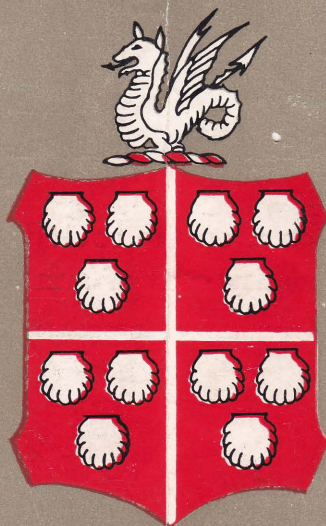


METHODIST CHURCH

CEYLON



JUBILEE SOUVENIR

1814-1964

Cover

The crest on the cover is the
Wesley coat of arms.

METHODIST CHURCH

CEYLON

“The Methodists are one
People in all the world”.

John Wesley.

JUBILEE SOUVENIR

1814 — 1964

JUNE 1964



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CEYLON

"The Methodists are one
People in all the world."
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JUBILEE SOUVENIR



Motors
LAWSON

1814 — 1964

JUNE 1964

THE JUBILEE SOUVENIR

150 YEARS

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THE JUBILEE SOUVENIR

1890 YEAR

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Rev. F. S. de Silva
(President of Conference)

FOREWORD

BY THE PRESIDENT

THIS Jubilee Souvenir has been in the making for nearly a year. Throughout that period we have kept the Church informed of what was going into it through the Church Record and also invited people to send their literary contributions.

We are glad to be able to present this magazine to you with articles of outstanding value. Among these may be mentioned the article on John Wesley, the article on Thomas Coke and the article that seeks to give in short compass the story of one hundred and fifty years of Ceylon Methodism. A fuller history is in preparation and is expected to be out next year.

Greetings and messages have come to us from distant parts of the world. The new autonomous Churches of Ghana and Nigeria have established a bond of fellowship with us as their messages show.

All but three circuits have sent us accounts of the beginnings of Methodism in their midst. It was important that these be recorded at this juncture.

What is a Souvenir for ? It is intended to create certain impressions in the people so that they may get the right perspective for the future. We expect that those who read the Souvenir will find that, that end has been at least partly achieved. We say partly because we are conscious of the shortcomings of this Souvenir. There might have been a few more features brought into it if we could have found the writers to take responsibility for them.

Our gratitude to those who have given their time and energy to this task is best shown by reading it.

One of the great dangers of the Church today is that it might be paralysed by its own great history. Fortunately, this has not happened to Methodism. As we move on to the future we must always remain movable, energetic and flexible; movable by not being tied down to ecclesiastical rules and past traditions. If God summons us we must be prepared to pull up our pegs, and pack up our tent and move on to unknown territory. Because of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit we can always remain energetic. We remain flexible because we have a far bigger vision of Christendom than can be circumscribed by Methodism or any other denomination.

One hundred and fifty years of our history with its successes and failures is now closed. We begin not merely a new chapter but a new volume.

The adage "history repeats itself", may be true only in certain respects. Our world view has completely changed from that of our forefathers. The fundamentals of our faith remain unchanged. The foundation of the Church has been laid once and for all. But the structures of life, and worship and service inevitably have to change.

For this task, in the words of Dr. John Scott Lidgett, the father of modern Methodism, "Methodism needs not only a warmed heart but also an intelligent mind."

FORWARD

The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been elected to the various offices of the Association for the year 1900.

The names of the persons who have been elected to the various offices of the Association for the year 1900 are as follows:

President: Mr. J. H. Smith
Vice-President: Mr. J. H. Smith
Secretary: Mr. J. H. Smith
Treasurer: Mr. J. H. Smith

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF
THE WORLD METHODIST COUNCIL

Bishop Fred P. Corson
President World Methodist Council



Personally and as President of the World Methodist Council, it is my happy privilege to extend to our Church in Ceylon congratulations upon 150 years of faithful and fruitful service for the Kingdom of God of Ceylon. During these years, the Church in Ceylon has written a very important chapter in the history of Christianity. You have been faithful to your trust and have maintained your witness with honour, dignity and fidelity. In these changing times, we thank God for all of you and our prayers attend you as you face the next century of your service in this very important part of the world.

We want you to know that you are bound to all of the Methodists with close ties of Christian fellowship and are in our prayers constantly.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF
THE BRITISH CONFERENCE



Rev. Dr. Frederic Greeves
President of the British Conference

It is my great privilege to send the congratulations and good wishes of the Methodist Church in Great Britain to the Methodist Church in Ceylon.

We rejoice with you in all your Jubilee Celebrations. With you, we thank God for those of our two countries who began to establish the Methodist Church in your beautiful Island. We are equally grateful for all who have continued that work and who continue it today.

The three weeks that I was able to spend a few years ago, visiting some of your Churches and meeting your ministers and women workers have increased the happiness with which I look forward to sharing in your celebrations and in the great Conference which will begin your autonomy.

I know that I speak for all our people when I pray God's richest blessing not only on these historic events, but also upon the years ahead. May Christ's Kingdom be extended and His Church built up in Ceylon !

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN IRELAND

Rev. Frederick E. Hill

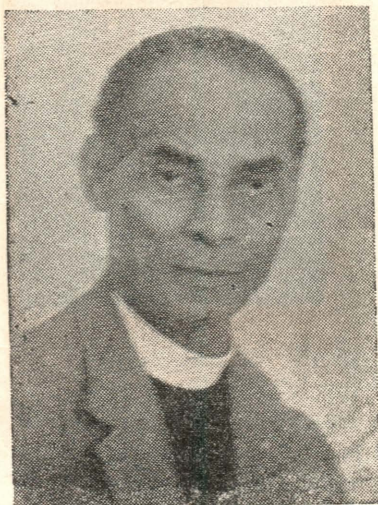
President of the Methodist Church in Ireland



It has been a great joy to all our people in Ireland to know of the forthcoming inauguration of the Methodist Conference in Ceylon. I would like to take this opportunity of sending our good wishes in all your plans and preparations for this notable event, and to assure you how very much we shall be remembering you on the occasion of your inaugural ceremonies next June.

Our links with the Methodist Church in Ceylon go back to the very beginning of the work and I have been recalling that it was in January 150 years ago that Thomas Coke set out for Ceylon accompanied by his six companions, amongst whom were three from the Irish Conference—James Lynch, George Erskine and J. McKenny. It has been a privilege and a joy for our Church to be partners with you throughout this century and a half, both through the service of these pioneers and that of the men and women who have followed in succeeding years. We pray that God will greatly bless the Methodist people in Ceylon as you move forward to a new chapter of your history. In this new development be assured that the love and prayers of all our Methodist people in Ireland will be with you, in the conviction that in the time to come God will lead His Church forward to yet greater and more thrilling tasks.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE
METHODIST CHURCH IN GHANA



Rev. Francis C. F. Grant
President, Methodist Church, Ghana

It is with great delight that we send our heartiest congratulations on the occasion of the hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Ceylon Methodism. We rejoice to know that this anniversary coincides with the inauguration of the autonomous Methodist Church in Ceylon, and assure you of our warmest best wishes and prayers for the future. The Methodist Church in Ghana has been admiring you for the ways you have yielded yourselves to be guided and enabled by the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, and believe that He is leading you to take a more vigorous part in the world-wide fellowship of His people, and in carrying out the mission to establish His Kingdom on earth.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN NIGERIA

It is a great pleasure that you have asked the Methodist Church, Nigeria, to send you a message on the occasion of your Church becoming autonomous in 1964 and of its commemorating a century and a half of Methodism in Ceylon.

On behalf of the Methodist Church, Nigeria, I heartily congratulate the Church in Ceylon on this great day when it becomes autonomous. We praise God for the marvellous way in which He has by His Holy Spirit led you to this goal since this past century and a half. We rejoice with every member and minister of that Church, and assure them of our constant prayer that they may continue to grow in grace and that God may help them to make the best use of their new opportunities for evangelism for His glory and for the further extension of His Kingdom in the life and heart of people. The Nigerian Conference was pleased to learn of your autonomy at its last meeting and prayed that God may bless it abundantly. We hope that your autonomy will strengthen you in Church Union in that part of the world. We would urge you to press on with it whatever difficulties there may be, for we believe it is the will of God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that His Church should be one. We Methodists are going into Church Union with the Anglicans and the Presbyterians in Nigeria, and we are grateful for the ideas and inspiration that we have drawn from the Church Union Scheme in that part of the world.



Rev. Joseph O. E. Soremekun
*President of the Methodist
Church, Nigeria*

And I am very happy to inform you that the three uniting Churches have fixed December 1965 as the target date for coming into union. We solicit the Ceylon Church for prayers for divine guidance and blessing on this preponderant proposal.

**MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE
METHODIST CONFERENCE IN GREAT BRITAIN**



David Foot Nash
*(Vice-President of the Methodist
Conference in Great Britain)*

“The glory of young men is their strength”, said Solomon
(Proverbs 20:29)

The glory of young churches, too, is their strength. They need not be strong in numbers. But they do need to be strong in faith. This was Abraham’s secret. He was “strong in faith, giving glory to God.” *(Romans 4:20)*.

The Methodist Mother Church in Great Britain prays for her beautiful Daughter in Ceylon that, now in her own independent home, she will know daily the strength which God supplies, through His Beloved Son.

**MESSAGE FROM THE FIELD SECRETARY OF THE
METHODIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY**

Rev. D. B. Childe

M. M. S. Secretary for India, Ceylon & Burma.



Sometimes we suddenly wake up to realise that we are getting older ! The Methodist Church, Ceylon, looks back to a history covering a period from the first inception of the work, of 150 years. We can never forget the zeal and devotion of your first missionary leader, as he pleaded before Conference to let him go, even at his own expense, and as he died on the journey. Equally, we honour the Christians who became the leaders, sometimes the first leaders, of the newly planted Church, in the early beginnings of Methodism in Ceylon.

For many years the Methodist Church in Ceylon has been free to decide, under the guidance of God, its own policy. Now, as you become an autonomous Methodist Conference, we all greet this occasion with joy and thankfulness, and we look for God's word for your Church in the future. May you be as aware of God's guidance, grace, and power, as you are aware of all the continuing love and prayers of all your friends throughout the world.

MESSAGE FROM REV. S. GEORGE MENDIS



Rev. S. G. Mendis
(Former Chairman,
All-Ceylon Methodist Synod)

We sometimes think and speak of "our" Church, forgetting that it is God's Church, and that ours is the important duty of tending it. While we look after that part of God's Church which is directly ours to look after, we need to think kindly and gratefully of all others who belong to God's Church under various names and in many places, and remember to pray for them all.

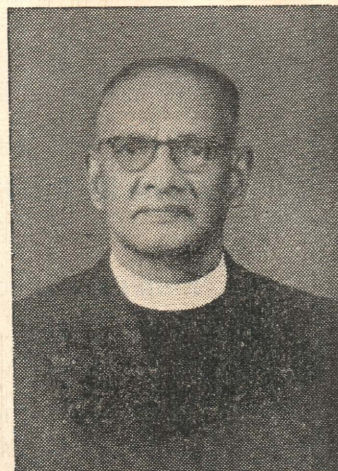
A serious fact we have to face is that the Church in Ceylon shows no increase in numbers. I recall a circuit in which forty to forty-five years ago we had during seven years a hundred converts. All but a handful of these have remained faithful through the years. But we have not helped them enough in bringing up their families, and their children and children's children have not remained within the fold.

We have heard of a group of Christians in Africa who met ten years ahead of their jubilee to consider how they were to celebrate it. After much thinking and praying, they decided they would attempt to double their numbers within those ten years. And they were blessed in their undertaking to perform the primary duty Jesus laid upon His followers and by God's grace they reached their target, and they had twice their number to reach out for more.

Today our prayers are mostly for our needs. But Christ said our Father knoweth what we need even before we ask Him. Let us pray more for God's Holy Spirit in us and in His Church and that His will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

MESSAGE FROM THE REV. DR. JAMES S. MATHER

This anniversary is a time for deep thanksgiving to God, and rededication of ourselves to His service, placing our entire trust in Him. When God called Moses for a great job, He said to him, "Take the serpent by its tail" (Exodus 4:4). You know, it is a symbolic call—not to be frightened by, or to run away from threatening dangers or gigantic tasks to which one is called, but to trust God, to obey Him and to face the future with confidence and courage. God, in whom is our trust, changes the life-destroying poisonous serpent, into the life-protecting shepherd's rod. He transforms dangers and difficulties into occasions for growth and fruitfulness, and opportunities for victory.



Rev. Dr. James S. Mather
(former Chairman, All-Ceylon
Methodist Synod)

With autonomy and the revolutions in the country, there is now greater need on the part of every Methodist, for more prayer, more work, more courage, and more dependence upon God. For instance, hereafter, our Conference's decisions are final, and there will be no higher authority to review or to give approval or to refer back for reconsideration. This means we have a very serious responsibility. Besides, there is now greater need for every Christian to be an active worker in the Church and a "witness", because our unfinished task is extensive, and because it is impossible and undesirable to maintain an adequate staff. The Bible teaches that it is basic and essential that every Christian should be a "witness" for his Saviour and Lord, "by Life and by word".

As through Moses, God will do great things for our country and people if, like him, we refuse to be frightened by the dangers that encircle us, and decide to trust God and obey. Let our dedication at this time be,

*"What He says, we will do
Where He sends, we will go,
Never fear, only trust and obey".*

MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP OF COLOMBO

I am glad to accept the invitation so kindly given me of sending a message of greeting and good will from the Diocese of Colombo to the Methodist Church of Ceylon at this time when you are commemorating the 150th anniversary of the coming of the first Methodist missionaries to Ceylon. The arrival of that little company, not without loss and hazard, was a great day in the history of Methodism, for it marked the beginning of the first Methodist Mission to the East; and you cannot doubt that since that day the work has received much blessing from God. You may well look back today with thankfulness; and in your rejoicing we are glad to share. But you will look forward too in hope, not least now as you move onward to full autonomy, that God will continue to use you for His glory and for the extension of His Kingdom in the days which lie ahead; and in that hope we share no less.

The Rt. Rev. Rollo Graham Campbell
Bishop of Colombo.



Mr. H. Watson Pieris, O.B.E.
(Vice-President)

MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP OF KURUNEGALA

It is with great pleasure that I send this message to the editor of the illustrated souvenir commemorating the 150th anniversary of the advent of Methodism in this country and the attainment of full autonomy by the Methodist Church of Ceylon.

Sir Emerson Tennant in his 'History of Christianity in Ceylon' pays tribute to the early Methodist Missionaries for emphasising the need for preaching the Gospel in the open air in town and village, as the foremost means of commending the claims of the Lord Jesus to the non-Christian population. And we must be thankful to God that the Methodist Church has never lost this emphasis in its life and work, throughout these many years.

Furthermore, one recalls with deep joy the great work of the Rev. Daniel John Gogerly on 'Ceylon Buddhism', and the continuing tradition within the Methodist Church, of a sympathetic and scholarly encounter with representatives of the Theravada Buddhists. Last but not least, many of us in other Churches have benefited greatly from tradition of lay leadership manifested in the polity of Methodism.

Mindful of God's many mercies to the Methodist Church in these and other ways, I pray that He may bless, purify and use this Church to the praise of His Name and the benefit of our people in the days to come.

The Rt. Rev. C. L. Wickremasinghe
Bishop of Kurunegala

A MESSAGE FROM THE JAFFNA DIOCESE OF THE CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA

A Church may well be proud of being able to celebrate its 150th anniversary. If the matter be treated confidentially, I may confess to a certain feeling of jealousy in the matter, because you have beaten us by two years. We hope to celebrate our 150th anniversary in 1966.

Because the Missionaries who came in those days did their work so well, the machinery of the Church functions so smoothly now that we have a tendency to imagine that it has always been so; and we have a tendency to forget the difficulties no longer imaginable to us. We tend to forget the dedication and the unflagging resolution that have gone into the making of Christian enterprise.

If, therefore, we are proud about the past of the Christian enterprise, it is with good reason. May the good Lord make us all worthy to inherit the labours of those who have gone before us; and may He help us also to inherit their spirit, their courage and their devotions, as He has helped us to inherit their achievements.

The Rt. Rev. S. Kulendran
Bishop of Jaffna Diocese
Church of South India

MESSAGE FROM THE REV. E. MIDDLETON WEAVER

Rev. E. Middleton Weaver

*(who came to Ceylon in 1883 and
left in 1941 and who is now living
in retirement in Belfast, Ireland)*

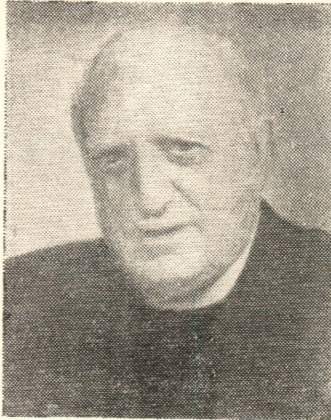


As a message for your Jubilee Brochure, there are only two points that occur to me. The first relates to the many difficulties and hindrances that have beset the work of the Church in recent years. I think the Church should regard them as opportunities. For some years I lived on the shore of one of the swiftest flowing Irish lakes. Just opposite, about three miles across, was another village to which people were constantly going. And I noticed that the boatmen never waited for a favourable tide. Their method was to pull up several miles against the current, then to dash through it, reach the slack water on the other side of the flood and drift down easily to the desired port.

So it seems to me the true attitude for Ceylon Christians at the present time is not to bemoan the difficulties but to regard them as God given opportunities which may be laid hold of for purposes of advance. The other point relates to the unfortunate divisions that have developed in the island in recent years, especially the division between Sinhalese and Tamils. There should be absolutely no trace of this in the Church if it wants God's blessing. I am bold to say this because there was a trace of it—just a trace—even in the ministry when I left Ceylon. I hope and pray that it has now been cleared away. There must be absolute brotherhood at the centre if the Church is to become a reconciling power between the riven fragments of Ceylon society.

Wishing you every blessing in the celebrations.

