches. In some cases the spiritual level of church life is very low and there are long standing quarrels and divisions among the members, so we look forward to the ministry of these teams for Garo evangelists can best reach Garo people in their own language, even though everyone has Bengali as their second language.

A new 'hospital'

In February, work started on the building of the small 'hospital' at Malikbari Baptist Mission. We were delighted when Mr Werner of the Liebenzeller Mission, a German Mission which works with us in Bangladesh, suddenly arrived with five trucks of cement at Malikbari and work actually began on the long hoped for clinic. Tragically Mr Werner was killed by armed robbers only a few weeks later while in Faridpur district, but Mr Joy Nath Baroi, his right-hand man in the building supervision work, is going to be able to continue the building of the clinic.

Since last October Sisters Charlotte and Gertrude (who are Liebenzeller missionaries) have come to Malikbari each month to hold 'mini-clinics' for four or five days at a time and the fame of the clinic has already spread far and wide. The number of women and children attending grows each time and as there is no other medical help in that area the local community is warmly appreciative of this new clinic.

A new centre

Included in the building programme at Malikbari is a church training centre which will be very welcome and offers the possibility

of short residential Bible training courses for women and girls too.

We have appointed a new pastor to care for the three Bengali village churches in our Dacca Baptist Union. These are all small churches and very far apart, entailing much travelling and battling on trains and buses to reach them but they are, none the less, important centres of Christian witness in their locality. One or two keen young men in two of the churches are greatly involved in outreach among their neighbours and one church has already decided to hold adult literacy classes nightly in their church.



The women help with the building of the clinic

OCTOBER 2nd

THE SOCIETY'S BIRTHDAY

Remember the work
in prayer

CELEBRATE IN GIVING

Send a gift to:
Rev A S Clement
93 Gloucester Place
London W1H 4AA

FOR BRAZIL

Stuart and Georgie Christine met at school but followed different studies at college. Georgie trained at Worcester to teach biology while Stuart went to Oxford to read physics. During that time says Stuart, 'the Lord widened our horizons in many ways, not least through our friendships with overseas students.'

After college they found employment in their respective spheres and later were married. They then lived in Derby and joined the Broadway Baptist Church. Both acknowledge their indebtedness to their former churches as well, Chelsea Baptist Church, Nottingham, and Mansfield Road, Nottingham. The Lord then called Stuart to train for the ministry and this training took place at Spurgeon's College and whilst there the call came to serve in Mato Grosso, Brazil. They begin their language study in Campinas. 'From the beginning the Lord has most graciously guided us,' they write. 'He has not failed us in England and we know He will not fail us in Brazil.'

FOR TRINIDAD

The Rev Norman and Mrs Margaret Walker were both teachers and were baptized and married at Durham City Baptist Church. Norman, having received a call to the ministry, trained at Regent's Park College, Oxford. Their initial call to serve in the West Indies came as a result of a sermon preached by Rev Dr Horace Russell of the United Theological College of the West Indies when he visited Oxford. It was thought wise to gain pastoral experience in England and from 1972 Norman has been pastor of St Paul's Baptist Church, Skegness, while Margaret has been teaching at an ESN school for senior girls.

Now an invitation has been received from the Trinidad and Tobago Baptist Union for Norman to be pastor of the Baptist Church at Point Fortin, a town on the south-west coast of Trinidad. He will also be involved in the training of local pastors.

They look forward to leaving for Trinidad in October and say they echo the words of the Psalmist, 'The Lord will fulfil His purpose for me' (Psalm 138:8).

FOR ZAIRE

Olive Satterly accepted Christ as Lord and Saviour through the teaching and witness of leaders in the Sunday School and Girls' Brigade. She was baptized and received into membership of the Dagenham Baptist Church (Oxlow Lane) in Essex.

Through the interest of Dagenham ministers and churches, through BMS Summer Schools and working at the Mission House in London for two years, she felt involved with overseas missionary work. Soon after commencing nursing training she knew that her own interest would mean an even greater involvement, by offering to go abroad.

