

Mrs. W. Blessum.

THE OPEN DOOR

Missionary Organ
of the Methodist Church
of New Zealand



"A Great Door and effectual is opened." 1 Cor. 16:9

JUNE, 1960

Burton

New Doors Open . . .

In the same sentence in which he rejoiced that a great door and effectual had been opened, St. Paul recognised that there were many adversaries. It has ever been so. Today is no exception.

There are powers abroad that would frighten and deter. But the spirit of Christ enables His people to discern the opportunities; to see the doors and to pass through them into effective service for the modern age.

Give thanks for Christians pioneers who seized the opportunities of their day, like the Methodist preachers in the West Indies in 1760 and George Brown who went from New Zealand to Samoa in 1860. In 1960, give thanks also for

- ★ *Converts and enquirers in the New Guinea Highlands.*
- ★ *The establishment of the work in the Nembi Valley.*
- ★ *Opportunities of medical training for Solomon Islanders in Papua and New Zealand.*
- ★ *The current public health programmes with campaigns against yaws, polio and malaria.*
- ★ *New special tasks for our teaching missionaries in the Solomons.*
- ★ *Easter Camps and Boys' Brigade work amongst the Solomon Islands youth.*

Pray for those engaged in buying up these opportunities, who spend themselves in the process.

Pray for more to help them, especially for a carpenter and for three teachers, men and women, for the Solomon Islands, and secondary teachers to fill vacancies in Fiji and Samoa.

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THE OPEN DOOR

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The Missionary Organ of the
Methodist Church of
New Zealand

A NUMBER ON . . . MISSIONS AND SOCIAL CHANGE

A NEW BEGINNING

With this issue, "THE OPEN DOOR" enters the fortieth year of publication. To mark the occasion, we are appearing in a new format. The policy of the paper has been reviewed by a committee of the Foreign Mission Board, which has approved the change.

The "OPEN DOOR" first appeared when the Methodist Church of New Zealand was about to assume full responsibility for the Solomon Islands Mission District. Since then, publication has been maintained through days of progress and disappointment, prosperity and depression, peace and war. Each alike has brought it emphases and opportunities.

We take the opportunity of thanking those missionaries and others who through past years have supplied the paper with its articles and illustrations. We honour the two former editors, the late Rev. W. A. Sinclair (twelve years), and the Rev. A. H. Scriven (nineteen years). Where should we have been without the army of local agents, all volunteers who have handled the distribution of our paper? We also acknowledge the many courtesies of our printers, the Institute Printing and Publishing Society.

We have called ourselves throughout "the missionary organ of the Methodist Church of New Zealand." At the first, it was frankly missions overseas that were in mind. And today as ever before, we would have our readers remember the countless and increasing number without the Gospel throughout the world. While the publication and financing of the paper remains however the responsibility of the Foreign Mission Department, we are increasingly mindful that the mission of the Church is one mission. This realisation will be increasingly represented in our quarterly themes and occasional articles. The theme for this issue is MISSIONS AND SOCIAL CHANGE. In September, we are planning an AFRICA NUMBER. In December, with the broader aspect in mind, we shall feature THE MISSION OF THE METHODIST CHURCH OF NEW ZEALAND.

To mark our new format, we are adopting a new cover design, for which we are indebted to Mr. Bryan Burton of Wellington Central Circuit.

— S. G. ANDREWS.

BY WHAT SHALL MAN LIVE?

A message by the Vice-President of
the Conference

World peoples have grown closer together almost overnight by reason of the rate and ease of communication, and this and other gifts of science to this generation, has called for readjustment and policy-revision in practically every department of life. The men of business, politics and international diplomacy have had to reorientate their lives of procedure, because what was hitherto remote is now close at hand, and what was of little account is becoming of major importance.

The Christian Church, ever true to her world charter, has also had to revise her priorities. The heathen who lived in distant isles worshipping his idols of wood and stone is now a rare species indeed. No longer is he the romantic figure living in some backwash of separating oceans. Modern communication has brought him on to the doorstep of lands as different in outlook as Russia, Japan and New Zealand. He no longer regards himself as the isolated object of the white man's charity or domination. He knows himself to be one of an immense world-family who have every right to determine their own destiny, hindered only in many places by an insufficiency of food and other good things, to which they feel they have inalienable rights.

Realising that hungry men become lawless men, the Western nations have gradually built up a vast network of humanitarian services under a variety of names.

The United Nations Technical Assistance programme functions in almost 100 lands; and since 1949,

N.Z. has through this agency contributed £691,000, and made available the expert services of some 80 farming and other specialists, in an endeavour to offset food shortages.

The U.S.A. and other countries have provided prodigious sums in relief of pressing needs. Red Cross, with its one and a quarter million members ministers in every country of the world not only ameliorating local distress but as an international link without any frontiers. All this aid wheresoever it comes, has been born of the spirit of Christ, which His Church has quietly and sacrificially shed abroad in men's hearts, down the generations. Most of these organisations gladly admit that without the ever ready support of church members their effectiveness would only be a fraction of what it is.

The Church will ever applaud and strengthen the hand of all these modern missionary endeavours while at the same time saying — they are not enough in themselves:

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

Close at hand are millions upon millions of people whose ideologies are at complete variance with our own, and close to them are people who know as we do, that the vacuum of the world's needs and lack of mature Christian faith, lies the easiest and most fruitful field for the infiltration of their particular “ism” or belief.

Let no one think that, because heathen cannibalism and idol-wor-

(Continued at foot of page 5)

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

Organised education in the British Solomons is still in its early stages. For well over fifty years nearly all education has been carried out by the Missions. Only in recent years has it come under the general direction and supervision of the Government's Department of Education which concerns itself more directly with the training of teachers, secondary education and inspection of Mission Primary schools. Of 266 registered schools, 252 are Mission schools and just over 100 of these are run by the Methodist Mission.