MESSAGE FROM THE REV. A. STANLEY BEATY



Rev. A. Stanley Beaty
Former Chairman Southern District

“What hath God wrought!”
As we gathered on the shore at Weligama on that first Pilgrimage in 1939, I pictured Erskine and Ault looking down on the scene and saying this to one another. Now, after another twenty five years, we are commemorating the 150th anniversary of the landing of the Missionaries and it is being marked by the setting up of the Conference of the Methodist Church in Ceylon and my wife and I wish to send you our greetings and sincere wishes for a time of great blessing and renewal.

The Christian Church in Ceylon, as in many other places, has been facing many problems in recent times. Some of these difficulties have already turned into opportunities, and we rejoice to know with how much faith and courage the future is being faced.

In the second part of that 1939 Pilgrimage, as we made our way from Galle Station to the service in the Dutch Church in the Fort (where the first Methodist service in the Island was held in 1814), we passed under a pandal on which was a banner bearing the words :

*“ We'll praise Him for all that is past
And trust Him for all that's to come ”.*

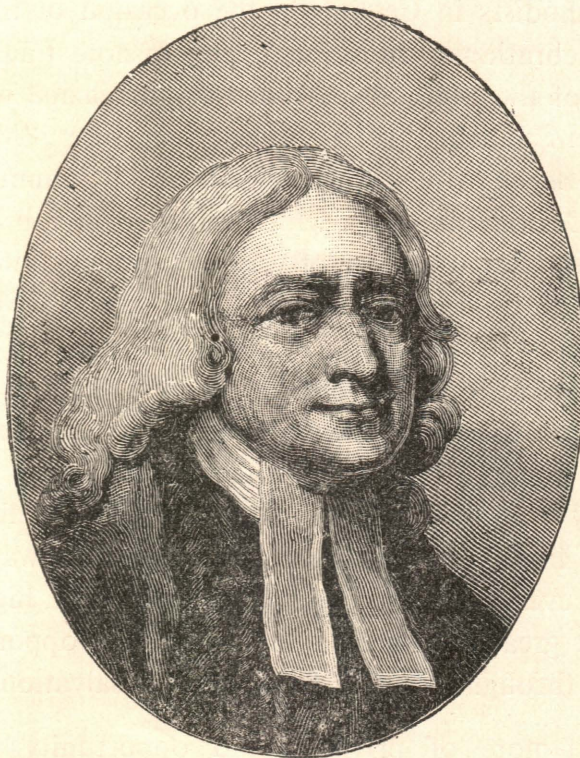
It is in that spirit that you are setting out on a new stage of your Pilgrimage; and from our home in Kent, which lies very near to the famous Pilgrims Way in this country, we send you this assurance of our prayers and continual remembrance.

GREETINGS FROM "THE KINGDOM OVERSEAS"

The Editor and all the 69,000 readers of "The Kingdom Overseas", the magazine of the Methodist Missionary Society, send special greetings and congratulations to all Methodists in Ceylon on the occasion of these great Jubilee celebrations. It is interesting to note that the very first issue of the Methodist Missionary magazine which was published in January 1816 under the title "Missionary Notices" began with an article entitled 'Communications from the Ceylon Mission', which included in full six letters from missionaries in Ceylon 'of very encouraging intelligence'. The first of those letters begins, 'This island is by nature one of the most beautiful in the world' and the last ends 'If I were now in Europe, surrounded by my relations, and the friends of Jesus whom I sincerely love, at the Divine call with the sacred flame I this moment feel in my heart, I would break away from their affectionate embraces, bid farewell to the land of my nativity, brave the dangers of the watery deep, encounter every difficulty and consider myself highly honoured and greatly privileged in having this opportunity of preaching through Jesus, a free and full salvation'.

That note of privilege and opportunity has been sounded again and again through the pages of our magazine over the last 150 years by those whose joy it has been to work in Ceylon. Just as the photographs of Ceylon's beauty have adorned our pages, so have the accounts of the growth of the Church in Ceylon delighted our hearts. Our readers will look forward to seeing the pictures and story of your Jubilee celebrations and welcome this new era of fellowship with the now autonomous Methodist Church in Ceylon.

Miss Pauline M. Webb
Editor, The Kingdom Overseas



Rev. John Wesley

John Wesley—A Man to Know

Milburn P. Akers

Editor, Chicago Sun-Times

A classical scholar, Oxford don and ordained clergyman of the Church of England, John Wesley, short, slight of stature, and in his lifetime plagued with illnesses, would seem to be an unlikely man to challenge debauchery, social injustices, and the complacency of 18th century England. But that he did despite mob violence, the scorn of the aristocracy, the condemnation of the press, and the displeasure of the authorities of his own church.

He did it in a manner which later caused Woodrow Wilson, himself a trailblazing scholar, to remark :

"The Church was dead and Wesley awakened it; the poor were neglected and Wesley sought them out; the gospel was shrunken into formulas and Wesley flung it fresh upon the air once more in the speech of common man."

This man whose career was a series of successful contradictions sought not only to win men's souls but also to put an end to the social injustices from which they suffered. He sought the reformation of the Church of England. The establishment of the Methodist Church (first in America—then after his death in England) was one of the results. The contemplative life appealed to him. But he became a man of action. His frail body demanded repose, but he drove himself unrelentingly. He was versed in the abstractions of philosophy, but in over-riding social consciousness compelled him to fight evils of his day.

The parish pulpit could not contain this man so long as there was a social evil uncorrected, an injustice unassailed. And England was rife with social injustice when John Wesley was born, the 15th of 19 children, in the rectory at Epworth, a small community 160 miles north of London, June 17, 1703.

Parson Samuel Wesley of the Anglican (Episcopal) faith had not been given any sinecure when he was assigned to the Epworth parish. It provided only a bare subsistence for the family. And it would not have been that save for his wife Susanna, a woman of exceptional talents, character, and energy.

Susanna—daughter, spouse, and mother of clergymen—had a strong religious conviction. Additionally, she possessed exceptional managerial capacity, a talent augmented by methodical habits. These traits were later evident in son John, a heritage from the woman properly termed the "mother of Methodism".

Susanna conducted her household on a rigid schedule seeing to it that the children not only carried out the duties assigned but that they were diligent in the pursuit of knowledge and faithful in the exercise of their religious obligations.

Soon after his 10th birthday, young Wesley received a scholarship which enabled him to enroll at London's Charterhouse School, where, in a somewhat bleak atmosphere, he pursued the study of Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Philosophy. In due course, he qualified for admission to Christ Church College at Oxford.

Oxford was the intellectual centre of England although then perhaps at its lowest ebb of scholarship. As Southey said of it: "The waters of Helicon were too much polluted with the wine of Bacchus."

Into this environment came John Wesley, son of the indomitable Susanna. Only five feet, four inches, in height, never weighting more than 120 pounds, frail and never in perfect health. Wesley did not succumb to his surroundings. He was studious, methodical, and, in the view of many of his associates, austere, quaint, and Puritanic. Even then, Wesley dared to be different.

As a former Charterhouse scholar, Wesley received an allowance of forty pounds a year to defray his Oxford expenses. There was little help to be had from the Epworth rectory of his parents. But he was indifferent to creature comforts. He had a passion for knowledge. That knowledge generated a passion for the souls of men. His concern for their souls created in him a consuming determination to rid society of the conditions which caused a debasement in which the spiritual could not flourish.

Wesley had determined on the ministry. That his would be a ministry characterized by zeal for a social gospel was inevitable even though the Church of his day was but little concerned with men's souls, let alone with their temporal abode.

Wesley, following several years of Oxford residence, was ordained as a priest of the established Church of England. His scholarship won early recognition. He was awarded a fellowship at Oxford's Lincoln College. For 15 years Wesley, who had entered Oxford at 17, was student, teacher, and sometimes itinerant minister in the surrounding countryside. For two years he assisted his father at Epworth. Then he returned in 1729 to Oxford where his brother Charles, then a student, had gotten together a study club, which, in the cynicism of the times, was ridiculed as the Holy Club.

John, upon his return, joined the Holy Club. He was quickly the leader of the group. He taught its members his methodical way of life, methodical habits of study, work, and worship. The little band of Holy Club members followed his instructions so assiduously that, in derision, fellow students termed them "Methodists," a name now borne proudly by millions. Thus, at its inception, Methodism was a way of life, a movement within the established Church of England created by a band of dedicated young men convinced that life had purpose and meaning, the spiritual essence of which was to be achieved in both man's relation to God and man's relation to man.

Those among us who could confine Methodist clergymen to their pulpits on Sundays and limit them to pastoral calls on weekdays, those who would restrict

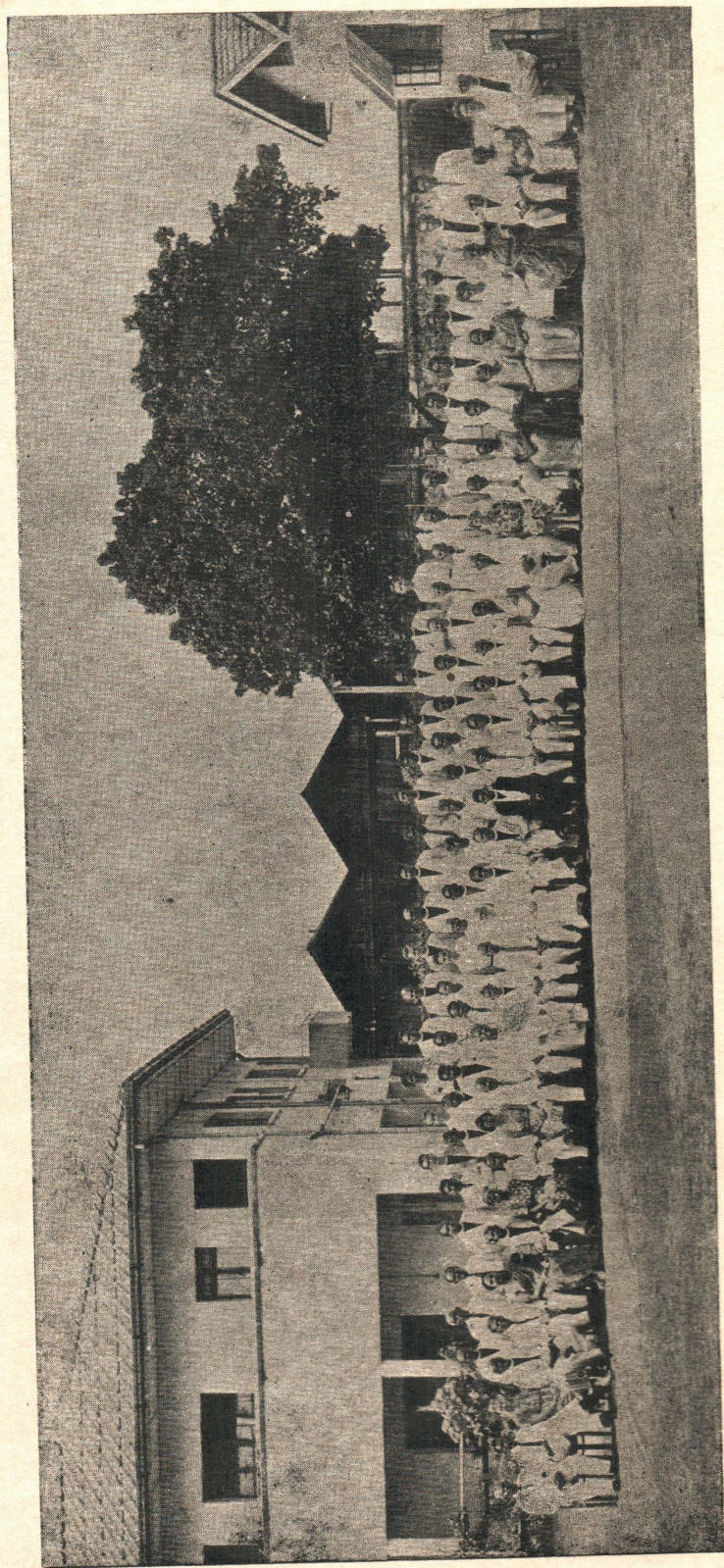
their utterances to abstract theological themes, would have been uncomfortable in the presence of John Wesley. For religion, as he conceived it, was not only a seven-day-a-week affair concerned with the hereafter but was also a seven-day-a-week affair concerned with the present.

This distinction should be made: John Wesley was not a rebel, John Wesley was a reformer. He did not seek to overthrow established institutions, he sought to redeem them. He accepted the established Church of England, of which he was a priest. He accepted the monarchial and the economic system of England; in fact, he opposed the American Revolution. But his acceptance of established institutions did not mean he accepted the abuses and distortions which, in course of time, permeate most establishments. In this respect he was not unlike Erasmus who, several centuries earlier, sought to redeem the Roman Catholic Church from within.

Unfortunately, those who control established institutions too frequently regard reformers as rebels; too frequently consider those who seek but to redeem as subversive. Institutions which become callous to reformers achieve a rigidity which breeds rebels. That is one of history's oldest, most disregarded teachings.

The American colonies contributed to John Wesley's early education. In 1735 he, accompanied by brother Charles, went to Georgia. His stern preachings against frivolity, added to his denunciations of the uncouth ways and unrestrained indulgences of the frontiersmen, created dissension in his parish. Wesley, his overseas venture a failure, returned to England. But he had profited. Thereafter he was intolerant of sin but had compassion for sinners.

Wesley had encountered a band of Moravians, a devout religious group, on his voyage. Their simple ways and intense religious conviction intrigued him. He made a trip to Germany, their homeland, to study their ways and inspiration. Returning to England, he resumed the organization of Methodist Societies on the Oxford plan. Then came his great decision to engage, as some of his associates were already doing, in outdoor preaching



The First Methodist Conference Ceylon as elected by the Synod of January 1964

This was a practice he embraced reluctantly. It shattered virtually every concept of propriety held by Church of England clergymen many of whom thought God was to be found only in cathedrals and parish churches.

William Blackstone, great legal scholar of the day, observed that he had not heard a single message from a London pulpit with any more Christianity than the orations of Cicero. He maintained it was impossible for him to determine whether the various ministers were followers of Mohammed, Confucius, or Christ. The consensus of those who wrote at the time—such men as Dr. Johnson, Voltaire, Bishop Horsley and Blackstone—was that few preachers of the day were more than mere “retellers of platitudes,” as one of them aptly put it.

The great unwashed, as well as most of the washed, did not attend church. So Wesley took the church or, more precisely, the message seldom heard in the church of that day to them. Many of the ministers of the established church, shocked at his outdoor preaching, protested. But Wesley and his colleagues continued even though mobs were on occasions turned upon them.

Once when asked where was his church, Wesley replied: “I look upon all the world as my parish.”

Wesley rode horseback throughout England, Scotland, and Wales. And he ventured as far afield as Ireland. So, too, did his colleagues, the preachers, called Methodists. Everywhere they went, they organised Methodist Societies preached to miners, factory workers, farmers, and motley crowds.

Their mission, as stated by Wesley, was “to reform the nation, more particularly the church; to spread scriptural holiness over the land.”

Wesley describes in his meticulously kept Journal sixty mobs he and others confronted as they carried the Gospel message throughout the land.

“Always look a mob in the face.” So Wesley counseled his fellow workers even though he was once “struck down three times”—dragged, cursed, reviled, shoved, and hit.

Five thousand miles a year for fifty years, this once sickly man rode horseback, neither winter's storms, nor summer's heat, nor mobs dissuading him from his appointed task. And as he rode, he read or edited manuscripts. He every waking moment (he seldom slept more than six hours a night) was productive.

Wesley lived his life by a code expressed, in part, in this bit of advice he gave his fellow workers: “Be diligent. Never be unemployed. Never be triflingly employed. Never trifle away time; neither spend any more time at any one place than is strictly necessary. Be punctual. Do not mend our rules but keep them; not for warmth but for conscience' sake.”

Wesley was a prolific writer, a translator and an editor, accounting for more than 400 books and pamphlets. He worked in odd moments. “It must have been a remarkable sight,” says Thomas Walter Herbert, “however familiar it became on the highways of England; a small man in scrupulously neat clerical dress, jogging somewhat awkwardly along the road, reins hanging loose on the horse's neck, book in one hand and pencil busy in the other....”

As Wesley's societies grew in number and in membership, he increasingly employed the printed word to maintain contact with the “people called Methodists”. Says the Cambridge History of English Literature: “It need only be said that he (Wesley) was with the pen, as with the tongue, a master of direct English and simple strength.”

This mastery of direct English and simple strength was employed in his countless discourses and in his voluminous writings; it was employed unstintingly as he laboured to win men's souls and to end the evils of the day. For Wesley, as was said of another, “took the ancient passion for the souls of men and set it down in the stream of modern life.”

This admirable quality does him an injustice however, if one reads only his sermons. To know Wesley, one should skim through his letters. Here the person shows through. He could be stern with reprimand, but also warm and cheery. Many women were among his correspondents. Wesley was a man to know. One bio-

grapher says his "natural temper" was "gay and sprightly, with a turn for wit and humour". He had charm of manner of which listening was a component. People found it easy to confide in him. And when he talked, they listened eagerly. The literary lion of the day was Dr. Johnson who once remarked to Boswell, his biographer, "I hate to meet John Wesley. The dog enchants you with his conversation and then breaks away to go and visit some old woman."

Helping an old woman was more important than basking in the glow of Dr. Johnson's approval. Human values were a part of this man's religion. His religion has been likened to two oars—one faith, the other good works.

The movement which began in the Holy Club at Oxford was a prime factor in making the slave trade illegal, in bringing about a more humane recodification of England's brutal criminal laws, in reforming its penal system and in making the lot of women and children, pitiful victims of the industrial revolution, easier. Wesley, when he began

his mission, was confronted by a rum-soaked, religiously indifferent, cynical people; a complacent church which had lost contact with those it was supposed to serve; an economic system which brutalised those it employed and a government, corrupt and inefficient, which existed only to attend the status quo.

Wesley always considered his Methodist Societies as a part of the Church of England. And so they remained in England until after his death. Then the powerful forces he had generated broke them away. For Methodists and the social gospel they proclaimed needed greater freedom of action than is usually found in any facet of the establishment.

John Wesley, born soon after the advent of the 18th century, died near its close—March 2, 1791.

His career was truly "the most important religious and social movement" of the 18th century.

(With acknowledgement to "Together")

These Words Warmed Wesley's Heart at Aldersgate

"Preach faith until you have it," Peter Boehler advised. It finally came to Methodism's founder during a reading of Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, in which this pertinent section appears.