Since then I have received guidance that this is really God's plan for my life. 'By the working of the Holy Spirit through the scriptures, pulpit ministry, as well as Christian friends, His will has gradually been confirmed to me,' she writes.

In July 1977 Olive completed a course at Selly Oak Missionary Training Colleges and is now doing French language study in Brussels, and Tropical Medicine in Antwerp, Belgium, prior to going to Zaire.

'I am happy to share in the work of the Christian Church in Zaire, and go in the confidence of our Lord's promise, "... and lo, I am with you always".'

Wilma Aitchison became a Christian in her early teens and after her baptism joined the Cowdenbeath Baptist Church. She was an active member of the Christian Endeavour. Her ambition was to be a teacher but the Lord led her into nursing and gave her a love for this work.

She qualified in nursing and then in midwifery and while doing the latter training at Nottingham she shared in the Lay Witness Fellowship. Wilma now goes to Belgium for language study and for the tropical medicine course, after which she goes to Zaire. She says, 'I have much for which to praise the Lord, but most of all I praise Him for Jesus Christ my Saviour.'

Called



Stuart and Georgie Christine



Norman and Margaret Walker



Olive Satterly

by God

FOR ZAIRE

Pat Walton's home town is Sheffield where she trained as a nurse. She had qualified in nursing before she became a Christian and then the call to missionary service presented itself through a magazine article on Zaire. As a result she was led to undertake midwifery training as well which she did at Nottingham and there first came in touch with Baptists. She was baptized in the Queensbury Baptist Church, Nottingham, where she is now a member.

Pat, also, is going to Belgium for language study and tropical medicine and then on to Zaire.



Wilma Aitchison



Pat Walton



Greg and Helen Smith

FOR BANGLADESH

Helen and Greg Smith are members of Rising Brook Baptist Church, Stafford, and after a period of training at St Andrew's Hall, Birmingham, leave for Bangladesh in October.

Helen is an enrolled nurse and Greg a Quantity Surveyor. Greg will fill the position of Estimator/Accountant in a new building team. They became Christians and were baptized at Newcastle-under-Lyme. They began to feel unsettled as they became more aware of the paradox between their own lives and the lives of underprivileged people. They committed their future to the Lord in prayer having become interested in missionary work by deputation visitors.

God wonderfully led them and confirmed His will for them in many ways, culminating in a request for Greg's skills from the church in Bangladesh. In this time they learned much about faith and obedience, and now look forward to their time spent in His service.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Secretaries acknowledge with grateful thanks the following legacies and gifts sent anonymously or without address. (1-30 June, 1977)

General Work: Anon: £5.00; Anon: £10.00; Anon: £60.00; Anon: £70.00.

Medical Work: Anon: £17.00;

Relief Work: Anon: £15.00.

Legacies

	£	p
Mr F Beazer	400.00	
Mr E L Betts	100.00	
Violet L Bower	100.00	
Miss E K L Brinkworth	742.47	
Mrs M G Coles	1518.22	
Mrs J Crocker	367.45	
Miss G Grove	52.91	
Miss L K Haggard	190.48	
Miss F L Harvie	289.80	
Nina B Nichol	300.00	
Mrs M L Phillips	100.00	
Mrs H G Price	681.82	
Mrs R Pursey	1000.00	
Miss V D A Silcocks	150.00	
Miss M N Thorne	980.00	
Doris E Wilson	100.00	
Miss H Young	20.00	
Miss W Palmer	100.00	

MISSIONARY MOVEMENTS

Arrivals

Miss P James on 8 June from Cuttack, India.

Miss J M Flowers on 11 June from CECO, Kimpese, Zaire.

Miss P Grimstone on 11 June from IME, Kimpese, Zaire.

Rev F W J and Mrs Clark and family on 18 June from Cascavel, Brazil.

Miss A Flippance on 18 June from Binga, Zaire.

Miss H M Hopkins on 28 June from Ngombe Lutete, Zaire.

Mr P Chandler on 28 June from Bolobo, Zaire.

Miss B L Fox on 28 June from Bolobo, Zaire.

Mr J G Davies on 29 June from Chandraghona, Bangladesh.