In the past few years Solomon Islanders have been pressing strongly for their children to be educated and to learn English. As everywhere else, the education of girls has lagged a long way behind that of boys but the Missions have done much to overcome the prejudices against girls going to school. Opposition has been strongest in Malaita, the home of nearly half the population, where there are still many pagans, but the Council there in a formal resolution has now given its support to girls' education.

"WESTERN" LEADERSHIP

In the Western Solomons the Methodist Mission have achieved almost universal primary education. Almost all schools are co-educational, with a high proportion of girls. Overseas, the West is well represented: there are Methodist boys at Te Aute College, Hawkes Bay, at Wesley College, Paerata, and at Adelaide, S. Australia, and there are two girls at New Plymouth Girls' High School. The first graduate and the first Grade I teacher — trained at Canterbury

and Ardmore respectively — both came from the West.

Emancipation of girls and women has developed far more rapidly and completely in the Western Solomons than in any other part, save possibly Honiara, the capital, in Guadalcanal. In Malaita, the bride price



Sister Nancy Ball — Trainer of teachers.

is very much a thing of the present. Before a man can hope to marry, he or his family must find a suitable number of pigs and strings of shell money. In all of the Western islands this practice has been modified. Gifts are still given and expected, but shell money is not used. Men and women have complete freedom of choice of marriage partner and they marry in accordance with the normal practice of the church.

The Missions (Methodist, Catholic, Melanesian (Anglican) Mission, Seventh Day Adventist and South Sea Evangelical Mission) have for many years had their own hospitals, mater-

nity centres, dispensaries and lepro-saria. Since the war, the Government too has greatly expanded its medical facilities to provide hospitals, dispensaries and a leprosarium where they are most needed. There are only two Mission doctors and Dr. Hoult of the Methodist Mission has probably travelled more and is better known in the Western Solomons than any other person.

DISEASE, DIET AND DRESS

The health of the people is showing a great improvement, the expectation of life is very much greater and a recent census has shown a substantial increase in the population. The yaws campaign carried out by a World Health Organisation team in 1956 and re-surveyed in 1960 has shown that the incidence of yaws has dropped from 12.37% to less than 0.3%. The next campaign which has been planned is the eradication of malaria. This will require the co-operation of all the people and in obtaining this Missions will have as large a part to play as the Government.

Few changes have taken place in the food which the Islanders eat. For the most part they rely on rootcrops such as sweet potatoes, yams, pana and tapioca, fruits such as pawpaw, bananas, pineapples and coconuts and locally caught fish. Here and there you may find groundnuts, locally grown rice, sweetcorn, and long beans. The diet is sometimes supplemented by imported tinned corned beef and cereal, rice, tea and sugar, but this is found more on the few Government stations and plantations where workers have not the time to devote to gardens.

Perhaps the most notable of the social changes has been in dress. In the early days the Missions were

naturally anxious that the naked or next-to-naked islanders were clothed. An improvised sulu or calico was ample for the men and the women were encouraged or made to wear the "Mother Hubbard," a loose fitting half-frock reaching down to the waist, and a skirt. Nowadays, in the Western Solomons more than elsewhere, nearly all the women and girls wear pretty, well-made, print frocks or blouses and skirts. Men and boys are rapidly discarding their sulus in favour of shorts, and singlets are giving way to shirts. Here and there one sees sandals or sandshoes, but long trousers, suits or anything approaching European dress are met with rarely.



Solomon Island Trainees taking full Australian nurses' course at Port Moresby.

RACIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Visitors to the Solomons are usually quick to notice two things regarding the indigenous population: racial relationships and language. In these islands we speak of "Melanesians" or "Solomon Islanders" but not "natives." There is no racial discrimination: the Solomon Islanders attend church or cinema, public concerts, functions or social gatherings on an equal footing with Europeans

and other expatriates. There are certain restrictions on such things as drinking and gambling, largely at the insistence of the more responsible Solomon Islanders, but in all other ways they have equal status. The use of English, even between Solomon Islanders themselves, is spreading rapidly and this will do much to reduce the insularity of the Melanesian and make him conscious of belonging to the Solomon Islands as a whole.

ADVANCES AND NEEDS

To return to education: in the future, better standards of living, better houses, healthier children, improved diet and so on, will depend as much on better education as on any other single factor. The need for the Missions to provide better educational facilities will continue undiminished. Schools depend largely on teachers and buildings and in the West there are far too few of either.

Of over 200 teachers, only five have qualified Grade I status, the rest are "approved." This year will complete the training of the first 20 teachers at the Government's training college, all of them destined for

Mission schools. At Kokeqolo School, adjoining the Methodist Headquarters, a one year course in teacher training began this year and it is hoped later to run two-year courses which will be given equal recognition with the Government courses. (These courses are replacing the three-year pastor-teacher training courses which have been conducted at Goldie College, Banga, for a number of years).

There are very few schools in the West which have been built as such. Classes are held usually in the church or sometimes in the teacher's house and there are no desks for the children.

Despite this, a great deal of excellent work has been done and some very fine results achieved. How much better the results would be with improved educational facilities.

Perhaps the greatest task facing the Mission today is to find ways of producing satisfactory conditions for the education of the children: it will require money, work and close attention to modern educational practice.

— Geoffrey F. Bovey

BY WHAT SHALL MEN LIVE?

(Continued from page 2)

ship are things of yesterday, our Christian missionary task is less urgent or less demanding.

Today, said Bishop Leslie Newbigin, "it means commitment to the task of going with and in the movements of technological and social development right to the ends of the earth, but as servant not as master, bearing witness as part of the people of God to the true meaning of God's work in the world and to the true Messiah who alone can give final blessedness to man."