FAITH is not something dreamed, a human illusion, although this is what many people understand by the term. Whenever they see that it is not followed either by an improvement in morals or by good works, while much is still being said about faith, they fall into the error of declaring that faith is not enough, that we must do "works" if we are to become upright and attain salvation. The reason is that when they hear the Gospel, they miss the point; in their hearts, and out of their own resources, they conjure up an idea which they call "belief," which they treat as genuine faith. All the same, it is but a human fabrication, an idea without a corresponding experience in the depths of the heart. It is therefore ineffective and not followed by a better kind of life.

Faith, however, is something that God effects in us. It changes us and we are reborn from God (John 1:13). Faith puts the old Adam to death and makes us quite different men in heart, in mind, and in all our powers; and it is accompanied by the Holy Spirit. O, when it comes to faith, what a living, creative, active, powerful thing it is. It cannot do other than good at all times. It never waits to ask whether

there is some good work to do. Rather, before the question is raised, it has done the deed, and keeps on doing it. A man not active in this way is a man without faith. He is groping about for faith and searching for good works, but knows neither what faith is nor what good works are. Nevertheless, he keeps on talking nonsense about faith and good works.

Faith is a living and unshakable confidence, a belief in the grace of God so assured that a man would die a thousand deaths for its sake. This kind of confidence in God's grace, this sort of knowledge of it, makes us joyful, highspirited, and eager in our relations with God and with all mankind. That is what the Holy Spirit effects through faith. Hence, the man of faith, without being driven, willingly and gladly seeks to do good to everyone, serves everyone, suffer all kinds of hardships, for the sake of the love and glory of the God who has shown him such grace. It is impossible, indeed, to separate works from faith, just as it is impossible to separate heat and light from fire. Beware, therefore, of wrong conceptions of your own, and of those who talk nonsense while thinking they are pronouncing shrewd judgments on faith and works whereas they are showing themselves the greatest of fools. Offer up your prayers to God, and ask Him to create faith in you; otherwise, you will always lack faith, no matter how you try to deceive yourself, or what your efforts.

Thomas Coke—who never saw the Promised Land

Mr. John A. Vickers, B.A.

ON THE last day of the year 1813, Dr. Thomas Coke, accompanied by a party of six missionaries, set sail from Portsmouth on a six-month voyage to the East. The East-Indiamen in which they embarked were bound for Bombay, whence the mis-



Dr. Thomas Coke

sionaries intended to proceed southwards to Ceylon as soon as the monsoons permitted. Coke was an experienced sailor who, in exercising his superintendency of the American Methodist Church, had crossed and recrossed the Atlantic eighteen times, braving many storms in the small sailing vessels of that day. Now, at the age of 66, he was undertaking an even more daring venture, but one whose fulfilment he was not destined to see.

The dream of a mission to the East was no rash, hastily-conceived scheme, but one which he had treasured and planned during many years. Early in 1784, a few months before embarking on his first momentous voyage to America to ordain Francis Asbury, Coke had begun a correspondence with Charles Grant, an employee of the East India Company near Calcutta and a devout Christian. (His son, Robert, is remem-

bered as the writer of the hymn, "Immortal invisible, God only wise".) Coke wanted on-the-spot advice about the possibility of a Methodist mission to India, and Grant responded, eagerly yet realistically. But the plan was destined to be shelved, despite John Wesley's backing, because of the ever-increasing commitments of Methodism in North America and the West Indies. All that Coke could do for the time being was to assure Grant that the mission to Bengal would receive attention "as soon as the present extraordinary calls from America are answered".

For many years after this, Coke's attention and energies were directed to the West. In particular, he gave himself unsparingly to the building up of the work in the West Indies, paying four visits to the islands and rarely ceasing to beg from door to door and from town to town for the support of the missions, whenever he was in England. All this was in addition to an active participation in the affairs of both the British and the American connexions in the troubled years after Wesley's death, the sponsoring of home missions in Wales and Ireland and of work in Gibraltar and Sierra Leone. Little wonder if India remained in the background! Yet it was never entirely forgotten: Coke had heard the call of the East, and in the end was to respond to its persistent summons.

India was much in the mind of the British public towards the close of the 18th century largely as a result of the protracted trial of Warren Hastings. In 1800, the Methodist Conference authorized Coke to send a missionary to Madras, but nothing came of this. There were, in fact, formidable difficulties in the way of establishing a mission on the mainland, not least the low moral standards prevailing among the European population and the opposition of both Muslims and Roman Catholics. Besides this, little progress seemed possible until the

East India Company revised its policy of forbidding the evangelization of the native population in the territories under its control. Not until the revision of the Company's charter in 1813 was this official attitude modified. It was this which persuaded Coke to contemplate a mission to Ceylon, which, being under direct British rule, seemed to offer a much more promising prospect of success and might serve as a base for extending the work to the mainland.

In 1809, the Chief Justice of Ceylon, Sir Alexander Johnston, during a visit to England, was brought into touch with the Methodists through William Wilberforce, who had the cause of Christian missions quite as much at heart as his campaign against slavery. He gave his encouragement and offered his support to a Methodist mission in the island, and though this did not bear immediate fruit, under Coke's devoted husbandry the ground was now prepared for the long-awaited seedtime.

The Conference of 1811 authorized Coke to make preparations for a mission to Ceylon. While he was still busy with these, at the end of the following year, he lost his second wife, but in the midst of his bereavement a voice seemed to say to him repeatedly, "Don't grieve: go to Asia", and when he emerged from the valley of the shadow it was to declare that he was dead to all else but Asia. No pleading of his friends could now dissuade him from his determination to accompany the missionaries in person.

There were still grave doubts in the minds of many at home about this projected mission to the East. The voyage was long, the climate on arrival hazardous: neither, certainly, was suited to a man of Coke's age. Furthermore, Methodism was passing through a period of financial stringency—has there ever been a time when she was not?—and some shook their heads over the possibility of financing yet another mission. The hesitation of the 1813 Conference to endorse his proposals brought Coke to his knees. He spent a sleepless night in agonized prayer for the distant land he longed to serve and next day made an impassioned plea which, coupled with the offer to underwrite the cost of the mission, swayed the Conference.

The autumn of that year was spent in gathering the missionary party in London,

where they were "kitted out" and began an intensive course in Portuguese. (No instruction in either Tamil or Sinhalese was to be had in London.) Early in December, they made their way to Portsmouth, where Coke preached his last sermon in his native land. Those present were not likely to forget that moving occasion, on which he declared, "It is of little consequence whether we take our flight to glory from the land of our nativity, from the trackless ocean, or the shores of Ceylon. I cannot go where universal love not smiles around, and where He vital breathes, there must be joy."

The voyage proved to be a long and stormy one, during which several ships in the fleet were lost. Coke showed himself the experienced sailor by settling immediately into a routine of intensive study and giving a word of comfort and encouragement to the other passengers in times of danger. He wrote home a series of letters, urging the Conference to supplement the quota of missionaries they had allowed him, so that none of the opportunities he foresaw should be neglected.

After many storm-tossed weeks, they rounded the Cape and entered the Indian Ocean. Now, at last, India and Ceylon began to loom ahead and Coke's thoughts were more than ever focussed upon their destination. But he was not to see the land to which he had dedicated his declining powers. On the evening of May 2nd, after showing some signs of indisposition, he retired to his cabin, where he was found early the next morning on the floor. It appeared that he had died, suddenly and peacefully, some hours before, of apoplexy, brought on by his intense application to his studies and the rigours of the voyage.

The bereaved missionaries landed in Bombay, leaderless and deprived of the resources without which the mission could not proceed. Fate had dealt its cruellest blow to Coke's life-long hopes of bringing the gospel to India. But providence was to overrule it; the doors were opened in entirely unexpected ways for the missionaries to proceed, and before long they were able to send back their first despatches from Ceylon. In the case of Thomas Coke, the little Welshman with the great heart, it was certainly not true that the good was "interred with his bones", for his death, like his life, was used of God.

The Story of Ceylon Methodism

Rev. G. Denzil de Silva, B.D.

HISTORICALLY Ceylon Methodism began when the first Methodist missionaries landed in Ceylon on the 29th June, 1814. But it was in 1813, when Dr. Thomas Coke wrote those historic words of his, that Ceylon Methodism actually came into being—

"I am now dead to Europe and alive to India. God Himself has said to me, 'Go to Ceylon!' I am as convinced of the will of God in this respect as that I breathe—so fully convinced that methinks I would rather be set naked on the coast of Ceylon without clothes, and without a friend, than not go there."

Dr. Coke was in the sixty-sixth year of his life when he won approval from the British Conference of 1813 to venture out to Ceylon and Java with the Gospel of God's Redeeming Love. On the 30th December, 1813, he sailed from Portsmouth with six younger missionaries—William Ault (and his wife), Benjamin Clough, George Erskine, William Martin Harvard (and his wife), James Lynch and Thomas Hall Squance. William Ault's wife died at sea on the 9th February 1814.

After four months of perilous voyaging the convoy of ships entered the Indian Ocean. The missionaries were at the threshold of their great missionary venture when disaster struck them. On the morning of the 3rd May, the Captain of the 'Cabalva', the ship on which Dr. Coke sailed, broke the sad news that Dr. Coke was dead. Very reverently and with sad and heavy hearts his comrades buried him at sea.

Our story would have ended there but for the fact that it was only the frail body of Dr. Coke that went down to rest in the ocean bed, while his stout soul went marching on.

With their leader gone, with no instructions or plans for the future, with no money

or letters of credit either, the six Missionaries landed in Bombay on the 21st May, casting themselves entirely on God. God opened the way. With the friendly assistance of the Chief Justice, the Governor and a rich merchant of Bombay who supplied all their needs, they continued their journey to Ceylon on the 20th of June with the exception of Mr. & Mrs. Harvard. They reached Galle on the 29th June. Lynch, Squance and Clough disembarked in a boat and reached the harbour. In the meantime the ship drifted out into the open sea driven by strong winds and a current. In the darkness of the night Ault and Erskine left the ship in the luggage boat hoping to make the harbour, but strong winds drove them seventeen miles further south towards Weligama. Fear gripped them as they thought that the boatmen were taking them ashore to kill and rob them. Ignorant of the native language, they made signs and offered a pocket watch as a reward if they were safely landed. To their utter surprise, one of the boatmen replied in English, "Very bad Sir, very bad Sir!" meaning thereby the foul winds. In utter trepidation, the two now awaited what they imagined was to be a cruel fate on an inhospitable shore. However, about midnight they were safely landed at Weligama.

When Lynch, Squance and Clough landed in Galle they were received by the Master Attendant of the Galle Harbour, Mr. W. C. Gibson, and escorted to the 'King's House', where the Commandant of the Galle Garrison, Rt. Hon. Molesworth, welcomed them with the words, "This is all in answer to prayer". Ault and Erskine, who were received by the Magistrate, Mr. Keuneman, in his home in Weligama, found friendly hospitality and were dispatched to Galle in palanquins. They reached Galle in the evening of the 30th June amid great joy and thanksgiving to God for their safety and reunion. Sir Robert Brownrigg, Governor of Ceylon, allowed the missionaries the

use of the Government House in the Fort of Galle, and also held a reception in their honour. This was truly a happy journey's end to their very eventful journey.

Breaking up the Fallow Ground

This story will be only a rapid review of the past one hundred and fifty years of Methodism in Ceylon. The pages that follow will expand the story circuit by circuit.

On Sunday the 3rd July, 1814, the missionaries held their first Service in the Dutch Church, Galle, which became a memorable one. Under the preaching of Rev. Thomas Squance a young Burgher physician, William Alexander Lalmon, offered himself for the Methodist Ministry. He became the first recruit, and served faithfully for forty-eight years. On Monday the 11th July they met in Conference and planned their future work. Clough was appointed to Galle, Erskine to Matara, Ault to Batticaloa, Lynch and Squance to Jaffna. Harvard arrived in February, 1815, and was appointed to Colombo.

Ceylon was recognised as a District in the Mission Field by the Conference of 1815, and James Lynch became the first Chairman. Six more Missionaries arrived and shortly afterwards. Daniel John Gogerly the greatest man that Methodism ever gave to Ceylon arrived in 1818. He came as a layman to take up work as printer and press Manager. He was ordained in 1823 and became an outstanding scholar. He studied Buddhism in the Pali originals and wrote many articles on Buddhism which were later put into two volumes entitled 'Ceylon Buddhism.' He was Chairman of the South Ceylon District for twenty-four years, and died in Ceylon, never once having gone to England on furlough. Of the first batch of Missionaries William Ault died after eight months in Batticaloa, through exposure and privation. George Erskine removed to Australia as he could not master the Tamil language.

Difference of language and difficulties of communication led to the division of the field in 1819, into the North and South Districts. William Buckley Fox became the Chairman of the South District. In

1885, the South District was divided into three Districts—Colombo, Kandy and Galle—with a view to encouraging local enterprise, and also due to difficulties of communication. This division lasted until 1905.

When Methodism reached this land, Christianity had already established itself under Portuguese, Dutch and British rule. Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam were the prevailing religions. However, the high moral teaching of Buddhism had not yet touched Lanka's soul. The vast majority of the inhabitants throughout the numerous villages still lived in the darkness of ignorance and superstition. Animistic beliefs and the worship of devas was still the popular form of religion of the village folk. As darkness fell over the landscape and night came on, one would hear, as we do even now, the wierd beat of drums and the incantations of kapuralas trying to drive away the evil spirits from suffering and diseased people. There was in Lanka's soul a thirst for a satisfying religion. Let a convert speak—"the people are dissatisfied with vihara worship, they are dissatisfied with devala worship; they are indifferent to Christianity; they live like brutes; but if you come again and again, and instruct us in these things, we are willing to hear, and shall be able to learn." A village woman bore her testimony too saying—"How can there be salvation without a Saviour? How can one draw water when there is no water in the well? How can rice be boiled unless there is fire underneath the chatty? and although we go to the temple and worship, how can we be saved if there is no Saviour?"

* * *

The missionaries set to work with courage, zeal and faith, living with the people, learning their language and seeking to understand their needs and problems. Poverty, ignorance, disease, vice, prejudice and defiance confronted them on all sides. Let the record speak—"The soil is thick with the matted roots of tangled Buddhism and demonism, and the work of conversion has been like wresting the prey from the teeth of the enraged lion."

Methodism began in the South. The work was spear-headed with village evan-

gelism and education. Schools and Mission Stations were opened out in the villages most of which had so far not been touched by the Christian Gospel. Learned monks, village headmen, simple folk heard the good news preached to them in temple precincts, village fairs, street corners, under spreading trees and in their homes. This was indeed 'good news', so a village headman testified—"I found in Buddhism no redeemer to save our souls, no creator of the world or beginning to it....and just as darkness vanishes by the appearance of the sun, I was enlightened." With the establishment of Richmond College, Southlands and Rippon the doors of higher education opened in the South and many hundreds of village lads and lasses passed through the portals of these Colleges to become enlightened citizens and leaders in the country. Rev. J. H. Darrell pioneered in this field with great success. In 1864 the training institute for Ministers and Teachers was established on Richmond Hill.

In the face of continuing opposition combined with indifference of the people, and the lack of concentration on the part of the Church, the zeal which characterized the work earlier, died down. However, there are in the Southern Province today eleven Churches, 10 Preaching Places and 967 Church Members.

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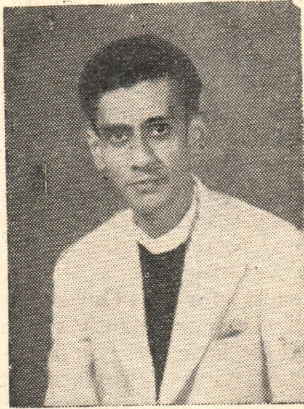
The advance of Methodism in the Western Province is an inspiring story in contrast to that of the Southern Province. Here the Gospel had to contend not only with Buddhism but also with Roman Catholicism which established itself firmly on the Western seaboard. Work began in the Pettah of Colombo. Not long after the arrival of the Missionaries in Colombo, the inhabitants were described thus—"We have Dutch and Portuguese, Sinhalese, Malabars, Bengalis, Javanese, Chinese and several other classes. We have worshippers of perhaps all the gods and goddesses between Persia and the Yellow Sea, Mohamedans, Roman Catholics, Protestants and Syrian Christians; yet there is little appearance on anything like religion, even in its lower acceptance, but the appearance of ignorance, Idolatry and misery."

It was in the face of such conditions that William Martin Harvard laboured to spread the good news of God. He built in the Pettah in 1816 the first Methodist Church to be built in Asia, and also established the 'Wesleyan Press' which is now the Wesley Press. This press was one that Dr. Coke had provided for when they set out on their mission. Mission work penetrated into the suburbs of Colombo. The Leper Colony in Hendala and the Welikada Prison were visited. A condemned criminal was so touched by the gospel that before he went to the gallows, his testimony led to the conversion of his four sons who became faithful church members. The most memorable event of those days was the conversion of a Maha Nayaka Priest who later became George Nadoris de Zylva Samaranaike, Mohotty Mudaliar of Mahabadda, and Mudaliar of Mutwal and Welisara District. Educational work began with the opening of two schools in the Pettah for boys and girls, which later developed into Wesley and Methodist Colleges. Social Welfare work was undertaken and grew up to become the present City Mission. In 1854 the first chapel was built in Kollupitiya, and work began to spread north and south and inwards. Today Methodism in Colombo is firmly established with sixteen Churches and a membership of 5000.

* * *

In Negombo the conversion in 1826 of two Roman Catholics, Don Daniel Pereira and his son Daniel Henry, opened the door for Methodism in this Roman Catholic strong-hold. Their story will be told in the pages that follow. This 'Apostle of Negombo' battled with great faith against severe persecution from the Roman Catholic Church. He with Rev. Robert Newstead helped to bring into being what today is the largest Methodist community of 2,722 members at Kurana. From Negombo the gospel flame spread to Seeduwa and Minuwangoda. Schools were opened in the villages. Newstead Girls' School offered higher education for girls, and later the Methodist High School, Katunayake, further expanded this field of education. Methodism reached out across the lagoon to the Roman Catholic area of Pitipana, and on to the North Western Province, which became the Home Mission field, where Rev. Cornelius Ganegoda pioneered with great success.