Departure

Mr L Alexander on 29 June for study in Brussels, en route for Pimu, Zaire.

Death

In St Helier, Jersey, on 13 June, Mrs F E E Le Quesne, Elected Member, General Committee 1927-1941; Honorary Member, 1941-1977; Chairman of Society, 1953-1954.



College of Christian Theology, Bangladesh

CCTB

by Mrs Denzil Baker

The College of Christian Theology came into being in 1968 because there were Christian leaders in the country who were convinced that it is impossible to build a strong church without trained leadership. One church leader recently shared the problem of his denomination. He stated that for 150 or more congregations there were only 12 men adequately trained for the responsibility of caring for their people. The other men, sometimes assuming the responsibility of more than one congregation, were doing so having received very little or no Bible training. The College of Christian Theology is dedicated to changing this type of situation.

What is CCTB?

The College is a group of some 11 mission bodies and denominations working together for theological education in Bangladesh. It is based on an education by extension programme. That is, courses are written in programmed format so that the student can study at home. Arrangements are made for students studying the same courses to meet regularly with a tutor in order to discuss the material and receive help where necessary. Training by extension is a particularly suitable method for the majority of churches in the country for two reasons. Firstly, the cost of such an education is considerably less than that of a residential course of training. Secondly, the natural church leader is often a mature man with a family and the obligations that go with it. For such a man to be taken away to a residential course for a number of years would be quite impossible. Then, too, one might ask, 'What happens to the church while he is away?' Theological education by extension provides on-the-job training.

Living in is important

However, it would be fair to add that there also seem to be disadvantages. Perhaps the two most mentioned are that to receive training by extension involves several years before a certificate is gained, and sometimes such a method is lacking in the fellowship and mutual encouragement that a residential course offers. Because the first criticism especially seems valid the College has recently moved into larger quarters where it can house up to 30 people to attend the College seminars. The plan is to offer the same person opportunity twice a year to come to seminars of either ten days, for the LTh degree, or six weeks, for the certificate level. The seminars give short periods of concentrated study which help a student more speedily to build up his credits and at the same time ample opportunity is provided for fellowship with others of like mind and faith.

Building the church

The College has not been without its problems. The two most serious, until recently, have been the unsettled situation in Bangladesh generally and the lack of adequate staff. With conditions in the country greatly improving and staff needs gradually being met the College now faces a new era of usefulness in the building of the Church in Bangladesh. Although we rejoice in the fact that there are 160 people studying various courses and at different stages in their education we need greatly to increase this number. The harvest truly is plentiful in this country of some 80 million souls. Pray with us that the Lord of the harvest will call many who will be willing to prepare themselves to be reapers in these days.

REGENT'S PARK HALL



by Rev Paul Biswas*

Regent's Park Hall is open every day from nine o'clock until twelve in the morning and from four until seven in the afternoon. Bibles, Christian books, daily newspapers and magazines in both English and Bengali are available for anyone to read.

The passer-by

Each day up to 150 people come into the Hall. Some are students from the university and colleges who come to study, and there are a considerable number of passers-by. Many express an interest in the Christian faith but because of social and cultural pressures, and also financial difficulties, they are not able to accept it for themselves. At the moment there are two Hindu families and a *Maulana* (teacher of the Islamic faith) who are receiving instruction and wish to accept Christ. Indeed people come from many different parts of the country to learn about the Christian religion. The Muslims are continually raising arguments against the Bible and Christianity so I try to help them understand by comparing the teaching of the Bible with that of the Koran. Especially I attempt to correct their wrong ideas about the Christian faith and many are drawn to Christ by this means.

Regent's Park Hall, therefore, is an important and central place for making the gospel known. From time to time books are given away free to the poor, and we are grateful for your support which enables us to have more books to distribute. Please pray for the work in the Hall and the many contacts being made as we seek to proclaim the saving knowledge of Christ.

*Paul Biswas, brought up as a Muslim, was converted several years ago. He has served as a pastor in different places, always giving particular emphasis to work among Muslims. For the past 15 years he has been working in Dacca at the Regent's Park Hall.