The teaching of Christian principles to the peoples of the East, is now, as never before, a matter of urgency. In their thinking, both the man in the Church and the man in the street should bring world events into a clearer focus, since those events concern us more intimately than ever before.

Shall we as individuals and as a church examine once again the measure of our commitment to Him, and its sufficiency or otherwise in respect of our overseas missions.

—Magnus S. Hughson.

MODERN FIJI

Last year, Sir Alan Burns headed a long and thorough commission of enquiry which was appointed to advise the Colony of Fiji regarding its future development in the light of its growing population. The report of this commission was released recently and is of very great interest to all people concerned about the welfare of Pacific Island territories. The report is a realistic appraisal of the Colony's future. It will foster no false optimism. It faces frankly the possibilities of growing unemployment in Fiji and a declining standard of living. Fiji's problems are not insoluble but they are serious.

LAND, LABOUR, CAPITAL

Fiji's economy is largely agricultural. In 1958, we produced seven million pounds worth of sugar, earned two and a half million pounds from gold and silver. Our total exports were worth 14 million pounds.

It has been said in the development of Fiji, the Fijians have contributed land, the Europeans have contributed capital and the Indians have contributed labour. In so far as any slick generalisation can be true, that is true.

It needs to be remembered that the British Government brought the Indians to Fiji in order to remove the danger that Fijian village organisation would be disrupted by demands for plantation labour. In fact a research historian, Mr. Ken Gillion, has recently established the

fact that the first request that Asian labour be recruited for Fiji came from the Government of King Cakobau—before Fiji became a British Colony.

However, the Indian community has grown and is now the largest racial group in the colony — 191,000 Indians compared to 162,000 Fijians out of a total population of 387,000 — i.e. 30,000 more Indians than Fijians.



Centenary Church, Suva, Fiji.

Fiji's industrial unrest (particularly the outbreak of riots last December) has been the subject of widespread comment. It is not an expression of deep-rooted racial feeling. It is not due to Communist influence. Nor can it be blamed on agitators. This trouble is an expression of an economy that is badly out of gear.

DILEMMA

Fiji faces a dilemma. The Burns Commission put the average national income of Fiji at £F70, per person

per annum. It has shown no increase over the last ten years. Australia's national income by comparison averages £A500 per person per year.

On one hand, our people generally are battling hard to make ends meet. Far too many men in urban areas are trying to keep a wife and family on a wage of between three and four pounds per week. As a minister, I continually marvel at their patience and wonder how they manage to bring up their families. However, over the last couple of years I have felt that their patience was wearing thin. The general pattern of European life and the wage scale on which our 9,000 Europeans live seems to be so terribly far above the standard of living which the Fijian and Indian people enjoy. There has been, over the last couple of years, in urban areas particularly, a continual rumble of complaint about this apparent injustice.

On the other hand, serious and objective enquiries into our economy have concluded that at the present stage of our development, our economy cannot stand significant wage increases.

That is the dilemma that Fiji faces! It is a dilemma that must be resolved.

One fact we must recognise. The winds that blow over the rest of the world blow over Fiji, too. Our people are not satisfied with the status quo — and rightly so. What is happening in many of the other underdeveloped countries of the world is intoxicating news for them. Overseas newspapers and news magazines in English and other languages are read by a surprising number of people. Films are making the rest of the world Fiji's neighbour. Radio

sets are found in every corner of the Colony. People listen to the points of view expressed by radio stations in other parts of the world. One result of this is that "Little Rock" has become a symbol for our people too. I have quite often heard an argument clinched by the observations "this is not Little Rock." General Nasser, too, has become a symbol of what a determined man can do. One of the most aggressive and influential labour leaders in Fiji is a Fijian young man who appears to have been greatly influenced by what he saw in Malaya while serving there with the Fijian Battalion in anti Terrorist activities. Fiji's trade unions are anxious to learn from fellow trade unionists overseas. A visit from Mr. Skinner, the New Zealand Trade Union leader, was widely appreciated.

We can no longer regard the Pacific as a little back-water of the world.

The Church has in past days made a creative contribution to social development. In the days ahead the Church must once more concern herself with social action.

EDUCATION AND THE CHURCH

There is a great surge forward in education in Fiji at the present time. There are three special factors contributing to this. First, the colony is completing a five-year plan of development for secondary education. This five year plan has proved, a little unexpectedly, to be a dramatic illustration of what can be done in a short time to raise the general level of education.

Secondly, a surprising number of students are leaving Fiji for study in other countries. They go to New Zealand, Australia, United States, India, Pakistan and the United Kingdom. It

is hard to compile accurate figures but I suspect there are approximately 300 students from Fiji in these countries, either at the university, or studying for university entrance examinations or taking nursing or some other tertiary education training. Even if they do not all graduate, they will return to Fiji with new and provocative ideas.

The third factor is only indirectly educational. The Pacific generally within the last 10 years, seems to have become suddenly aware of the

future, for example, leadership amongst the Fijian people will more and more be determined by ability rather than rank.

In both the church and the community, Fiji — like the rest of the Pacific — has in the past produced very few leaders able to think and act independently. The Pacific generally has lagged behind the rest of the world in the development of leadership from within the community. I do not think the same will be true in the future.



Fijian scouts in New Zealand.

great outside world. A surprising number of people nurse the hope of travelling beyond their own territory some day, somehow! By holiday travel, in overseas sporting engagements, at Church conferences, and in sundry ways many of them get the chance. They may go to another Pacific territory, or further afield. Wherever it is, their horizon is widening.

A most significant result of this is in the field of leadership. More potential leaders are coming to light — in all racial groups! In the

This is a challenge for the modern church. It raises some special issues. The church generally seems to have lost touch with the leaders of the young countries growing into nationhood. A definite attempt must be made to rectify that. The ministry of the church must be trained to a high level. I personally consider that the establishment of a central theological college ought to be given high priority in the Church's planning.