THREE CHAIRMEN OF DISTRICTS



Rev. G. D. de Silva
(Southern District)•



Rev. Dr. D. T. Niles
(Northern District)



Rev. P. B. Rajasingam
(Central District)

While the 'Apostle of Negombo' was beating down false religion, superstition and idolatry in the Negombo Area, Peter Gerhard de Zylva, the 'Apostle of Moratuwa,' was overthrowing the altars of paganism, vice and irreligion in the Moratuwa District. In those early days Moratuwa was a place where heathen practices and drunkenness abounded, and cock-fighting was the main feature of the Sabbath Day. Buddhism and Roman Catholicism offered very stiff resistance to Methodism. In 1873 the great debate known as the 'Panadura Vadaya' took place between the Methodists and the Buddhists. Over ten thousand people are reported to have listened to the debate, the result of which however, was inconclusive. Our work went steadily forward and it is in this District which was once described as 'the least hopeful' that we have today the 'most flourishing' and virile bastion of Methodism with a community of 4,637, fifteen Churches and three preaching places.

* * *

From the Western Province, Methodism struck inland into the hill country of the Central and Uva Provinces. These two Provinces were very backward areas. Uva was a 'woefully benighted and semi-barbarous region.' Samuel Langdon broke new ground in Uva taking to the people education, social reform and medical work along with the gospel. Educational institutions like Kingswood College and the Girls' High School in Kandy, and the Badulla Girls' High School became means of combatting illiteracy and providing higher education. L. E. Blaze the founder of Kingswood College, and Sir John Pandles who gifted the new site have gone down into history as great benefactors. Industrial education in the Kandyan country began with the opening of the Girls' Industrial School in Kandy which became known later as 'Ferens'. Village schools were also opened in the two provinces. The Girls' Home Badulla became a home for destitute children, while the hospital for women in Welimada (now closed) brought healing and happiness to suffering people. The Reformatory at Diyatalawa which was started by Samuel Langdon later combined with the Wellawatte Orphanage. Evangelistic and rescue work was undertaken in the not so happy place known as 'Happy

Valley.' Tamil work began with the opening of the Mission Station in Hatton. Vigorous evangelism became the feature among the vast population of Tamil labourers on the estates. In the Central and Uva Provinces the work has been growing steadily. Along with opposition to the preaching of the gospel, physical barriers have stood in the way in this vast field. Opportunities are not lacking, but resources in men and money which are lacking make our progress slow. Today Methodism counts a community of 1622 members, thirteen churches and seven preaching places.

* * *

Our story moves on from the predominantly Sinhalese and Buddhist areas to the Hindu areas in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. Strong Hindu forces and the iniquitous caste system were the chief opponents to the Christian gospel. When Lynch and Erskine arrived in Jaffna, Christian David the headmaster of the Government Normal School joined them in active support of the Mission work. In 1827 John Sanmugam Philips joined the ministry and became the first Tamil minister. He was followed by Richard Watson who became a great preacher. Peter Percival and John Kilner were two of the great Missionaries who made a unique contribution to Methodism in Jaffna. Peter Percival founded Jaffna Central College and the Girls' Boarding School and Training Institution which were the earliest Methodist establishments of their kind in the North. John Kilner's vision made the whole Church in Ceylon think in terms of self-support, self-government and self-propagation. His greatest work was the recruiting and training of men for the ministry. Ralph Stott pioneered in Batticaloa. In 1893 he built the Batticaloa Church in memory of William Ault. A notable undertaking was the evangelising of the Veddha people in the veddha country. Low caste people in the north who were deprived of any place in society found self-respect and worthfulness through the gospel. This work has grown since. The great revival of 1887 in Jaffna was the biggest thrust by the Christian Churches at 'Sivism' and took the gospel to every corner of the Peninsula. Methodism occupied Point Pedro and Trincomalee. An early record relating to the Tamil area pays

tribute to 'the vigorous work, the reliable laymen, and the strong and good native ministry.' After one hundred and fifty years Methodism is well established in these two provinces with a community of 5,800, thirty three Churches and four preaching places.

In 1883 in the island of Mannar, the Methodist Missionary work was started by Rev. E. Middleton Weaver and the Rev. E. S. Adams. It was a strongly Roman Catholic area and in 1908, some of the Roman Catholic people became Methodists. Today there is in Mannar-Murungan a strong Methodist community.

* * *

The first fifty years of Methodism in Ceylon has been summed up by the Rev. Robert Spence Hardy in his 'Jubilee Memorials' thus :—

"Like a banyan tree spreading its shade, multiplying its living supporters and filling the land with resting places, so our Mission Churches have been developed from their original Centres and have covered Ceylon with widely-reaching truth and blessing. Every development of our Mission history has been undertaken because the Lord led us into that duty: every expansion of our toil has come as the direct result of successful soul-winning."

From 'Mission' to 'Church'

While the first half of our story can be called the period of expansion, the last half is the story of consolidation. This was a period when local initiative and leadership emerged.

The Provincial Synod was constituted in 1893 and continued till February 1950, when the North and the South Districts were amalgamated under one Synod with seven Area Councils in place of districts. In 1932, with the union of the Methodist Churches in England, Ceylon dropped the designation 'Wesleyan Mission' and became known as The Methodist Church in Ceylon. The Church began to work its way towards self-support giving up gradually the large grant received from the Missionary Society. The training of Minis-

ters shifted from Richmond Hill to the United Theological College, Bangalore, where our Ministers received theological education at university level. Evangelist and Deaconesses were trained at the Training Colony Peradeniya, which became a centre of co-operative activity with the Anglican and Baptist Churches.

Our High Schools and Colleges in particular became well established institutions far superior to most other schools. These became pre-eminently the Church's contribution to the evolution of modern Lanka. With the State take over of schools the Church handed over all schools with the exception of Wesley and Methodist Colleges.

In the sphere of Lanka's struggle for independence the Church gave leaders of the calibre of Dr. Solomon Fernando in the south and Nevins Selvadurai O.B.E. in the north. In the work of social reform and temperance work Rev. John Simon de Silva became an acknowledged leader.

The period of evangelisation from abroad drew to a close when the Ceylon Church began to evangelise with the opening of Home Mission fields in the North Western Province, Muthur and more recently in the Gal Oya valley. With the formation of the Home Mission Department the work in all the provinces occupied by the Church was stepped up. Women's Work grew rapidly with the formation of the Methodist Women's Fellowship which now has a membership of 1550 with fifty Branches. Youth Work became a strong arm of the Church with the establishment of the Wesley Guild Movement. The Methodist Laymen's Movement, of recent development, has begun to make an enriching impact on the life of the Church.

On matters of public importance the Church has spoken with authoritative voice, and in national aspirations it has co-operated without compromise. In the crises that shook the nation's life, the Church stood penitent and prayerful.

In this modern period there was growth in inter-denominational relationships. The Church was responsible for initiating negotiations for Church Union now in the final stages of realization. With the rise of the Ecumenical Movement the Church became

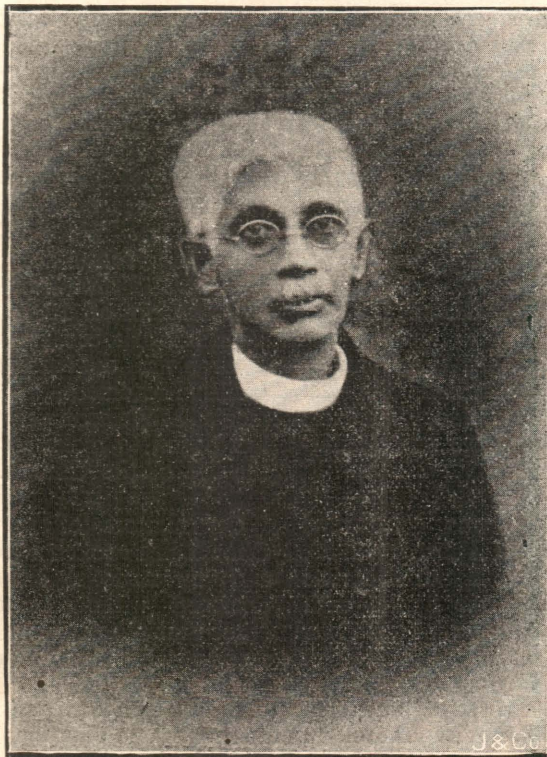
• a member of the World Council of Churches and in the East Asia Christian Conference, and continues to take an active part in these spheres of wider Church life. In our own country the Church plays a distinctive role in the work of the National Christian Council. The Church also broke new ground with the setting up of the Study Centre and the Institute of Buddhist Studies, opening out a new dialogue with the world outside. In theological education the Church, along with the Anglican and Baptist Churches, has taken a unique step with the setting up of the Theological College of Lanka at Pilimatalawa.

• Today the Church stands at the threshold of its greatest ever venture. On the 18th June this year, we become a fully autonomous Church. Incidentally, although Methodism was the last of the missions to reach this land, she becomes the first Church in Lanka to become fully autonomous. Autonomy is not an honour conferred on the

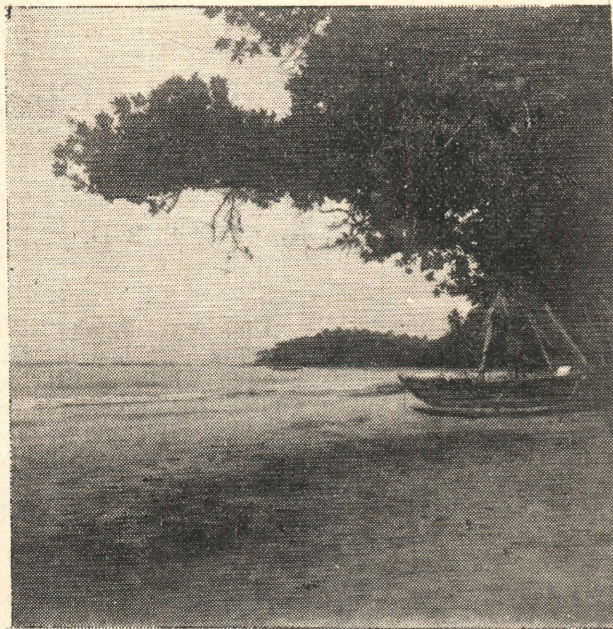
Church for good work done, but a serious call to greater responsibility and harder work. The Synod will be replaced by the 'Ceylon Conference' with a President and Lay Vice-President; and three District Synods will come into being—Northern, Central and Southern—with three District Chairmen.

Having attained this new status, Ceylon Methodism will carry in her own hands her life and future destiny. We have not yet reached the point when we can write 'finis' to our story; but, we now open a new chapter that has still to be written, for our mission in Lanka remains an unfinished task.

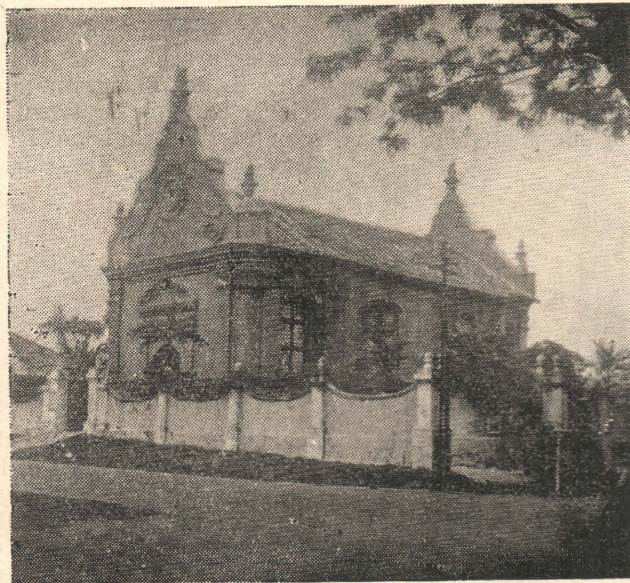
(Material was drawn from the following books in writing this story—"Wesley's World Parish" by George G. and Mary Grace Findlay. "The Jubilee Memorials" by Robert Spence Hardy.)



Rev. John de Silva
(Father of the President)



The Weligama Bay



The Dutch Church Galle Fort

How Methodism Came to Circuits

GALLE CIRCUIT

Rev. Theodore H. Perera, B.D.

One hundred and fifty years ago, one dark and stormy evening in June, in the height of the fury of the Southwest monsoon, a ship was sighted outside the harbour of Galle. This was no uncommon sight, for most of the ships that came to Ceylon, called at Galle. That evening, because of the wind and rain, it was not at all possible to bring the ship in and so she anchored outside the harbour. People who watched the little boats bringing the passengers ashore little knew that an historic event was taking place, in that the first Methodist Missionaries to set sail to Asia were landing in Ceylon. Nor did the Ceylonese people know how much this band of God's chosen servants had endured to bring the Gospel to them.

For over six months these missionaries had been sailing under the most difficult and trying circumstances and two of their company, including the Rev. Dr. Thomas Coke, had died at sea. Since everything they brought with them was in the name of their dead leader, they landed without a cent to call their own. However, the Governor's Chaplain received them and looked after them as his guests for some time.

The next Sunday, the Rev. Thomas Squance preached in the Dutch Reformed Church which is situated in the Fort of Galle. His text very appropriately was "For we are come as far as to you also in preaching the gospel of Christ." 2 Corinthians 10:14b. At this service a young doctor named William Lalmon was converted and he became the first Ceylonese Methodist Minister.

Sometime later the missionaries planned their work and decided to separate and go to different parts of the Island. It fell to Rev. Benjamin Clough to stay in Galle. He applied himself diligently to preaching the Gospel of Christ and ever since then, the Methodist Church has been at work in Galle spreading from the Fort to Kalahé, Metarambe, Richmond Hill, Ambalangoda and Batapola.

Rev. Benjamin Clough opened the first Wesleyan school in Asia in the house of Mr. E. R. Gunaratne in Dickson Road Galle. This educational work later expanded at Richmond Hill which in 1857 was bought by Rev. Joseph Rippon.

PETTAH CIRCUIT

Rev. P. B. Rajasingam, B.D.

METHODISM came to the Pettah within a few days of the arrival of the first missionaries to Ceylon. When Harvard and Clough arrived in Colombo after travelling from Galle they lost no time in preaching the Gospel in the Baptist Church which was made available to them. Later, when Harvard settled in a house in Dam Street,

regular services were held on his home verandah. The impact of Harvard's preaching was soon felt, not only by the residents of the Pettah district, but also by the Governor General of Ceylon, Sir Robert Brownrigg and other high ranking officials. Soon the verandah of Harvard's house proved to be an unsuitable place for services, so plans

were set afoot to purchase ground on which a Church could be built. At that time a site in Dam Street was considered to be "a commanding and convenient locality" and this was purchased with the help of Mr. Armour, a distinguished citizen of his time. A number of other prominent citizens of the island subscribed generously towards the erection of the Church.

The plans for the building were already in the hands of the missionaries. Dr. Coke had pleaded with the British Conference to allow him to go east. Conference, meeting at Brunswick Chapel in Liverpool in 1813 gave the first missionaries its blessing and later when Dr. Coke was ready to leave, the architect of Brunswick Chapel gave him the plan of that Church. The Doctor judging "that its plan and arrangement was admirably suited to a hot climate" accepted the gift with thanksgiving. The Pettah Church was accordingly built on that plan in 1816.

The first service held in the newly built Church was at 7 a.m. on December 23rd 1816. The service was conducted by Rev. W. M. Harvard and the sermon was preach-

ed by Rev. B. Clough to a fairly good congregation. At the evening service that same day the Church was filled to capacity and the Governor General and his wife, together with other important members of the Civil Service and Armed Forces attended the service. It is recorded by Rev. Harvard that the Church was so crowded that many people were unable to get in.

After a short time services in English ceased and Sinhalese became the main language used. But after 1863 the Sinhalese congregation began declining and English speaking congregations became the main stay of the Pettah Society. But even these numbers declined when the old Pettah residential area became more of a commercial district and old homes were converted into business premises.

In March, 1913, the City Mission was inaugurated and became a separate Circuit in 1914. At this time the work of the Mission expanded to include social work in the city slums which were beginning to spring up around the Church and this has now become an essential feature of the City Mission work.

No. 23

JAFFNA CIRCUIT

Rev. D. K. Wilson, B.A., B.D., B.LITT.

IT WAS at the "Little Conference" of 11th July 1814, the first meeting of the pioneer missionaries in Ceylon, that the momentous decision was arrived at to separate to various and distant parts of the island. In simplicity and godly sincerity they fixed on their stations by ballot. Brothers Lynch and Squance were chosen for Jaffna. Brother Ault for Batticaloa, Brother Erskine for Matara and Brother Clough for Galle.

After a strenuous journey through village and jungle, Lynch and Squance arrived on August 10th in Jaffna, where they were warmly received by the sub-collector James N. Mooyart. The decision of these early missionaries to start on their work by opening schools was indeed a wise step.

Their task was made easier by preachers like the Rev. Mr. Schwartz and the Rev. Christian David who had laboured in Jaffna during the early years of the 19th century.

The zeal of these pioneers knew no bounds, they mastered their Tamil, circulated sermons in Tamil, written on olas; established schools and spared no pains for training a competent Tamil ministry. It was said of Squance that though he was not a man of good health, he had a voice like the sound of a cathedral bell.

The Lutheran church in Jaffna was the place of worship used by these missionaries but it was on the 19th of February 1823, that the present St. Peter's Church was completed and dedicated for worship.

- The foundation of Methodism in Jaffna had now been laid and it was for men like Dr. Peter Percival, Ralph Scott, John Walton and Rigg ably followed by local men like Rev. D. P. Niles and Rev. Mr. Beebee to consolidate the work.

- The opening of schools at Vannarponnai and Punналаikadduvan again paved the way for the societies in those areas. One of the outstanding features of the work in villages outside Jaffna was the availability of local talent in laymen like S. A. Edward, Brown Chinnathamby, William Nevis and Arumuka Navalar. The last named was the celebrated Tamil scholar who produced a Tamil version of the scriptures which for elegance and dignity of expression has never been equalled. He also composed the Methodist Catechism, and also translated the Methodist Liturgy. It was said of Arumuga Navalar that he was "the greatest Tamil scholar, Methodism has ever had."