And what of a university for the South Pacific? Now is the time to begin planning a university geared to the needs of the Pacific people. This again is a project in which New Zealand could make a fine contribution.

A MULTI-RACIAL COMMUNITY

Fiji is a very cosmopolitan little community. The differing races in the community add very greatly to the interest of the place — Fijians, Indians, Europeans, part-Europeans, Rotumans, Chinese and representatives of very many Pacific territories. Further, our community is

divided in religion — divided almost equally between Christians and non-Christians. Within a few years, natural increase will mean that a majority of our people will be members of the Hindu or Moslem religions.

Everything considered, our different groups get on remarkably well together. Fiji has the opportunity of demonstrating to the rest of the world how widely different races can grow into an integrated community.

However, at the moment we are not an integrated community. The different racial groups live side by side — in general, with a great deal of good will. There is some cause for satisfaction that there is no formal segregation of one group from another. But then, neither are we integrated. There are far too many "coconut curtains" separating our peoples.

We could have real racial tension in Fiji. I do not personally expect serious racial bitterness in Fiji. It is more likely, I believe, that our different racial groups will be a source of strength in our future development.

Fiji must become an integrated community. The Fijian and Indian people cannot plan for their own separate welfare. Our community must be united and each racial group must make its contribution to the welfare of the community as a whole.

The Christian church has no more urgent task in this day, than to exercise the ministry of reconciliation. The church must not only declare

but demonstrate within its own fellowship the power of Christ to draw all men together.

We do not yet demonstrate within our church as we should, Christ's power to heal the divisions of men. By and large the Fijian church has little to do with the Indian Church.

There are, however, real signs of hope. The Fijian Methodist Church represents 85 per cent of the Fijian people and is well able to influence the thinking of the community. The Indian Church is small — Christians number less than 3 per cent of the total Indian population — but it is vigorous and growing.

There is an increasing concern within both the Fijian and the Indian church that we belong together, and that our faith must draw us together. The Fijian Synod recommended, for example, that the Fijian ministers in training should be taught Hindustani. Our youth groups, significantly, are finding more opportunities for common action. We are planning, wherever possible, regular united services where our Fijian, Indian and European people meet together for worship. Once a year, all branches of the church unite for a "Week of Witness." The Fijian Church has taken a most significant step in setting aside a Hindustani-speaking Fijian catechist, Manoa, to work specifically amongst Indian people.

I invite fellow Christians in New Zealand to join in praying that Christ's people in Fiji may be bridge builders showing the power of Jesus Christ to draw men together.

— L. DOUGLAS FULLERTON.

WOMEN IN BOUGAINVILLE

FOR more than thirty years, our workers have been active amongst the women and girls of Bougainville. Our senior worker, Sister Ada Lee, now principal of the District Girls' School there, discusses projects for girls and women today.

The old order changeth and giveth place to the new. This is as true on the Mission field as in the busy industrial area of any large city. It is true of the new Education laws adopted in response to the forward push United Nations is giving to all native communities; of the enterprise of the commercial world, and the development of transport bringing the world market within days instead of months of the lonely producer.

What is the response to all these strides of advancement? The native man generally is ready to accept with one hand many of the material advancements, but he is loath to let go from the other hand the customs and precepts of his ancestors. Hence he is sometime found to be supporting in its second stage a work he tried to prevent in its earlier stage.

In the Bougainville society the women have always been of importance in the tribe. From the mother the child inherits not only her totem, but also her status, and land. From earliest times women were holders of land and modern developments have not deprived them of those rights, so all land transfers have to be agreed to by the women as well as the men. While they may not gather with their 'lords' in the meeting house to discuss the business they have the right of veto, and they do use their right,

MARRIAGE

In the all important matter of matrimony, the girls are "sold." Here too many of the discussions are

held in the men's meeting house, but both the mother and the girl involved must agree to the match, though it often appears that for the girl particularly, irate scenes occur if she disagrees, and much pressure in the way of argument and threats is hurled at her. For example she is kept from school, if she continues to refuse the proffered swan, or if she changes her mind later and chooses another for herself. Although there are an increasing number who use their right to say "yes or no," there are still a large number who diplomatically agree, either because the boy is acceptable, or because it is easier and pleasanter not to face the barrage and pressure, or because they see the reason behind the match of guarding the land inheritance, for land is an important factor to be considered in matrimonial affairs.

Although the women had this flight of importance, they definitely did as they were told in other things. A woman might visit her relatives in the same scattered group called a village providing she did not pass a non-family house en route, and the way lay through the bushes. She did not go unescorted to the garden, but she was the gardener, and added to her usefulness by caring for the pigs and the finance of the home.

NEW OUTLOOK

Christianity and education have taught new ways of living. The villages are open, and there is an open

space in front of the rows of houses where the sun shines down and the children play. The women and girls walk in groups along the open road and to and from the garden unescorted — or if escorted their men help to carry the load. Girls and boys sit down in one classroom for their school, albeit, at times that takes courage on the part of some of the older girls. For this reason the girls find a new freedom when they come to a girls' school and after a few weeks there is a noticeable dropping away of the defensive atti-

there been a dissenting voice raised in the village against the girls' leadership in so far as it has progressed to the present.

OPPORTUNITIES

What of the future for these girls? Girls are growing in this new freedom and are expressing a desire to be allowed to work for a year or so between school and marriage. They are growing more enterprising and, realising the limitations of work in their own villages, are casting eyes on further fields. Will they be allowed to do? — these girls who have been further away from their own villages than most others. Questioned on this point,, representatives of the people express themselves, willingly, but add guardedly, "Let a girl ask with a job in view and then we shall have a real answer to this question."" Several girls have asked if they may travel under supervision to other parts to holiday with school-girl friends, but always the answer had been "No," because the girl may change her mind about her fiance when she sees other men. Then those who arranged her marriage would be made ashamed.

Yet the people are growing and the young women of the race are being given opportunities of education, and are using their education within the limited scope at present offering. The men are graciously giving opportunities for women to be representatives on various native councils which are springing up in their communities, and the women

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Kihili School Girls.

tude, and they apply themselves with more enthusiasm to their work. Confidence is established in front of girls only, and the knowledge that what they say is correct adds poise to the confidence and then they are ready to step out and take a part in the leadership of Lotu work on the Station and village where opportunity is given. Be it said to the credit of those who a few short years ago said scathingly, "Are the girls going to be missionaries too?" Opportunity has not been lacking for certain work for most of the girls capable of leadership. Neither has

A SOLOMON ISLANDERS' CONFERENCE

FOR SEVERAL YEARS an unofficial conference has been held of representatives (men and occasional women) from our Solomon Islands Methodist circuits. The Chairman of the district here describes the movement and assesses its importance and future prospects.

The idea of what is now called the Solomon Islands District Native Conference arose at the end of the war among the missionaries seeking to rebuild the work. They faced the fact that in the pre-war Church the native people had had no effective voice in the church Government and yet during the period of hostilities they had risen to the occasion and taken the leadership in practical matters. They had done well and it was necessary that the gains in local leadership should be conserved. But there were difficulties. Our pioneer Chairman was in his 70's and he did not feel the need for a change, and the native people regarded him with such veneration that they could think of nothing that did not involve his benevolent paternalism. This accentuated the diffidence that had become traditional about speaking in a meeting where Europeans were present. There was actually no official place for lay native representation on Synod and even the non-European ministers were

few and relegated to a minor place.

The feeling of the European ministers was expressed in a minute passed by the first post war Synod 1946 which reads:

That members of Synod during the coming year consider the possibility of conducting a Native Synod Session in mid-year and report to next Synod.

This was expanded by the Representative Session, to:

Synod agreed to conduct a Camp Meeting in the nature of a convention to be held in mid-year, to be concerned primarily with native church affairs. That during the convention a session be held at which native representatives from the circuits should consider matters referred to the session by the annual Synod and also be empowered to make recommendations to the Synod. Choiseul Circuit staff to make all the arrangements for a three-day meeting. (Continued on next page)

WOMEN IN BOUGAINVILLE

are proving their worth there. Yet there is a long way to go in the matter of lifting the living standards of the people generally. In some cases isolation by rivers or mountains will make them "children of nature" for many years yet, with few of the modern amenities which could lift their standards. So the woman is still the gardener, and keeper of pigs, and carries the burdens on her back with not a great deal of leisure to practise her new

skills and crafts. Sometimes the men see in the growing population a danger of a decimated land portion for inheritance, and occasionally resort to witchcraft. So the old and the new still jostle for true supremacy. The community cannot rise faster than its women can go but enlightened women who can carry the benefits of their education into their homes are helping, even if slowly, to carve the new future for their people.

Ada L. Lee.

The Open Door

It says a great deal for the spiritual vision of our men, that they could take time out to plan for these gatherings at a time when they met amid the devastation of war, when their minds must have been filled with the herculean task of rebuilding the shattered stations and plants. Every station had been destroyed and every building razed. But it is not surprising that circumstances were too strong for them and that it was another four years before such a meeting as they envisaged came into being.

The Rev. John R. Metcalfe, who was later to succeed Mr. Goldie as Chairman, was the driving force behind the idea. Naturally it was on him the work fell from the beginning, and it was not really until he became Chairman that the gatherings planned in 1946 became an established fact.

In December, 1946, Mr. Metcalfe wrote to the ministers setting out his plan for the "May meetings" which were to be held at his station. In his concluding paragraph there is this significant sentence:-

"I expect the language used will be Roviana which will make things somewhat difficult for some of us, but it is not the white man's show."

This underlined the language difficulty which is still not entirely solved and also the temptation which the District constantly has to fight against to flood the Conference with Europeans. We haven't always succeeded in resisting it.

The Synod of December, 1947 notes:-

Synod regrets that the May Meetings could not be held owing to transport difficulties but reaffirms its desire to hold meetings in May, 1948

and accepts the invitation of the minister and people of the Choiseul Circuit.

But again nothing came of the plans and in 1949 Synod the plans were again made this time to hold the Conference in April, 1949. About this time a basis of representation was agreed on. It was :-



Solomon Islands ministerial family.

The Chairman, the Secretary (of Synod) the Secretary designate and one other (presumably all Europeans).

All native ministers and catechists.

One representative from each Circuit.

One further representative for each 500 members or part thereof in each Circuit.

In practice this proved quite impossible of fulfilment and changes were made.

The first actual conference was held at the head station in May, 1950 to coincide with the Mission Anniversary day (23rd May), but the three northern circuits were only represented by school students who had been available at the nearby point, for transport arrangements to collect

the duly appointed representatives of those Circuits had broken down. A transcript of the proceeding has been preserved in summary and it is clear that a good deal of the time was taken up with reminiscences about the past and consideration of ways and means of celebrating the Golden Jubilee in 1952. When the conference was challenged by Mr. Metcalfe to look into and plan for the future — a future in which he saw an independent Solomon Islands Church, many of the older men said in effect that the black man was incapable of planning ahead and that the white man would have to do all the leading. Apart from the planning for the Jubilee, the main value of this conference was inspirational, and the six resolutions passed were very formal.

It was two years before another conference could be held, and before that Mr. Goldie had retired. The meeting was held during the Jubilee celebrations. A number of practical problems were dealt with, and the General Secretary who was present, again challenged the gathering to think in terms of becoming a self supporting, self propagating and self governing Church. While the ideas as a whole still fell on stony ground, the vision of the call of the Highlands caught the imagination of the folk and the meeting committed the District to the sending and supporting of workers to the New Guinea Highland District.