The modern phase of Methodism in Jaffna is writ large with names like Rev. A. E. Restarick, E. W. Weaver, A. Lockwood, W. M. P. Wilkes, H. R. Cornish and P. T. Cash. These were the men who shaped the educational policy of our schools and guided the church of the North Ceylon district. Self support and the march towards autonomy was the goal of these men of foresight and they selected the local pastors to be the leaders of the church in Jaffna.

The years 1922, 1939 and 1950 are significant in this period. Until 1922 all mission circuits (C circuits as they were then called) had only Missionaries as Superintendents but in 1922 three "C" circuits, Mannar Murungan and Tirukovil were placed under the care of three Ceylonese ministers—The Revds. J. M. Osborn, J. S. Mather and T. S. Vethanayagam respectively. For over a hundred years the constitution provided for only a missionary to be the Chairman of the District but the British Conference in July 1939 revised its policy and made the office open to Ceylonese, and so it was that in January 1940 that the North Ceylon District Synod elected the Rev. J. S. Mather as its first Ceylonese Chairman.

But the year 1950 was even more significant when the North and South Districts were amalgamated and the All Ceylon Synod was brought to birth.

The year 1964 has now arrived, it is the 150th anniversary of Methodism in Ceylon and autonomy is now an established fact. The Church in Jaffna is now related to the soil but rooted in Christ. Young Tamil men are coming forward to obey the call of Christ. The Church in Jaffna and in the Northern district is under the leadership of the Rev. D. T. Niles, who is one of the greatest evangelists of this century. Truly it can be said of those missionaries who laboured here "that they planted, the great stalwarts of Jaffna watered, but God alone gave the increase."

No. 24

BATTICALOA CIRCUIT

Mr. Prince Casinader

TODAY as we walk into the Methodist Church Sunday after Sunday and take our place in the pews, let us remember what difficulties and experiences the Rev. William Ault, the pioneer Methodist Missionary to the East had to contend with. The following is an account of the arrival of Revd. Ault on the shores of Batticaloa, "The boatmen afraid of the strong wind, the 'Kachchan' which blew during the day time, anchored the vessel and spent the time eating and drinking. At night they did not

get up from sleep when the wind abated and sail the vessel till I roused them. My jar of water was stolen from me, and my sufferings were very great. Owing to the violence of the wind, one of the anchors was lost, my boxes were broken and my clothes and books damaged by saltwater. I fell overboard and barely escaped with my life. After eight days though the shores of Batticaloa were in sight, the difficulty of landing from the boats was more dangerous than all the perils I had gone through the last

seven months. When getting down my foot slipped and I fell into the sea, the boat sank but I managed to struggle ashore. As all these incidents are unavoidable to those who serve under the banner of the cross and are disciples of Jesus who died under it, it is best to suffer them patiently."

With the arrival of this pioneer Methodist and servant of God, the history of the Methodist Church and the history of Methodist education commence in the East of Ceylon.

Rev. Ault started a Boys' English school in a large store room granted by the Government. The Collector at that time Mr. Simon Sawyers was most helpful to him. There were only five pupils at first and three of them were the orphan sons of two British soldiers, the fourth was a local boy, who later became a Mudaliyar of Batticaloa and the fifth boy is not known. But when this saint of God died on the 1st of April, 1815, the number of the school had arisen to 40 scholars. From this time wave after wave of Methodist missionaries, continued to keep alight the torch of learning lit by this first missionary, and on one occasion, Capt. Thomas Aldersay Jones of the 19th regiment who was commandant of the garrison at Batticaloa acted as a stop gap, till the arrival of Ault's successor the Rev. Elijah Jackson in July 1816.

The last English missionary principal of this college founded by Ault, was the Rev. James Cartman, who was succeeded by Mr. S. V. O. Somanader, the first Ceylonese Principal of this college, which celebrates its 150th anniversary this year. Methodist education in the Eastern Province far from being confined to this college, and other schools broke new ground, in opening up industrial schools, where among other subjects, carpentry was taught. The

Methodists were also pioneers in taking education right into the heart of Bintenne, to educate the Veddahs here. The Rev. A. E. Restarick writes about 1899, "I was glad to get somewhat closer to the unmitigated Veddah in the heart of the forest. No carriage bicycle or horse can cover three out of the five miles from the main road." The Rev. Restarick adds "I ought to have said, that we have a school and a carpenter's shed and are trying to bring light by the former and some regular means of maintenance by the latter. The veddah youth however prefer a jungle walk after honey to half an hour with the chisel, being very lazy." This Methodist educational settlement in the Veddah country was appropriately called "Kirupaisthanam" (Home of Grace.)

The premier church in the Batticaloa District is the Puliantivu Methodist, built 125 years ago, in 1838. Writing to his mother in England, Rev. William Ault writes, "Here is a very pleasing prospect of creating missions. There are some persons who are seriously disposed. I have begun a little class meeting and have 19 members. I feel strong faith in God that He will pour out His spirit mightily upon us." Last year the church celebrated its 125th anniversary and throughout the length and breadth of the East coast Methodist churches have come up. It must also be mentioned that medical units set up by our churches in the past, did much for the people, especially to the women in purdah among the Muslim community. A long line of English missionaries have carried on the work of ministering among us ever since 1814, and it is noteworthy that today in our 150th year, a third generation missionary, whose father and grandfather ministered in our midst has come in the prime of his life to continue this service.

No. 25

COLOMBO SOUTH CIRCUIT

Mr. Kenneth Somanader

Kollupitiya : When Methodism first spread to this Circuit, Colpetty (as it was then called) was just a "village", consisting of a bazaar and a series of mansions and native dwellings, mingled together, without

any regular order, in the midst of coconut trees, with strips of cinnamon garden intervening in several places.

Towards the end of 1815 (just over a

year after the arrival of the first Methodist missionaries), the Rev. W. M. Harvard took up residence in a small cottage in the village of Colpetty. About this time, there was a school supported by Lady Johnston, who requested the missionaries to take it under their charge on her departure for England. Early in 1817, another school building (with a dwelling attached to it) was put up, and more than 100 boys and 50 girls attended it for instruction.

The only place of worship then was a military schoolhouse and the services were attended mostly by laundrymen who plied their calling—"in the usually destructive manner of the east"—on the borders of the lake. Gambling was rampant in the area, and cock-fighting was a favourite sport. Spence Hardy writes:—

"The inhabitants have become wealthy; but they have not rendered to God the return He demands, and we have to mourn over the carelessness, and even enmity, of many who once bid fair to be bright gems in the crown of the Redeemer. Yet the work has not been altogether without success. There have been converts, even here, who have been willing to serve God, rather than Mammon; and who have refused offers of good situations in other places, lest their souls should suffer loss from being away from the public means of grace."

Some 10 years later, the dwelling near the school became unsuitable. Around it trees grew which shut out the sea breeze, and opposite to it a fish bazaar was established. Fortunately, just a hundred yards away, a garden was on sale by order of the Supreme Court. "It was near the sea, extensive, and planted with coconut trees; and there was upon it a building erected of the most substantial materials which, 10 years previously, had cost nearly £350". The property was eventually bought, "being partly paid for by the sale of the former house, with £300 additional from the funds of the mission". It is said that the mission house often proved itself as the means of restoring to health the invalid missionary from some less favoured locality. A former chairman, for instance, the Rev. D. J. Gogerly, lived in it 22 years and enjoyed almost uninterrupted good health.

In 1854, a neat chapel was built in the garden attached to the mission-house. The congregation was not large but it was composed of persons who were regular in their attendance. Women, however, were rarely seen in the congregation. Spence Hardy writes:—

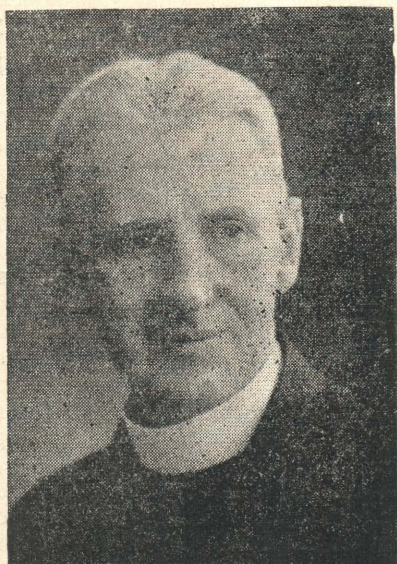
"They regard the means of grace as no concern of theirs, and so uniformly remain at home on the Sabbath, though calling themselves Christians, as the Moorwomen absent themselves from the mosque. The narrowness of their minds is too much in conformity with their confined experience. When prevailed upon to attend the house of God, if one of a lower caste happens to sit before them, the offence is unpardonable, and they will not again submit themselves to the indignity. The girls that have been educated in the schools too often fall into the same listless habits, as regards religion, and seem contented to acquiesce in the general idea of their mothers and grandmothers, that women have no souls."

The present Kollupitiya Church (in which the inaugural service is to be held) was opened for worship on Friday, July 10th, 1896. A large congregation was present. The date of opening was not without significance. To quote the Rev. R. A. Nelson:

"One century was drawing to a close, the great nineteenth, which included within its far-reaching historical development a great part of the modern worldwide missionary movement. The twentieth century, with its explosive and catastrophic changes in nearly every field of human life, was waiting to be born. In the field of Christian growth and expansion, a missionary-controlled church was moving towards an indigenous church rooted in its own soil. At this point, between two epochs of time, the Colpetty Church was opened. Its life therefore has run parallel with the events of the twentieth century and we can speak of it as a twentieth century church."

For some considerable time the existing building had been found to be inadequate even for the normal Sunday requirements,

THREE FORMER CHAIRMEN OF DISTRICTS



Rev. H. R. Cornish



Rev. G. A. F. Senaratne



Rev. G. B. Jackson

The Church was extended as far as possible to the Galle Road, and in addition a balcony was added. The service of dedication and reopening was held on December 5th, 1959.

Wellawatte: In Methodist history, the name of the village of Wellawatte first appears in the school report of 1818, when it was regarded as a link in the chain of schools extending from Colombo to Kalutara. The missionaries were evidently well received here and two sermons were preached in the school weekly. In 1822 there were nine members of the Society who met regularly at a class meeting. There was a long struggle with the evil influences that were at work, especially the invocation of evil spirits in times of sickness.

In 1845, one Don Louis (who had formerly been connected with a regiment of Sinhalese soldiers) came to reside in the village and presented a request to the Rev. D. J. Gogerly "that some one might be sent to instruct them in the things of God". Soon afterwards, the Rev. David de Silva came to reside in the village. The congregation increased and the work so prospered that, in the same year, a permanent chapel was erected "near the high road leading to Ratnapura" (this is a reference to the premises now occupied by the Boys' Industrial Home). In 1847, there were thirty three members at Wellawatte. There was opposition at this time and those who wished to lead sober, righteous and godly lives, began to be persecuted. This opposition made the members more decided and consistent and the result was, in fact, a slight increase of membership.

Sometime later, a Hall was built in High Street (almost opposite Hampden Lane) which was used as a school on week days and as a place of worship on Sundays. The work prospered and the time came when the premises were inadequate.

It was not long before a new Church was built in Galle Road, not far from the Railway Station Road junction. The work continued to prosper and the congregation increased. With the widening of the Galle Road there was a real need for a new Church. The old Church was demolished and in the same premises the present Church was built in 1939 amidst great rejoicing.

Maharagama: In 1936 the late Rev. J. S. B. Mendis conducted the first Methodist service in Maharagama on the verandah of the home of Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Abeywardene at Maha Mega. For some time a small group met there regularly for worship. They looked forward to the day when there would be a church in the area and they prayed earnestly about it. Some years later Mrs. A. C. Abeyawardene donated a piece of land and in 1953 the Church was built. Right from the beginning it was the intention that this Church was to be a point of outreach and an evangelistic base for work in the neighbouring area.

Nugegoda: In the 1930s, services were held on Sunday mornings in the home of Mr. and Mrs. S. Blacker, where five or six Methodists used to meet for worship. About the year 1937, land was purchased from Mr. S. Blacker as a site on which to build a church, and the foundation stone of the present Church building was laid on the 7th March, 1938, by the Rev. A. S. Beaty, Chairman.

Maradana: Maradana was at first a part of the Colombo North Pettah Circuit and the first building used for worship was the schoolroom in Dean's Road, acquired in 1885, which served as a chapel for the Tamil congregation, the Rev. L. S. Lee being in charge.

In 1884, the Rev. John Scott, Chairman of the Mission, bought "three roods seven twenty one one hundredth square perches of land in Maradana for the price or sum of Rs. 4,000." The house on it was to be used for the Ceylonese minister and the ground for a new Chapel.

A committee with Dr. E. N. Schokman as secretary worked to raise the money needed. "The number of workers was small." A building grant of Rs. 2,000/- had been received from the Mission but when the Church was opened in 1890, Rs. 1,000/- had yet to be raised. The rostrum was donated by a member in Moratuwa.

At the same time, a schoolroom was erected at a cost of Rs. 350/-.

The Rev. J. A. Spaar and the Rev. H. S. Wickremaratne were appointed to the

work. Mr. Spaar was the first minister to live in the house on the premises, the Mission House.

Services were conducted in three languages, Portuguese, Sinhalese and English. In time the Portuguese services were discontinued, the members having become a part of the English-speaking group. Services are now held in Sinhalese, English and Tamil.

In the schoolroom, Mrs. Schokman started a small school for poor Portuguese children but after a few years the school was threatened with extinction.

When in 1896 the Rev. J. H. Nathanielsz came to the Pettah Circuit, his heart was deeply moved by the conditions in which some of the members lived. The Rev. J. S. Corlett wrote: *"The class of all others in Ceylon which seems most hopeless is that known as the mechanic class. These people are of Portuguese descent; living in squalor and wretchedness, earning a scanty wage, given to drunkenness and sin of various kinds, the mechanic brings up his children in ignorance of all that is good."*

For these, in 1898, the Colombo Industrial School was started. "The buildings are on Wesleyan Mission property but the Mission is unable to undertake the support of the school beyond allowing one of its ministers to do this work."

For more than forty years, the life of the school and the life of the Church were closely intertwined. The Sunday School used the school buildings. From it the Graded School System of Sunday School work spread to other parts of the island and to other denominations. The inspiration came from Captain Lawson Robins and Miss Grace Nathanielsz.

Wesley College has also been closely associated with the Church, which has been blessed by the work and influence of its Principals, notably of the Rev. H. Highfield.

In 1933, the porch was added as a memorial gift. In 1941 the new Chancel was built, giving the Church much needed space and adding to its beauty.

No. 26

MORATUWA RAWATAWATTE CIRCUIT

Rev. P. E. Fernando

THE first intimation of work in Moratuwa goes as far back as 1816. A letter written to the Home Committee by Rev. Benjamin Clough in February 1816 gives us a graphic description of this first visit. Mr. Clough accompanied by three other missionaries preached for the first time in February 1816 to a very large crowd. This was followed by the conversion of a priest.

It was in September 1817 that a permanent Methodist Station was established in Moratuwa by the opening of a Mission School at Idama, so generously given for the purpose by Mr. Bastian Fernando. Adjoining the School Hall a small room was built where the Minister could stay when he visited the village. About 30 to 40 children were admitted and Mr. Elias Perera, a pious man, native of the village

was appointed as teacher. Later a pulpit was built, and the school hall was made a preaching place, the children being kept for that service. In 1818 the attendance went up to 97. In his Quarterly Letter for the Home Committee dated September 29, 1826, he wrote "I regard this village as the least hopeful part of our Circuit, yet even here we have some first fruits, which I find like grapes in the wilderness, yet God forbid that we should suspend our labour, or relax our efforts."

In the year 1832 a Chapel was built at Egoda-Uyana. This is still in existence and is now the oldest church in Moratuwa, belonging to any denomination. It will be of particular interest to learn that the bell here is the one that was brought for our first School, and it bears the inscription "Moratuwa English School 1817."

- Work from here was extended to Gorakana, Kehelwatta little later.

In January 1840, the Rev. Peter Gerárd de Zylva, rightly named as the "Apostle of Moratuwa" was appointed to this circuit. Rev. Mr. de Zylva devised a plan for systematic work and his work was a great success.

- On his appointment to Moratuwa, he took his residence at Katukurunde in April 1841. Writing in 1851, Mr. de Zylva says that on his arrival "there was scarcely a Protestant family in all Moratuwa who did not adhere to some one or other of the Ten Devales or the Three Vihares of the place."

- His first class meeting on October 16th 1840 consisted of 5 male adults and 7 female adults. At the end of 1841 the number of members was 39. The congregation increased four fold. Some of the inhabitants of Angulana requested him to

come to their village and on 10th August, 1841, Mr. de Zylva visited this village. A shed was put up for his visit and about 250 people were present. He spoke to them on "the infinite value of the Soul and on the only way of Salvation".

The work at Koralawella was also commenced that year (1841). In the year 1842 there was a conversion of a young man, who was said to have been possessed by an "evil spirit", and this resulted in many other conversions. Within a month the people built a small bungalow and Mr. de Zylva used this for divine worship. He always had a crowded house, sometimes the congregation numbered about 200, excluding children.

On April 27, 1859 the Rawatawatte Chapel was opened by the Rev. John Scott in the presence of a very large gathering. Methodism in the Moratuwa-Rawatawatte Circuit has spread from very small beginnings.

No. 27

TRINCOMALEE CIRCUIT

Rev. L. J. Julian, M.A.

From the Minutes of Annual Conversations between the Wesleyan Missionaries in the Tamil District beginning in 1819

THE Trincomalee Station was first occupied in 1817. A "very premature and injudicious attempt" to build a chapel got no further than the laying of the foundations. In the following year the Mission House was bought for 6,000 rix-dollars on behalf of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference by the Revs. Osborne and Erskine, and was "enlarged and completed" by the Rev. Abraham Stead in 1820. Attention turned again to the chapel, and in 1821 the Rev. Carver was instructed to erect "a proper place of worship". He began to build for "the credit of the Mission" and "the establishment of the Church of Christ". But the Missionary Committee in England took a more worldly and businesslike view and soon charged him and two others with "extravagance in drawing bills for the Service of the Mission, and with wasting public Money". A virtual strike of the Tamil

District missionaries ensued. Eventually the Missionary Committee accepted what it could not very well alter. Monsoon rains at the end of 1821 "greatly damaged" the unfinished chapel, but it was completed in 1822 and dedicated in 1823. It measures 60 x 41 feet—a foot narrower than the Jaffna chapel (St. Peter's) which was built at the same time. Yet its cost—18,897 rix-dollars—was almost double that of the Jaffna chapel. The reason then given has been re-echoed in Trincomalee all through the years: "Trincomalee being a place much frequented by the British Naval force . . . (has) a difference of value in labour and every thing besides of nearly one hundred per cent above Jaffnapatam."

In 1819 the property was bought which later became the Peruntheru School. The "Annual Conversations" of the mission-

aries in 1821 reported four schools in Trincomalee staffed by four teachers and attended by 230 children. A school for the children of British soldiers was being held in the Mission House and there were "native schools" at Great Bazaar and Little Bazaar.

Four years after the occupation of the Trincomalee Station the Society numbered 14, of whom most were British soldiers. Yet one third of the cost of the new chapel was raised in Trincomalee. The Society Report for 1823 reported a decline in strength because of a "reduction of the Naval and other Establishments at Trincomalee". The Missionary Committee, disappointed by the lack of progress there, suggested that the

station be abandoned, at least temporarily. The missionaries, while admitting that the Station was one of "painful interest", would not entertain the idea for a moment. So in 1826 the eminent Tamil scholar, the Rev. Peter Percival, was stationed in Trincomalee. No immediate improvement was seen, however, for in that year the Society raised no public collections or class monies. A partial explanation was found in the "fluctuating" Society: the 83rd Regiment had moved into the interior of the island. Moreover, the debt on the chapel had not yet been paid off: So, after the first ten years, faith rather than facts inspired the Society Report for 1827: "This small Society appears to be doing well. They are praying for better days."

No. 28

PANADURA CIRCUIT

Rev. R. E. de Silva, B.D.

THE coming of Methodism to Panadura goes back to the year 1817, when Rev. Mr. Amer started a Wesleyan school, with 70 pupils, in a small way-side resting place—'Ambalama'—which was built by a non-Christian friend, Mr. Daniel Rodrigo. This was like a synagogue—a day-school during the week days and a place of worship on Sundays.

Rev. MacKenny was probably the first clergyman here. The Gospel preached in a non-Christian atmosphere did not meet with hostility, and was accepted by many. As time went on, the 'Ambalama' was not enough to hold the growing numbers. At this stage Mr. Solomon Rodrigo, a son of Mr. Daniel Rodrigo, gifted to the Mission on a notarial deed, a part of the land surrounding the ambalama. Soon a larger and a better building replaced the Ambalama. This was built of mud and wattle, and was dedicated in August 1822. Sir R. Otley and Rev. S. Lambrick were present at the service. Rev. Benjamin Clough, one of the first batch of missionaries, preached on the text "God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (St. John 4:24).

Some of the pioneer ministers, whose names are associated with Panadura are Revds. Lalman, Cornelis Wijesinghe, Bartholomeusz, de Hoedt, and Peter Gerard de Zylva, the 'Apostle of Moratuwa'.

As this new church was not a solid structure and showed signs of decay, Rev. Mr. de Zylva and other clergymen set about collecting subscriptions for a new building. They are said to have collected £196. Rev. John Raymond Parys, who was sent to Panadura worked here for 9 years. The old church building was now fast decaying and it was imperative that the anticipated new building should be built as speedily as possible. At this time there was a convert, Mr. Andris Rodrigo, who saw the need of the Church and gifted to the Mission an additional 36 feet by 36 feet piece of land to enlarge the premises of the new church. It is said that several non-Christian friends gave their help for this venture. This was the first step that laid the foundation for the friendship and goodwill between the Christians and Buddhists at Panadura, which exists to the present day.

To the £196 already in the bank, Rev. Mr. Parys added £ 10 of his own money. The

Two Members of the British Conference Delegation



Rev. R. Wilfrid Pile



Miss Edith Ridge



Rev. S. B. Saravanamuthu
Secretary of Conference

work of the new church was given on contract. A further sum of £100 was collected and the furniture for the church was also procured with this money. On March 6th 1861, the new church was dedicated by the then chairman of the Synod, Rev. D. J. Gogerly, who preached the first sermon in the new church.

About this time the Church spread to Kehelwatte, where a school was started and the Gospel preached. A church was built there.

The Church spread in another direction to Batagoda, 15 miles to the East.

To meet the needs of the growing Church, two portions of land adjoining the church premises were bought. At the 75th anniversary of the church, an urgent need was met by the gift of a Sunday School hall by Mudaliyar and Mrs. P. S. Rodrigo. At a later stage a new Mission house was built on the premises.

One hundred years have gone by. The Church has grown both spiritually and numerically. As an indication of this growth and as a fitting memorial for the centenary, Mr. and Mrs. J. R. A. Rodrigo, two of our members, gifted a new church (built on the same land). This was dedicated to the glory of God on March 6th 1961.

No. 29

THE KALUTARA CIRCUIT

Rev. A. Lokubalasuriya

EARLY in 1815, James Lynch and W. M. Harvard spent a day in Kalutara. Mr. Lynch addressed a large gathering of people. The Kachcheri Mudaliyar rendered the sentences into Sinhala. This is the first recorded instance of the preaching of the Gospel in Kalutara.

The second visit was a united missionary tour made from Colombo by the Wesleyan, Baptist, and the C.M.S. missionaries. A converted Buddhist priest was amongst them.

Though Kalutara was thus visited occasionally, it was in August 1817 that the first missionary appointment was made when W. B. Fox was stationed here. There was no missionary house and so Fox stayed with English Government officials. A place of worship is mentioned in the records of this time.

The Kalutara Mission then extended from Panadura to Kosgoda. There were seven schools with 444 children.

The second English missionary to Kalutara was John MacKenny. He built a Chapel and a Mission House. The Chapel was opened on Sunday, 28th January, 1821.

The annual District meeting was held that year in Kalutara and all the missionaries of the South District were present.

Our work was greatly supported by the English Government officers of the time. In 1822, the Governor, Sir Edward Paget, made a short stay in Kalutara. He, along with his family attended the evening services.

In 1827, on Sunday, March 18th, a converted Buddhist priest made an open confession of his conversion to Christianity.

The Rev. John Daniel Gogerly, oriental scholar, was in charge of Kalutara in 1827, 1828 and again in 1830. Mr. Kilner was sent here a few years later. He was a fluent speaker in Sinhalese. There was a succession of missionaries till 1840.

William Hardy, well known for his writings on Buddhism, took charge in 1939.

A little later, the English missionary was withdrawn from Kalutara and Ceylon ministers were placed in charge of this circuit.

Two of the earliest Ceylon ministers were Rev. John R. Parys, a Roman Catholic

who became a Methodist, and the Rev. C. W. de Hoedt. Then came the Rev. J. A. Poulier (1863-1872). After him came the Rev. J. A. Spaar.

The old Mission House and Chapel were in a bad condition. During this time a new Mission House and Chapel were built. The Chapel was opened for public worship on Good Friday, March 1877.

In 1896 an English Missionary was again appointed to Kalutara. This was necessitated by the growing work on the estates. A few years after, the work again reverted, to Ceylonese control. Later still, missionaries and ministers worked in colleague-ship with the missionary having special oversight of the Estates Circuit.

On the Sinhalese side of the work, the ministry of the Rev. C. E. de Silva and that

of the Rev. J. S. de Silva have been highly appreciated.

The Rev. G. A. F. Senaratne built the present school at a cost of Rs. 22,000/-. This money came from the sale of a part of the Mission premises.

Most of the early missionaries and ministers were able to preach in Portuguese. The Burghers spoke Sinhalese, Portuguese and English.

The work of the Schools should not be forgotten. The following are some of those who did very good work in those early days—G. F. Meynert, Don Carolis Tennekoon, D. D. de Alwis, Wickremasinghe, B. Andris Perera, J. B. Perera, Emmeline Vander Straaten, Lucy Vander Straaten.

No. 30

KURANA NEGOMBO CIRCUIT

Mr. A. R. F. Fernando

WHEN the first missionaries landed in Ceylon in 1814 they started preaching the gospel from four main places. This Methodist Missionary enterprise was started in Negombo by Rev. Robert Newstead as far back as 1818. Now this work has expanded and there are Methodist Societies at Negombo, Kurana, Dalupota, Andiambalama and Pitipana.

Negombo Society :

On August 9th 1819 the foundation stone was laid for a church in Negombo, and it was completed and dedicated in 1820. The main structure of the Church was demolished and rebuilt in 1957 on the same foundation. Rev. Robert Newstead opened two schools at Negombo. As time went on the boys' school had to be closed down but the girls' school improved and became a leading school in the Negombo District and was later named "Newstead".

Kurana Society :

Rev. Robert Newstead preached at Kurana in 1818. Rev. John Adnan Poulier

opened a School and it was also used as a preaching hall at Kurana. As this school became wholly inadequate for the congregation the first Church was built in 1828. Under the benign influence of Rev. Don Daniel Perera the "apostle of Kurana", and Rev. Robert Spence Hardy, the work of God at Kurana flourished amazingly. With the wholehearted co-operation of all, the second Church was built in 1848. To commemorate the distinguished services rendered by Rev. Daniel Perera the foundation of the present Church was laid in 1870 and the Church was declared open in 1887.

Dalupotha Society :

This society was started by Rev. Robert Newstead about the year 1820. One day when riding on horse back, an animal suddenly jumped in front of his horse. He lost control and fell from the horse. He knelt and prayed and decided to build a Church at this spot and today the Church stands there. Rev. Robert Newstead went round the village and collected about sixty people who were Animists. They became converted. The Church expanded.

Andiambalama Society :

There are reasonable grounds to think that Rev. Don Daniel Perera preached at Andiambalama, and in many places converts were won and a society was formed. The very fact that the tomb of the late Rev. Peter Salgado lies in front of this Church is itself a proof of the great services rendered by him.

Pitipana Society :

In the year 1930 when Rev. J. S. B. Mendis was in charge of Kurana some of

the Roman Catholics sought refuge in another Christian Church other than their own. As such, on Sundays they came to Kurana to hear him preach. When Rev. G. A. F. Seneratne came to Kurana on August 23rd 1936 about seventy five Roman Catholics from Pitipana became Methodists. Rev. G. A. F. Senaratne opened a hall for preaching and it was dedicated on 13th September 1936. About six hundred people attended the service. There were three services each week. A school was opened.

No. 31

KADDAIVELY

Rev. C. Daniel

THIS Parish formed a part of the Point Pedro Circuit. The site now occupied as our mission compound was the Parish Church and the ministers residence in the days of the Dutch. The mission work at Kaddaively was started in 1821 by the Rev. Robert Carver. Earlier than 1821, Point Pedro and Kaddaively were under the Chairman of the North Ceylon District the Rev. James Lynch who was also the Chairman for Madras and Bangalore. Though work at Kaddaively was started in 1821, the Mission entered the formal occupation of the premises in 1829. Later on, an application was made to the Government Agent, Jaffna by the Rev. Dr. Percival and as a result Kaddaively property, along with Puttur and Vannarponnai, were ceded to our Mission by the Local Government in 1844. In 1923 Kaddaively had a separate school with a teacher and 38 children. "Kaddaively in the Point Pedro circuit is a place of great importance for mission labour. It is one of the interesting divisions of the Northern Province. I hope

soon to attempt the restoration of the old church there", wrote Rev. Percival. With the generous gift of timber gifted by the people of Kaddaively, the church and the school building were restored in 1846.

As a result of the labours of the early missionaries in this field the first convert was Peter Murugappar, who, in spite of several hardships and disownment by his people, boldly accepted the Lord. The second convert was Margaret Sinnachchi Murugappar who later became a devoted Bible woman. Through her life and witness many were brought to the Lord. These were followed by W. N. Kandiah and family, John Velupillai and family, and A. V. Murugesu and family. The descendants of these families are today Kaddaively society members. There are about sixty families on the roll. Kaddaively has produced four ministers of whom two are still in the active ministry. There had been many Evangelists also of whom a few still serve the church faithfully.

KANDY CIRCUIT

Mr. J. O. Mendis

CENTRAL Ceylon with its capital, Kandy, came into British possession in 1816. The missionaries were anxiously waiting for an opportunity to begin work in the interior. In 1836, the Methodist Mission entered Kandy, led by converts from the coast who had settled there. In March the same year, a European missionary was sent to Kandy. It was only in July that a large house, formerly the first Adigar's residence, became occupied. In it was space for a dwelling house, a chapel and a school. The English congregation consisted of officers and men of the Army, Burghers employed under Government, and the low-country Sinhalese who had come to Kandy to earn a livelihood. The missionary was recalled after one year to Colombo to replace Rev. B. Clough who returned to England. The Station was then looked after by Mr. Poulier who began a school at his residence, where he taught 15 girls and 10 boys.

In 1839, Rev. Spence Hardy returned and fitted up a room at his residence to serve as a chapel. Reduced grants enforced a retreat three years later, but the work was carried on by the laymen. A Mr. Don Peter from the low country who was converted in Kandy became an evangelist and worked in Kalutara. A man who had been notorious as a drunken father and a curse to his family, was converted and began to meet in class. Another member and his Kandy wife were exceedingly zealous for God and engaged themselves in good works. The man began teaching during his leisure hours. A blind Kandy boy was baptised. He had come to know the truth at Sunday School and he was able to repeat nearly the whole of the first catechism and several chapters of St. Matthew.

Coffee planting which was rapidly extending on the hills in the neighbourhood drew trades-people and mechanics from the coast towns. In 1865, Mr. J. Henry Eaton a notable advocate, resident in Kandy, began

to preach and hold class meetings for the folk. Several Methodists, from the coast attended these meetings. The names of Messrs. Poulier, B. A. Mendis, and L. S. de Silva in addition to Mr. Eaton are prominent among those who formed the first Methodist Society in Kandy and nurtured it. They were inspired by the Colombo Revival in 1865. From small beginnings the Society grew, and a request to send them a missionary was granted. In 1867 Rev. J. Bough came as missionary in charge.

The keen desire to have a fitting place for worship took hold of the lay people and through their efforts the chapel in Brownrigg Street was built and opened for worship in 1871. In 1873 a small chapel was built in Katukelle where the missionary bungalow also came to be. This was later replaced by the present chapel which is now used for our Tamil services.

At this time great interest was shown in evangelistic work outside Kandy and work in Laggala and other places was begun. By 1878 Tamil work in Kandy was started.

The growing needs of the Methodist community as well as the evangelistic opportunities of the area led to the starting of the schools connected with the church at Ampitiya (on a property bought in 1851), Talatouya, Uduwela, Rajawela and Ampitiya, together with an English school for girls and another for boys in Kandy town. An Industrial School which later became a bilingual school known as Ferens came into existence. Ferens was closed owing to the changing policy of the Government in the 1940s. All our schools were taken over by the Government in 1961 in keeping with the Education Bill.

It will be interesting to note the following:

1. In those early days, laymen played an important part and were responsible

- for the building of the Methodist Circuit.
2. Before our Kandy Church was built, baptisms had been celebrated at Audience Hall. "Rev. Andrew Kassen I.L.D., Wesleyan Missionary, baptised William Henry Solomons in 1853 at the Audience Hall."
 3. There are still descendants of Kandyan families who were converted those days worshipping and taking an active part in the life of the Church. These are the Paranagamas and the Abeykoonas.

The Kandy Circuit works in English Sinhalese and Tamil and its work has extended to Matale, Kurunegala, Kegalla, Nawalapitiya and Gampola. The laymen still play an important part.

No. 33

MUTWAL CIRCUIT

Rev. G. S. Weerasooriya, B.D.

METHODISM in Mutwal dates back to the time when a school was started in the area. It was the only educational institution in the locality for some time. Between 1837 and 1881 a Methodist community came into being and in 1881 provision was made for the growing community to meet together for worship. The building which was purchased, later proved to be inadequate for the congregation of sixty but it was not until 1918 that plans for a new building began to bear fruit. A grant from the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Committee was given towards the cost of the buildings; Sir John Randles laid the foundation stone and some years later the Chapel was dedicated to the work of God.

The Totewatte Church in the Mutwal Circuit had its beginnings in a young Buddhist boy who attended a Mission School run by Rev. Clough, one of the first missionaries to Ceylon. This boy was converted at school and returned to his home area to witness to his relations and friends who were Buddhists. Rev. D. David de Silva, a minister from a neighbouring church, frequently visited the boy. He realized

that there would be many opportunities for service if a resident minister was appointed to that area and it was on his recommendation that Synod appointed a minister to Totewatte. Under the leadership of Rev. Peter Fernando, the Methodist community began to grow. For some time the only place of worship was a cadjan hut which was contemptuously nicknamed by others as "Attha Kana Palliya". But the cherished hope of having a permanent building for worship was realized during the time of the Rev. J. D. Lanerolle and the present Church stands on land donated by Joseph and Solomon Fernando, sons of Johannes Fernando, the boy who was converted at the Mission School.

Madampitiya Church history dates back to the year 1852. A school and church were built at this time on a plot of land near the Kelani River but as this land was subject to flooding from the Kelani, it was considered necessary to rebuild a Church on another site. This second site was subsequently acquired by the Municipality but it was from money received as compensation that Wesley Chapel was erected on its present site in 1906.

No. 34

KATANA CIRCUIT

Rev. C. M. Sahabandu

Miriswatte

METHODISM was brought to Miriswatte in the year 1837. The pioneer Methodist Minister during this period was the Rev. Don Daniel Pereira who was engaged in

evangelistic work with the Rev. Robert Newstead in Negombo. When the Mission began its labours here, nearly all the people were heathens except for a few nominal Christians. A class Meeting was formed in 1837. Through the labours of a devoted

- Catechist, Mr. Harmanis Fonseka, 20 families embraced Christianity. In 1848 a Chapel was erected at the expense of the villagers. Sunday School lessons and School classes were held in the Vestry. Later on a separate building was erected for the School. During Rev. J. S. Peeris' period in 1873 evangelistic work was begun at Dunagaha and Kimbulapitiya. A school was opened at Dunagaha in 1873. By the grace of God there are 45 Christian families now in Miriswatte.