The third Conference was not held until 1955. In the intervening years the four Circuits had become six, European staff had increased, the training programme had improved and the rehabilitation of the District had proceeded a good way. In the Circuits native leadership was becoming more effective and this was

reflected in the increased willingness of the people at the Conference to talk and raise matters of importance to them. The principal resolutions of the conference concerned the establishment of leaders' meetings in every circuit, and a suggested set of rules to cover the conduct of the Lord's Supper, Baptism and Marriage. These were very practical dealing with such problems the position of people who were formerly S.D.A. or R.C. and who had now become Methodists, the baptism of illegitimate babies, etc.

It should be understood, that the District has not had any "law book" or "manual of discipline" where its procedures have been set down, though the law book of the N.Z. Church was supposed to be followed where possible.

While this led to a good deal of variation and some laxity, the resolutions of this native conference and those of subsequent years represent a hammering out of the principles of church discipline by the local leaders. Such decisions have of course been subject to review by Synod. But the value has been great and now nearly five years later we are in a position to complete a "manual of discipline" from Solomon Island Church which has not been imposed arbitrarily from without but has been in a large measure hammered out of the experience of the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

In this matter Roreinang Conference, 1955 set a pattern which was to be followed in subsequent years. It also set the precedent that these gatherings should not be held on European-staffed stations — a precedent which has been followed ever since. Conferences have been held every year since 1955.

The volume of business had increased and from the six resolutions of the first conference the number has grown to 33 at the 1959 Conference. The subjects discussed range widely. They include matters of faith and order, life and work, matters concerning our missionary work in the New Guinea Highlands, our relations with overseas groups and activities — and in fact anything that comes within the purview of the Church people. The attached list of the resolutions of the 1959 Conference will give you a much

have, in practice, been accepted as they stood, or in a modified form. Some are merely recorded as they do not require formal Synod action. A few are not approved by Synod.

So that while the Native Conference has no "legal" standing at all, in practice it functions as though it was a legally constituted part of the District Government.

Organisation Problems

The secretaryship is always held by a Solomon Islander. Representation has been a difficult problem,



Distributing Mark's Gospel in Teop language.

better idea of the scope of the discussions than anything else.

The attitude of Synod to the Native Conference Resolutions

Since 1956 the native Church has been officially represented on the Synod and at the present time about 50% of the Synod membership is non-European. Since most of the non-Europeans who attend Synod have been at Native Conference, the views of the Conference are strongly represented. In any case Synod gives very serious consideration to the recommendations. Most of the term

because of the transport. In a scattered district like ours it is costly and not easy to arrange to transport a large number of people to a given point. More stringent regulations for shipping will not make it any easier. Again weather is a vital factor and while a time of the year is chosen that is known for its calm weather and there are no guarantees. At least one representative has been prevented from attending because of weather. The problem of getting our people back and forward over the political border line, always plagues us and one year most

of the Bougainville contingent were refused permission to travel to the BSIP by the District Commissioner. In practice we have tried to have all the native ministers and about 6 representatives from each Circuit. This means at least 40 people, and for our small boats raises problems. In the future with an increase in the number of Circuits, there will have to be some re-assessment of the representation to the population of the Circuits. Costs cannot be ignored. At present it costs us upward of £300 for transport alone for Native Conference.

Language is another problem. There is no lingua franca for the District, and theoretically the language of the Conference is English. In practice English, Roviana and pidgin are used in varying proportions. This means a good deal of time wasted with translating, etc. But there is no other solution. We press on to the day when it shall all be in English.

Attendance of Europeans has been largely confined to the ministers, and has varied from the Chairman alone to all the available men. A European has usually been in the chair. It is necessary at this stage at least for at least one European to be there to answer questions and the one best fitted to do that is usually the Chairman. The presence of Europeans does much to inhibit the discussions, and so it is best kept to a minimum.

It should be noted, however, that the Conference has several times in recent years tackled the question of stationing of European staff, issued their own invitations to staff to return, and in one case severely criticised a European worker. This

seems to be another good reason for having at least one senior European worker present at the Conference.

The inspirational side of the conference has not been neglected and in 1958 a Bible Study was introduced for each of the three days of the conference. This has proved popular. In 1959 the study was on Christian Giving based on Bishop Azariah's book of that title.

The Future of the Conference :

By 1962, when we celebrate our Diamond Jubilee and begin our District Budget scheme, we will be ready to revise our District organisation and it seems likely that we will seek a permanent place and a legal status for these "May Meetings" which have grown into "Native Conference." Just what form it will take then it is hard to say, but its contribution to our total life is so great that we cannot do without it. Increasingly Europeans present will be there only as observers and will only contribute when they are asked to do so by the Conference. Because of the problems of time and transport, it may be that at some future date we will have to split the Conference into two or more sections, though that would be a real loss.

The Position of non-Indigenous Pacific Island Workers.

At present the Tongan and Fijian members of our staff are members in full of the Conference, and in fact provide a good deal of the stimulus and leadership. It is their influence which has done a great deal to lead our people towards ideas of self government and self support.

GEORGE G. CARTER

ABOUT PEOPLE

HONIARA WORKING BEE:

Our mission carpenter, Mr. Rodney Fleury of Dunedin South Circuit, reports from Honiara that great enthusiasm has attended the building of the Methodist Church there. He has been supported by Fijian Methodist carpenters and by numerous Solomon Islanders, who have worked voluntarily on weeknights from four till dark and on Saturdays. The church, which will replace a place of worship, the club that was intended originally for recreation only, has been financed, partly from the efforts of Honiara Methodists (approximately £1,000) and from part of the war damage grant recently received from the New Zealand Government. Honiara is the capital of the British Solomons, and about 300 Methodists have removed there.