Kadawala

- From Miriswatte evangelistic work spread to Kadawala. A Buddhist from Kadawala married a Christian woman from Miriswatte. Her husband later became a Christian. Due to the labours of the missionaries and Methodist ministers several families were converted to Christianity in Kadawala. At the start, services were held under a tamarind tree. Later a School was built in 1896 which served the Christian as well as the Buddhist children in the locality. During this period there was a Church in Kudagammana in close proximity to Kadawala. As the Christian population in Kudagammana dwindled down to a great

extent, the materials of this Church were brought to Kadawala and a new Church was erected in 1953. The number of Christians in Kadawala is gradually increasing.

Dagonna

Thelanis Carthelis, a Buddhist of Dagonne married a Christian from Hendala, Elizabeth De Alwis Jayatilleke. Thelanis later became a Christian. This family served as a nucleus for a wider Christian Community. In 1892, Thelanis gifted the Mission a bit of land on which a School Chapel was built. The Methodists of Dagonne still assemble here for worship.

Katana

Due to the efforts made by the Karunatilleke family and the co-operation given by them to the Methodist ministers from time to time a Christian community was formed in Katana. In the year 1888 Markus Fernando built a Church and School and presented them to the Mission. (Markus Fernando is the great-grandfather of the present Circuit Steward, L. J. S. F. Karunatilleke).

No. 35

MORATUMULLA CIRCUIT

C. S. M. Fernando, B.A.

- Rev. Peter Gerhard de Zylva, "the Apostle of Moratuwa" who was appointed to the Moratuwa area as minister in charge, also started work at Moratumulla in the year 1841. Access to Moratuwa those days was only a footpath and the inhabitants were uneducated. Mr. de Zylva went from house to house advising them on good morals and religion. By this time several inhabitants from Moratumulla area had already heard Mr. de Zylva preaching at Gorakagaha Mankada (near Mendis Lane), so they were very happy about the work started by him at Moratumulla. Soon afterwards, a cadjan shed was erected at Moratumulla for use as a preaching hall. As the people wanted a school too, a building was erected near the

Galpotta junction, and a person named Joseph Peiris was appointed as its Headmaster. During this time, Mr. de Zylva conducted services every Sunday in the following order—8 a.m. at Egoda Uyana, 10 a.m. at Gorakana; 12-30 p.m. at Moratumulla, 3-30 p.m. at Gorakagaha Mankada, 7 p.m. at Angulana. His only transport was a white horse. Through his services, the first converts to become witnesses for the Gospel were Panagodage Christombu Fernando (Kiri Vidane Seeya), Panagodage Abraham Fernando (Ando Seeya), and Tantu lage Joranis Fernando (Juan Bass) of Indibedda, W. Francis Fernando and W. Joronis Fernando of Willorawatte, Don Andris Ferdinando and Don Solomon Ferdinando of Kadalana. With the help

of these people Mr. de Zylva started class meetings and family prayers and several people became keenly interested in Bible Study. In 1847 Don Andris Ferdinando was appointed as a Catechist to help Mr. de Zylva's work. During this time preaching was done in the village called Batakettara too. Opponents from the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches; Buddhist Priests, devil dancers and Hindu Priests attempted to destroy the work of Mr. de Zylva. But in spite of this opposition Mr. de Zylva stood firm and continued his good work. Later his enemies repented and were converted. Work at Moratumulla then began to progress very rapidly.

In 1846 Mr. de Zylva moved his residence to Willorawatte and stayed at first in the house of W. Francisco Fernando and later in the house of W. Joronis Fernando in the same village. Thus he stayed at Willorawatte and worked in the Moratuwa area which extended from Angulana to Egoda Uyana. At this time the Moratuwa Area was the only self-supporting circuit. Rev. de Zylva engaged himself not only in spiritual work but also in social work. He visited the sick, advised them on the foolishness of devil dancing ceremonies and the virtues of cleanliness, and helped them to get medicines and medical attention. He helped the poor and got them to improve the village roads, and did all he could to provide them with educational facilities. The work of the church progressed systematically and strengthened itself. The arduous work at this large circuit affected the health of Mr. de Zylva. The District Synod saw that the work was

too much of a strain on him, and transferred him to a small circuit—Galkissa. He left Moratuwa and his place of residence at Moratumulla and moved to Galkissa.

Rev. Daniel Henry Perera was appointed to Moratuwa in his place, and the appointment of Rev. J. A. Spaar as assistant minister was a great help to the work in Moratuwa Area. Rev. Robert S. Hardy was in charge of Moratuwa, when Rev. D. H. Perera was sick for some time. In his writings it is stated that cottage meetings were held on full moon days in the homes of our people (Methodists). Mr. Perera resided at Rawatawatte and founded an English school at Gorakagaha Mankade. In 1865, the spiritual revival which started in Colombo and which spread out to several parts of the island had its impact on B. Samuel Mendis, Charles S. Peiris, M. H. Perera, and John Andrew de Mel of Moratuwa, who later dedicated themselves to the service of the church. In 1868, Rev. O. J. Gunasekera came in charge of Moratuwa area. During this period, services at Koralawella and Moratumulla were very fruitful.

Thus within 25 years in Moratumulla (where there was not a single Methodist in 1841) there were 243 full members, 43 members in trial, one Church, one Preaching Station, two schools and two Sunday Schools. The noteworthy event that took place in the year 1869 was the division of the large Moratuwa area circuit into two circuits, namely Moratumulla circuit and Rawatawatte Circuit. In that year, 1869, Rev. Joseph Fernando came in charge of the Moratumulla Circuit.

No. 36.

MINUWANGODA CIRCUIT

Rev. W. D. Jayasinghe

REFERENCE is made in Spences "Jubilee Memorials" to Minuwangoda as a Mission Station. Connected with this Mission then were four principal villages—Andiambalama with its hamlets Kimbulapitiya and Walpola, Wattegedara (a hamlet of Minuwangoda Pethiyagoda and Polwatte. The missionary labours of the late Rev. Don

David Pereira, known sometimes as the 'great Pereira' and also referred to as the "Apostle of Kurane-Negombo" which covered a period of 41 years prior to his death in 1867, had extended to this area too. In 1848, the late Mr. P. Salgado had been sent to Minuwangoda as a Catechist as there were a few Methodists in the area. When

Mr. Salgado, who later became a Minister, was moved to another station in 1864, it is recorded that there were 212 families connected with this mission with a regular attendance of at least 150 persons at services, and two schools. A school appears to have existed at Minuwangoda from Dutch times (since 1720).

Andiambalama with its hamlet Kimbulapitiya is now a society of the Kurane-Negombo circuit. Walpola was later abandoned as there was no response to the preaching of the Gospel.

Minuwangoda Circuit now comprises five societies viz., Minuwangoda with its hamlet Wattegedara, Pethiyagoda, Polwatte, Kamaragoda and Horagasmulla. There was work at Diulapitiya up to about 1902, but with the opening of a place of worship at Horagasmulla—only a mile, away—work at Diulapitiya ceased. Till about 10 years ago, there was work at Kudagammana, about three and a half miles from Horagasmulla, but as there were only two Methodist families, who now worship at Horagasmulla, the chapel was demolished and the materials were used in the building of the Chapel at Kadawala in the Katana circuit.

From very early times, there were eight schools in this area, viz., Minuwangoda, Pethiyagoda, Kamaragoda, Polwatte, Diulapitiya, Kotadeniyawa, Hanchapola and Kudagammana but at the time of vesting in December 1960, there were only three schools—Pethiyagoda, Horagasmulla and Kamaragoda.

At Wattegedara (Minuwangoda Society), Methodism started with the witness of a young Methodist woman from Kimbulapitiya, married to a Buddhist at Wattegedara, leading to his conversion and that of the members of his family. A missionary from Negombo began visiting them in 1845. There are 30 Methodist families with 68 full members and a total Christian community of 108. The present church was built in 1885 in the heart of the town by the Kurunegala Road.

Pethiyagoda, about five miles on the road to Veyangoda, is now the largest society with over 100 families, 160 full

members and a total Christian community of 333. It was entirely a non-Christian village, when the witness of a surveyor stationed there and a young schoolmaster appointed to the school established there during the first 50 years, had its impact on the community. The catechist from Minuwangoda visited the place and the missionary from Negombo had to 'wade through deep water with his shoes and stockings in the hands of an attendant'. Notwithstanding severe persecution, 14 families had embraced the Christian faith by then. Though poor, they had built a church at their own expense where they had services among themselves, even when they had no preacher. The present church was built in 1911. The minister resided there till about 30 years ago, when his residence was moved to Minuwangoda. An evangelist is stationed there now.

Methodism had its roots at Horagasmulla, about 5 miles from Minuwangoda on the Kurunegala Road, through the witness of a young Methodist woman from Seeduwa, married to a Buddhist at Horagasmulla in 1860. The husband later became a Christian and, in 1885, gifted the present church land, where a school was built and services held till the year 1911, when the present church was built. There are 25 Methodist families with 45 full members and a Christian community of 69. An evangelist is stationed there now.

Polwatte, connected with this mission from the beginning, is a poor village where the people are engaged in the pottery trade. Its present church, which is the second one, was built in 1880. There are about 30 families with 24 full members and a Christian community of 83. People there are still 'babes in faith'.

Work was started at Kamaragoda in the latter part of the last century and its present church, which is their second one, was built in 1921. The village is about five miles from Minuwangoda, lying to the west on the Veyangoda Road. It has 25 Methodist families with 32 full members and a Christian community of 84.

According to available records, 20 Ceylonese ministers, of whom 13 have passed away, have been stationed in this

circuit since 1880. The late Rev. D. P. G. Ferdinando, who had laboured zealously for two periods in this circuit and who had earned fame as a builder of churches wherever he served, had started the building of the present churches at Pethiyagoda, Horagasmulla and Kamaragoda. Since 1893, nine missionaries of whom seven had been

called to rest, had oversight of the work of this area.

In 1895, the circuit reported an income of Rs. 381.11 with 106 full members and a total Christian community of 148, while, in 1963, the income was Rs. 5,900.80 with 329 full members and a total Christian community of 677.

No. 37

JAMPETTAH CIRCUIT

Mr. C. W. Vethanayagam and Rev. D. N. Muttaiah

THE Methodist Tamil Mission in Colombo was started in August 1871 by Rev. J. W. Phillips, with a membership of about 30. A school was started soon after.

About 1874 land was bought at the junction of Jampettah Street and Green Street and a Church was built there. The Missionary Committee in London granted £100 and an additional £100 was collected locally for this purpose. A house too was bought at Van Rooyan Street to serve as the Minister's residence.

In course of time the membership of this church increased, and other societies were established in Maradana, Colpetty and Wellawatte. By 1916 the number of schools under this mission had increased to five (schools had been established at Kotahena, Hultsdorf, Maradana, Kollupitiya and Dehiwela), and a catechist was assisting the minister in his work.

By 1927 the membership had increased to over 400. This included a large number of people belonging to the American Congregational Mission in Jaffna, but who, while in Colombo, were in the care of this mission. An additional minister was given to this circuit in 1929, and, since then this circuit has had two ministers to attend to its pastoral work.

By this time a good part of the Christian Tamil population was found shifting towards Wellawatte, and, the membership

there increased considerably. So, in 1931, it was decided that there should be a separate church for the Tamil Society in Wellawatte. A church building fund was initiated, and, Members of the circuit as well as others, including many in Malaya, contributed liberally to that fund. A site was chosen at Moors Road and the land was purchased for Rs. 4,500/-. The foundation of the Church was laid on the 8th of September, 1934, and the church was dedicated on the 8th of August, 1936. The building cost about Rs. 25,000/-. The membership of the circuit was steadily growing, and, by 1937 it was well over 900.

By 1943 the Superintendent Minister had shifted his residence to a rented house in Wellawatte. The manse at Van Rooyan Street was sold and the property fetched Rs. 27,000/-. This money was invested with the mission authorities, and the interest thus obtained covered the rent of the minister's new residence.

In 1947 those members of this circuit, who belonged to the American Congregational Mission in Jaffna (now called the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India), left the circuit to form a separate society of their own in Colombo as decided by their Diocesan Council in Jaffna. In consequence of this movement there was a drop in the membership of this circuit.

In 1953 a house in Boswell Place was bought and this was used as the manse of

FORMER CHAIRMAN NORTH CEYLON DISTRICT



Rev. Gilbert E. Jessop

the Superintendent Minister. This house cost Rs. 45,000/-. Another manse, for the second minister, was built at Pickerings Road in 1960 on a property donated by a church member. The building cost Rs. 22,500/-.

The mission schools were taken over by the State in 1960, and, since then this circuit has been able to devote all its resources to religious work entirely. The membership of this circuit now stands at 1,015.

No. 38

TIRUKOVIL CIRCUIT

Rev. E. E. Gunaratnam, B.D.

THE present Tirukovil Circuit, which commences at the 12th mile post South of Kalmunai and traverses sixty miles along the Eastern coast, is identical in extent with the Revenue Divisions of Akkaraipattu and Panama Pattu. The circuit is formed of five societies, viz., Blackheath, Karunkottitivu, Tirukovil, Komari and Pottuvil,—with a total membership of 736 on the register. This is a promising evangelistic field where the Gospel is proclaimed to Hindus, Buddhists and Muslims. Our converts have come chiefly from the Hindus, while a few have come from Buddhist homes as well. There are no other Protestant churches in this area.

The years 1874—1878 stand out as the crucial period of pioneer Methodism in this circuit, when the commencement of missionary work came as a natural expansion of work when Kalmunai became a missionary station nearly a hundred years ago. The Rev. Edward Strutt and the Revds. James Henry de Silva and W. M. Walton, felt the guiding hands of God leading them Southwards.

In 1874 a boys' school was started at Karunkottitivu and a mixed school at Blackheath. In 1875 a school chapel was built at Karunkottitivu and a teacher-catechist stationed there, while in the year that followed the Rev. Edward Spalding Adams was appointed as the first minister at Karunkottitivu. In 1877 a boys' school was started at Thambiluvil. One year later the Rev. Robert Barnes succeeded the Rev. Adams, and in 1879 the Rev. George Joseph Trimmer took over from the Rev. Strutt at Kalmunai. In the same year a catechist was stationed at Tirukovil, while

a school at Tirukovil for boys and another for girls at Thambiluvil were started simultaneously. The latter, with 73 girls on roll was referred to as the "best school for girls in Batticaloa." The Rev. Trimmer, writing on the 15th December, 1879 says:—

"I see that Brother Strutt has already mentioned to you of an awakening among the 'Chaaliyas' at Komari. The origin of this is an interesting one. Our Tirukovil teacher was baptised during Mr. Strutt's time and therefore had not long been a follower of Christ. Soon after his baptism he visited Komari (12 miles South of Tirukovil) and, advised and aided by the Rev. R. A. Barnes he preached and exhorted these people from Sabbath to Sabbath. I think such an instance of voluntary work for Christ, on the part of a young convert is worthy of mention. Brother Barnes also visited these people once a month and soon after I came here he reported that several of them desired and were fit to be baptised. My visit however was necessarily delayed until the middle of October. Komari as before mentioned is on the coast. It is essentially a jungle village. I should think that its inhabitants have little if any intercourse with more civilised towns such as Puliyantivu. The way from Tirukovil is not altogether a pleasant one. Part of it runs through dense jungle said to be the habitat of cheeta and the bear."

The Rev. Trimmer continues to say that at this visit he had a lengthy conversation with the fourteen adults who were presented for baptism,—explaining to them what it meant to become a Christian. At the end of the

conversation four of them went back and the remaining ten were baptised. On investigation it is found that the teacher referred to was one Mr. Joshua Chettiyar (whose descendants presently form the bulk of the Tirukovil society). Mr. Joshua Chettiyar's diary mentions the awakening referred to by the Rev. Trimmer, and also the oppression of those early converts by the non-Christian Chief Headman, then at Pottuvil. In course of time three relatives of this Chief Headman were led to the feet of the Master by Mr. Joshua and baptised by the Revds. E. M. Weaver, and Fletcher on the 15th October, 1895,—this was the beginning of the Pottuvil society. The Revds. E. M. Weaver, C. S. Casinader and Mr. Joshua Chettiyar were able to extend their work further Southwards, when on 30th June, 1896 a school was started at Panama, an isolated hamlet, ten miles South of Pottuvil.

The present boundaries of this circuit have been fixed as early as 1896. Since then the work has not expanded geographically, but has been strengthened and consolidated by those who succeeded the pioneer missionaries. Special mention should be made of Miss M. B. Clegg, who was the first and only lady missionary to be stationed in this circuit. Large church buildings replaced school chapels and trained evangelists took over from teacher-catechists.

The decade commencing 1922 marks another memorable period in the history of this circuit when under the able leadership of the late Rev. T. S. Vethanayagam, the Gospel reached many staunch Hindu homes. Among the several baptisms reported during this period, it is noteworthy to mention our Mr. Canagaretnam, to whom the name 'Paul' was given at his conversion. The Rev. James Mather in referring to this incident in May 1959 says—

"Paul is a Hindu convert from Thambiluvil, a strong Hindu centre, about forty miles South of Batticaloa town. I re-

member going to this village thirty years ago for an evangelistic meeting along with the late Rev. T. S. Vethanayagam and I still remember the stir and tension there was all over that area at that time over Paul's conversion, but God who called him helped him to stand firm against many difficulties."

Apart from oppression of converts by non-Christian officers, there was organised opposition from the Hindus, and one of our evangelist's houses was set on fire. Nevertheless the church emerged triumphant through this period of tension and strain and the Lord used Paul Canagaretnam to bring many Hindus to the feet of the Master. The services of Mrs. Gnanammah Kathamuthu, the first local Bible woman who served the church for over 40 years is also worthy of mention. During this period Sister Elizabeth Baker, Miss Catherine E. Hamilton and the Rev. B. Holland, gave much of their time to help the ministers and other workers in the circuit to go forward. The circuit advanced spiritually and numerically.

The Rev. R. W. McVeigh was the last missionary who was superintendent of the circuit from Kalmunai. At the Synod held in Kalmunai in January 1942, Tirukovil was made a "B" circuit and the minister then stationed at Tirukovil was made the first national superintendent minister of the circuit. Since then this circuit has taken greater responsibilities in finance and local leadership. When the Home Mission Department was formed this circuit was placed under it as it proves to be one of the promising evangelistic fields in this District. One Tamil minister, three men and two women workers presently form the entire staff.