Meanwhile other building projects await the offer of a further single Methodist carpenter from New Zealand.

FURLOUGHS AND DEPUTATION:

The Revs. G. A. R. Cornwell and D. I. A. McDonald returned during May, to Buka and Choiseul respectively. Mr. and Mrs. Cornwell left their daughter at Masterton, and Mr. and Mrs. McDonald their two elder sons at Broadwood. On their outward journey, Miss Shirley Bailey of Morrinsville accompanied the McDonalds as a visitor.

Dr. Gerald Houtt spent May on deputation in South Auckland and will return in August to the field.

Following furlough, Sister Audrey Highnam left on leave of absence in April, for further study in England. Sister Lesley Bowen is taking the



Rev. Gordon and Mrs. Cornwell

Plunket training course at Dunedin. Sister Beulah Reeves returns this month to Kihili. Following dedication at Christchurch, Sister Kathleen Shaw proceeded to training at All Saints College, Sydney. Sister Gladys Larkin will be dedicated next month at Christchurch and leave at once for the Solomons. Sister Lorraine Flowers, serving under our Australian Board, left Sydney in May for Yirrkala, North Australia.

Rev. Aisake Vula of Fiji returned to Honiara in April after leave.

NEW GUINEA HIGHLANDS:

Writing in April, the Rev. C. J. Keightley reported the recent arrival of Mrs. Keightley and their three daughters to join him in the newly opened area at Nipa in the Nembi Valley. Conditions are gradually being made more liveable for them. Meantime the area of movement has been extended by the government and cordial relations established with the local people.

The Rev. Gordon Young, Chairman of the District, and Mrs. Young, are on a visit to the other Pacific and Asian mission districts and to England.

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION:

Following the General Conference at Sydney last month, a consultation was held of those interested in the proposed combined theological training institution for the New Guinea and Solomon Islands area. The General Secretary (the Rev. S. G. Andrews) and the Rev. D. I. A. McDonald represented our Board at the discussions.

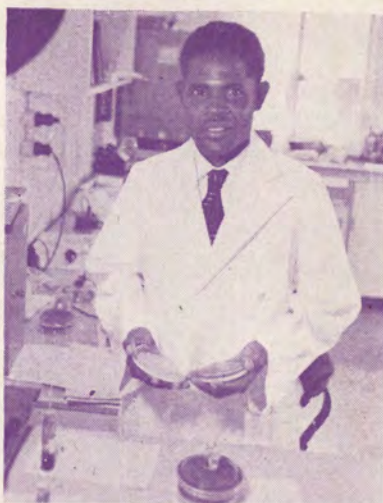
AUXILIARY CELEBRATIONS:

Recently the New Plymouth evening auxiliary celebrated their 21st birthday. Over 40 gathered, including Miss C. Squire, the first president. A greeting was received from Mrs. E. D. Patchett, whose vision and faith had brought the auxiliary there into being. In 21 years, £1,286 had been raised for missions. At the meeting, Sister Beulah Reeves showed pictures of her work at the Bougainville District Girls' School and answered the questions of members.

Sister Beulah was also the speaker at the South Auckland District Convention held in Sister Beulah's home church at Te Kowhai. The 90 members present were impressed with Sister Beulah's vivid account of her girls, who come from all parts of Bougainville and beyond, speaking 20 languages. Yet they learn to live together helped by common studies in which English becomes a common language. Mothercraft, hygiene, childcraft and cooking are all taught.

AN ANSWERED PRAYER:

Speaking at Te Kowhai, Sister Beulah Reeves told how she had once prayed that God would send a teacher



Nathan Riqeo learning to be a laboratory technician at Wellington Hospital.

to the Bougainville Girls' School, for which an appeal was being made. Her prayer was answered when the call of God came unmistakably to her.

Are you praying that present teaching vacancies for teachers (men and women) experienced at the intermediate school level may offer for service in the Solomon Islands?

NEW STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

By courtesy of the Hospital Board, and helped by the balance of previous Lepers' Trust Board grants, the Mission has brought to New Zealand two Solomon Islands medical "dressers." Gillian Lai is learning X-ray work and Nathan Riqeo becoming a hospital technician, at Wellington Public Hospital. CORSO has provided the scholarship by which Miss Vivian Mamupio has commenced a maternity nursing course at St. Helen's Hospital, Auckland. Three young nurses are taking the full Australian nurses' certificate course at the Papua Medical College, Port Moresby.

CLEARING BOX 5023

NEW CONVERTS:

(Our March issue carried a report of decisions for Christ at Tari last Christmas.)

This was the first public declaration and many who were ready to make this stand that day had indicated privately that they believed.

Since then, more have done so privately and no doubt the Spirit will move again in the near future for these also to be called upon to make the stand in public. All but one of the 18 are well interested in the appropriate class. Speaking for the women and girls who are my care, there is active participation, marked progress in prayer and discussion, and changed lives. The men have spent much time sorting out the problems. The eating of a pig which has been sacrificed to the spirits — wonderful to think that they brought it up isn't it? I have no hesitation in saying as far as we can ever know, these people have received Christ.

—Edith James, Tari.

RECORD LEPERS' TRUST BOARD GRANTS:

We do not receive £8,500 every day. That however was the amount of a recent cheque from the Lepers' Trust Board. £4,000 is for our general medical and leprosy work in the British Solomon Islands and £4,500 is for the maintenance, insurance, etc., of the leprosy relief vessel "Ozama Twomey." We quote from the press release authorised by the Board:

"The biggest single item in this year's allocation is the provision of £12,000 to build four new hospital dispensaries in the British South

Solomons and the New Hebrides with a view to reducing infant and maternal mortality in these backward areas. As a result of his own observation of conditions for mothers and their babies, Mr. Twomey last year made a special appeal aimed at saving lives by building dispensaries to meet this problem.

"So it is that this item appears for the first time in the Board's allocation. It is the board's intention that as further funds become available, more such dispensaries will be built. Details of the allocations are as follows:"

£3,000 under this heading is being offered to the Methodist Mission.

A DEACONESS ON PATROL

On Palm Sunday I was up at 6 a.m. and left with Moki, Unkong and David Dising, for a village several miles away. We took short cuts, climbing down and up ravines, tight-rope walking along logs, etc. One river was waist deep and very swift. I emptied my pockets and shortened my camera strap, and was very grateful for Moki's helping hand. We arrived at Tokunutu about 9 a.m. and had a good service. In the afternoon I talked with Maiha about his pastoral problems. As the rain continued I put on my yellow plastic cape, my green hat, my blue shoes and clutched my red plastic case holding hymn book, Bible and sermon, and felt cheerful going to the next village for the afternoon service. These little services are great opportunities. The people want to hear, and the Mission boys who ask to come with me seem to be

(Continued on inside back cover)

CALLING THE AUXILIARIES

Greetings all,

I guess we all know many folk who drift along from day to day closing their eyes to the perplexing problems that surround us.

They have no burning desire to do anything to help the thousands of refugees who have almost despaired of ever having a home of their own again! No conscience bothers them about the way coloured peoples are treated — why not leave them alone to fend for themselves? — why upset their happy carefree way of life? — etc., etc. Thank God there are still those who do care, many who respond to the Great Giver of all life, who have love in their hearts for the less favoured and unfortunate ones, whose eyes are open, looking for the opportunity to help.

We rejoice to know that throughout N.Z. there are so many women who continue to show their interest by their loyal support of Christian workers here and overseas.

CONVENTIONS:

In most districts Conventions have been held. Record attendances prove that our women appreciate and value these gatherings.

All attending have enjoyed rich fellowship. Interesting guest speakers from other churches have been favoured, as they bring news of other missions in other lands, so broadening our outlook. Educational sessions about our own work have also been a highlight.

Thanks must go to presidents and district councils for their thoughtful and careful planning.

How quickly the months move along. We no sooner hear of Sisters and workers taking special training than they seem to be through and eager to be on their way.

Miss Gladys Larkin here in Christchurch will be dedicated on July 10th and will leave for the Solomons on July 28th.

Dr. Hoult has brought over a wonderful collection of coloured slides taken in the Solomons. He will be showing them as he moves round on deputation. Make a point of seeing them if he comes your way. It is a chance to see pictures of mothers with their babies, bright happy school children at work and play, boat loads including all ages of folk, moving from one island to another crowding on until you wonder how they remain afloat; strong and healthy boat crews, by the look of their bronzed and dusky bodies, skilled in the handling of boats and cargo, and loving to bask in glorious sunshine at every opportunity, young men quickly learning to become competent builders in permanent materials. All these and many more show so clearly the progress and intimate life of the island people.

As you watch they come alive. They become members of a sister church, a young church that you feel you want to help to become more independent; a church that is producing leaders and teachers and even missionaries for their near neighbours in the New Guinea highlands.

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By the time you read this letter the Special Women's Conference

being held at Marton will be over. I would urge all women of the church to make an effort to hear the representative who speaks in their district.

We will all welcome any suggestions that we feel will improve and strengthen our women's meetings. There may not be the answer to your

local problem but it is wonderful what good leadership and enthusiasm by even one person will do. Do not be afraid of change and new ways, give them a try.

With best wishes to all,

Amy E. Richards,
President.

CLEARING BOX 5023 (continued)

specially attentive. So it seemed that afternoon and I have since had the opportunity to speak further with Ungkong and David. Moki is in my Bible class and has been trying very hard lately to be a true Christian. Mawung, who brought my pack on the bike has long been a Christian and he loves to preach too. Please pray for all of these.

Translation work is going ahead and we are now working on the eleventh chapter of Luke. We often have to puzzle over the right way to say things, but it is all rewarding and interesting and taking on a new meaning for us.

—Pamela V. Beaumont,
Touu.

EASTER CAMP AT BILUA:

People came from different villages around Vella Lavella, Ranonga and Banga. Most of them came by canoe, but some came by ship and others on foot. I think there were over 600 people altogether but not all of them were campers. Rev. A. Watson had prepared a timetable for us and three studies. Our day started at half-past five and finished late at night. Early in the morning the cooks prepared the breakfast; we ate and washed and had a quiet time of Bible reading and prayer. After that, we read

our study and when the bell rang, we went to our groups. There were 20 groups and some teachers were chosen to lead them. We sat outside under the trees. Our studies were about Judas, the crowd and the three Marys. For all our Easter services, our church was very very full and many people had to stay outside. On Saturday afternoon, we had some soccer matches. Ten different teams entered. We did something different every night. On Friday night there was a choir competition. On Saturday night we had a concert outside. The high school boys did an Easter play and there were other items too. Then on Sunday night, Mr. Miller showed us some coloured pictures about Sunday school children all over the world. On Monday we finished Easter Camp with the Lord's Supper. We liked camp because many people came together like one big family and we studied together and thought about our Lord Jesus Christ. We would like another Easter Camp next year.

—Amos Loke,
A high school student.

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Also Rev. and Mrs. Aisake Vula, P.O. Box 36 Honiara, British Solomon Islands

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(For reasons of space, New Zealand workers only are listed below)

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Rev. and Mrs. C. J. Keightley, Nipa, via Mendi.

TARI CIRCUIT: Surface and Airmail—Methodist Overseas Missions, TARI via GOROKA, TERRITORY OF NEW GUINEA.

Sister Edith James	Miss Joyce K. Rosser
Mr. G. T. Dey	*On furlough in New Zealand.

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