It was only in 1963 that this circuit produced its first candidates to the ministry, viz., Messrs. K. S. Vethanayagam and George Jeyarajasingham. The 150th anniversary of Methodism in the Island coincides with the 100th anniversary of work in this circuit.

DEHIWELA—MT. LAVINIA CIRCUIT

Rev. N. W. R. Fernando and Mr. J. Vincent Mendis

THE Dehiwela-Mt. Lavinia Circuit was formed in 1950 and consists of three Societies, Dehiwela, Karagampitiya with Pepiliyana, and Mt. Lavinia, which for several decades formed part of the former Kollupitiya-Wellawatte Circuit.

The oldest of these Societies, Dehiwela, was first included in the "Reports of the Wesleyan Mission" about 1878 as "a substation belonging at first to Galkissa and in subsequent years to Wellawatte". No record can be found as to the exact date when Mission work was begun here, but it is stated in the early Reports that work was commenced in the neighbouring villages of Kalubowila and Ratmalana in 1819. A School Chapel existed in Dehiwela for very many years and services were held regularly on Sundays. The work did not progress and it was thought in 1888 that preaching here should be given up. Returns of 1877 show that the Society consisted of ten members. Dehiwela needed an enthusiastic leader, and they found him in the Rev. B. Anthony Mendis who returned to live in his home in Dehiwela in 1875 and was ordained. He gathered a few Wesleyans together and decided in faith and prayer 'to build the city of God.' in Dehiwela. The little flock under his leadership set themselves to the task and their great faith was blessed by God. They purchased the site, built the present church, and dedicated it in 1883. During this period there were several adult conversions including the conversion of a Muslim. The 1886 records show 33 full members, 25 juniors, 18 on Trial, with a Sunday School, Day School and three local preachers. Three Ministers of the Church came from Dehiwela—the Revds. B. A. Mendis, C. E. P. Wijasinghe and later, S. George Mendis.

The members from Dehiwela who had settled in the neighbouring village of Karagampitiya formed a second Society, and held their Sunday Services in the School Hall. This continued, the work developed, and the present Chapel was built in 1922. Sunday School and other activities progressed. The adjoining village of Pepiliyana where the Church Missionary Society, had given over their chapel to the Wesleyan Mission became an additional centre of work with help from Karagampitiya. Work in Pepiliyana had been badly affected, but today our little flock there has been greatly strengthened, and the Chapel is being renovated as well as the Church Hall adjoining.

In Mount Lavinia there was property belonging to the Methodists and in this School Hall services were held in English and in Sinhalese from about 1910. As time went on, this area developed with a large influx of people settling down here when St. Thomas College moved to Mount Lavinia from Colombo. A new Chapel was built in 1929 and was later extended at the 30th anniversary in 1959. The Minister's residence stands on this same compound.

Today the Circuit has developed into a fully self supporting and progressive Circuit, with a membership of 315 and a Christian community of 531 (1963 returns). The Circuit works on a budget of Rs. 14,000/-. There are four Churches, where Services are held every Sunday, one in English and three in Sinhala, three Sunday Schools, three Women's Fellowships, and two lively Youth groups. The Circuit has an honorary Evangelist, a retired District Evangelist, six fully accredited Local Preachers, and six on trial, and it is administered by one Minister.

MANNAR-MURUNKAN CIRCUIT

Rev. M. I. Newton

METHODIST work was started in the Island of Mannar in 1883 by the Revs. E. Middleton Weaver and E. S. Adams. They lived in tents in the village and quickly made contacts with the villagers. They were followed by the Rev. William C. Bird who travelled about on horseback proclaiming the Gospel of Free Salvation to all the villagers. This missionary work was continued and in 1908 the work was extended to Murunkan and Puthukamam. Many villagers left the Independent Roman Catholic Church and joined the Methodist Church because of its simpler forms of worship and on the day when the first Recognition Service was held for Full Members, a hundred people were received into Fellowship. The Methodist Church, a part of the Holy Catholic Church, offered them

the eternal word of God in the Holy Bible; purity, scriptural holiness and a passion for Christian missionary evangelism and social action.

The new members found their spiritual home within the Methodist Church. They did not become members for material gains such as free education, they felt they wanted to share fellowship and love and to grow together in Christ's Grace and strength.

Looking back over the eighty years we can give thanks to God for all that has been wrought. Whatever the difficulties we may have to face in the future we shall be able to go forward confident in the knowledge of His love and Grace.

No. 41

UVA CIRCUIT

Rev. H. L. Fernando, B.D.

WHEN Rev. Samuel Langdon, who had been stationed in Kandy since 1880, returned from furlough, in 1884, he brought with him Rev. W. H. Rigby, who was designated as the pioneer Methodist missionary to Uva. First Mr. and Mrs. Langdon made a tour together by pony-cart through Nuwara Eliya to Badulla, and back through Bandarawela, and decided on these two places as the first centres of work. Mr. Rigby was stationed at Bandarawela, and Rev. M. H. Perera at Badulla in 1885, and much itinerating work was done, Haldummulla being specially mentioned. Haldummulla and Fort Macdonald (Busdulla) appear in the 1886 stations, but with the words 'Agents wanted'. In 1887 Mr. Langdon came to Bandarawela, Mr. Rigby having been transferred to the Galle District, and had with him Mr. James Alwis, Catechist. Rev. D. H. I. Ferdinando (then a catechist) was at Badulla, and an unnamed agent at Haldummulla.

The following year this Agent was replaced by the Rev. D. T. Wijayasinghe, then a catechist.

In 1887 Mr. Langdon opened the Boys' Reformatory and Industrial school at "Happy Valley", Diyatalawa, which did fine work; but it had to be closed in 1900 owing to financial difficulties, when it was amalgamated with the Wellawatte Boys' Home.

The first missionary to Badulla was Miss Fannie Cooke, who offered for the work of a Girls' Home there, which Mr. Langdon proposed to start. She was a very motherly and experienced lady, and did great work for the women and girls of Uva for over 30 years. The starting of the Home on March 2nd 1889 was made possible by the substantial help of an earnest Christian planter, Mr. Jordon. Later another planter, Mr. Rettie of Spring Valley

was a good friend to Miss Cooke and to the Home. The first man missionary to be stationed in Badulla was Rev. A. E. Prince. Miss Faith Tyler, who came from the same church in England as Miss Cooke, came out in 1893 to do evangelistic work. She lived at first with Miss Cooke, and gathered a band of helpers, including Miss Laura Elias, Miss Munasinghe and Miss Leela Godawela, who toured the district with her, going as far as Bibile, Nanupurawa, Haldum-mulla, Meegshakiwela and Soranatota. Through their work a number of women converts were won, and schools for girls were started in some of the villages.

About the same time, Miss Teasey came out from Ireland for a Girls' High School, and the three ladies worked hand in hand for more than 10 years, and were known as the Three Graces of Uva—Faith, Hope and Charity.

When the work was started at Badulla, there were already a few Christians living there the chief being Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Blaze. The School hall, which was built in 1892, was used for a time as a chapel, but a small chapel was built a year or two later. The present Church, in a good position near the main road and market place, was built in 1924, during the ministry of Rev. C. H. S. Ward, on land leased from the crown.

The work at Welimada was started from Badulla in 1898 and a Women's Hospital and Dispensary called after Mrs. Wiseman, who founded the Women's Auxiliary of the Methodist Missionary Society, was opened. Good work was done there by various lady missionaries, including the Misses Gertrude, Elsie and Annie Kellow, daughters of Mr. Kellow of Albion Estate near Ambawela. Later a government hospital for men was started and Dr. J. H. F. Jayasuriya, who was appointed as the first D.M.O. in 1921, was of great help to the work, as also was a local tea planter, Mr. Bissett. However in 1939, the Medical work was closed down on government orders, the Government hospital incorporating the women's work.

Evangelistic work has been carried on there up to the present. Rev. M. A. Stembo was sent there as a young minister in 1904 and worked there for 5 years. A

convert during this time was the father of the late Mr. Kosgahakumbura, Catechist, who became a Christian along with his family. Mr. Stembo was followed by Rev. D. G. E. Piyasena in 1909, but he was transferred next year to Lunugala. His place was taken by a Catechist, and for some years now the station has been filled by two deaconesses. In 1954 a Christian Community Centre was started, and after this was closed a Creche for labourers children was carried on.

From Welimada work was started at Busdulla, where a school was opened, and services have been held since 1915. The present Church was built in 1937 during the time of Rev. W. O. Bevan. Mr. D. Siribaddena and his family have been throughout the mainstay of the cause.

Though Bandarawela was the first place at which a missionary was stationed, it was only about 1914 that the town became a popular health resort. The railway had been opened in 1894, and now good roads had been built. Both the permanent population and the number of visitors increased, and the need for a Church became a pressing one. Services were held in the school, but it was not until 1936 that, through the efforts of Rev. W. O. Bevan, a worthy church was built, though the design, including a tower, was only completed in 1952 through the generous help of Mr. H. Watson Peiris.

It was in 1908 that Rev. C. E. de Silva held the first Methodist Service in Demodera at the Rest House. A member of the congregation, Mr. R. Edward Elias, offered to give most of the materials required for the erection of a small chapel, and this was built. It was later replaced by the present Anglican Church.

After serving as a planter on several estates in Uva since 1887, Mr. Elias bought a piece of land in Ella, and built himself a bungalow. Here services were held for some years.

We will conclude this account with a quotation from the "Jubilee Souvenir of the Uva Mission." published in 1948:

"Evangelistic work was 'the first love' of Uva's workers, and they all have taken

no small part in preaching Christ in the highlands of Uva, not counting the cost or seeking for rewards, but doing the will of Him who sent them. In perils oft and in journeyings oft, our ministers, and men and women evangelists, have laboured faithfully, mindful of the goal the pioneer missionaries set themselves many years ago

—Christ for Uva and Uva for Christ. With the passage of years the Mission has given place to the Church in Uva.

While we thank God for the great record of service rendered by His Servants, in the past, we press on still trusting Him for all that's to come."

No. 42

HATTON CIRCUIT

Rev. S. M. Jacob, B.D.

HATTON is the "creature of the Railway station" and owes its growth as a town to the Railway Station. Thus it seems singularly appropriate that the first Divine Service in Hatton was conducted in the Railway Waiting Room in the year 1884 by the Police Magistrate, Mr. John Northmore. This devout gentleman, together with the Station Master, Mr. Wm. A. Pate, was responsible for the beginning of Christian worship in Hatton.

The ground on which the church and the Minister's House (now known as "Wesley House") stands was gifted to the Mission, and the church was erected in 1889. This church was used for Divine Services on Sundays and as a school on week days. Though a place of worship was now available, a minister could not come from Kandy to conduct the service every Sunday. Therefore, at the request of the Mission, Mr. John Northmore, who was an Anglican, conducted worship at the church whenever a minister was not available.

Even in those days, the Hatton Church was truly Catholic, for Mr. Northmore says in one of his letters: "Let me bear my humble testimony to the rare catholicity shown in our worship. Church Missionaries, Baptists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, besides Methodists, used to offer prayers in our Chapel and fill the pulpit, and 'Hymns Ancient and Modern' were always sung; indeed it was our boast that there was no sectarian feeling at Hatton. We were all simply fellow Christians worshipping God." It is true to say that this catholic spirit is maintained here.

In 1894 the lease of land on which the quarters now known as "Station View" stands was granted and a school was conducted here. The first resident missionary in Hatton, the Rev. H. J. Philpott, was appointed in 1896 and English services were held at Hatton, Nawalapitiya, and Talawakelle. In this year, the English School (now Highlands College) was opened.

The evangelistic work was begun in 1896/7 and vernacular services were held. A Sinhalese catechist was appointed this year but the Tamil services were conducted by schoolmasters.

It is interesting to recall that the Methodist Church was the pioneer here in opening estate schools. The first estate schools at Marlborough and Allakolla were opened in 1899. Strathedom, Battalgalla, and Carolina Schools were opened in 1900 and the same year a Sinhalese School was opened at Ambegamuwa and Sinhalese work was begun there. The Rev. H. J. Philpott went home on sick-leave this year and the following year, 1901, the Rev. W. J. Noble came to Hatton. In 1902 the Nawalapitiya Church land was bought. The Rev. W. J. Noble had to go on sick-leave and the Rev. A. S. Bishop acted for him from March to September 1903.

The Tamil work advanced and evangelists were appointed to Hatton and Nawalapitiya in 1904. The Hauteville, and East Holy Rood Estate Schools were opened the same year. The following year, schools were opened at Belgravia, Sheen Nawalapitiya (Tamil), Rajawella and Gampola (Tamil).

The Hatton Mission House was begun in 1905 and was occupied a year later by the Rev. W. J. Noble.

During the time of the Rev. A. S. Beaty, who was in Hatton for a number of years—he first came to Hatton in 1907—Hatton, Rondura, Ottery, Pedro, Portswood, Kanda-

pola, Hethersett, Concordia, Cottagala and Abbotsleigh Schools were opened.

The work towards Talawakelle progressed and an evangelist was appointed there in 1906. On April 11th 1908, the foundation stone for a chapel was laid and this was opened for service on August 23rd, 1908.

No. 43

NORTH WESTERN PROVINCE

Rev. J. S. B. Manukulasuriya, B.D.

IN the year 1907, the South Ceylon District Synod decided that the North-Western Province should be its Home Mission Field, and appointed Rev. Cornelius Ganegoda to this field.

When he arrived in the N.W.P. the previousness of Christ Himself was much in evidence. A nucleus of Methodists was already there.

At Lihiriyagama, there were a few Methodists who were being looked after from Negombo. Among them was Ranmutugalage Agida de Silva of Andiambalama. Though she had married a Buddhist of Lihiriyagama, her faith in her Lord and Saviour had not faltered. Not only had she made her home her chapel, but she had even gathered together a few children in her home and begun to teach them. Rev. Mr. Ganegoda paid periodical visits to this village and gradually built up the work there. Mrs. Agida de Silva handed over her school to the Church. Mr. Juwanis de S. Ranmutugala donated a piece of land and a building was put up. The first Church Worker (a teacher catechist) was appointed to teach and to give pastoral care to the people.

Rev. Mr. Ganegoda, choosing Walahapitiya as his centre of work, went there in March 1907. Immediately upon settling down in Walahapitiya, he openly preached the Christian Gospel to the people. The people formed themselves into a Society with a view to opposing him and the propagation of the Gospel. But Mr. Ganegoda was not the man to be discouraged by any obstacles. The Lord was his strength and his fortress, and prayer was his powerful wea-

pon. He prayed for guidance. As he did this, he looked around and two things struck him—the high percentage of illiteracy among the people and the vast number of adults and children with sores and ulcers. As he could not open a school in the village, he began to dress the ulcers, using Iodoform and Condys. Among his patients was a young man Thomas Rajapaksa—Rotappu to his people. It took weeks for Rotappu's ulcer to heal. But during that time Mr. Ganegoda won the respect and love of Rotappu and others. After months of prayer, Mr. Ganegoda started a school at Walahapitiya on the 1st of August 1907 in the verandah of his own house and the first teacher was Mrs. Sophie de Silva of Katunayake. Sometime later the opposing Society resolved to prevent the Christian workers from using the public well and to take necessary action to eject Mr. Ganegoda from the house. Rotappu was present at this meeting. The Lord was working in him. He left the meeting sad and troubled, without casting his vote. Efe long he surrendered to Christ and was baptised.

At Sembukattiya, Mr. Ganegoda started work with a Methodist family who came from Katunayake and preached in an old cart shed. At Madampe he started services in a tiny cadjan shed at the invitation of Methodists already there. Mr. M. D. Charles and his family—Methodists from Katunayake—formed part of Mr. Ganegoda's congregation at Makandura. At Heenpannawa, his brother, Mr. M. D. Aaron, offered a part of his cottage to Mr. Ganegoda to hold periodical services of Divine worship for himself and his family.

At Udugama, Mr. Ganegoda found Mr. Davitt Fernando and his Methodist family from Moratuwa and he began his work in their carpentry shed.

The work now extends from Kochichikade to Puttalam, from Thummodera to Narammale and Heenpannawa. There are seven churches and three places of worship and a Children's Home at Thummodera.

The present Christian community is 646 and the circuit staff is made up of one minister, two evangelists and three deaconesses. The following ministers who have worked in the field have passed beyond the veil—Rev. C. Ganegoda, Rev. J. S. B. Mendis, Rev. John de Silva, Rev. H. A. Nonis and Rev. G. A. F. Senaratne.

No. 44

KALUTARA ESTATES CIRCUIT

Rev. S. W. Arasaratnam

Atura: In the 1920s the majority of staff on estates in this area were Christians, and most of them originally belonged to the Church of England, in the Tinnevely District, or the London Mission Church in Travancore. The absence of a Church was very much felt and a few families used to travel by buggy carts a distance of nearly 20 miles, to attend service at the nearest Church at Neboda. Later a Mr. S. Samuel arranged for services to be held regularly at Millakande Tea Estates School building. In 1928, on the initiative taken by Mr. Samuel, the Rosehaugh Tea Company Ltd., donated the present church site of one acre to the Mission. The planters in the area not only supported the move to build the Church with their financial assistance, but arranged for all the Christian staff to receive an advance of one month's salary to pay into the building fund, recoverable in easy instalments over a period of 12 months. Half the cost of the Church building was received as a grant from England.

The Church building was completed in 1929, but at one stage the accommodation was found inadequate for the congregation of this Church. Although at present the number of Christians in this area has dwindled owing to a large number of Indian Christians leaving for India etc., still it is confidently expected that the membership will exceed past figures in the near future. This is due to the fact that a large number of labourers are eager to accept Christ in this area which is a very fertile field. It is felt that the Mission should continue to take a lot of interest here and never allow financial considerations to cause any setbacks. Perhaps, Christians who are in fortunate positions would come forward

to sustain the work in this area. The Atura Church was completed in 1930.

Matugama: In the 1930s, a few Christians from the estates and a fairly large number of Christian traders in Matugama Town used to assemble at Matugama Estate School building on Sundays for the service. Members had to go to the Neboda Church to receive Communion and for Baptism. The Christian congregation gradually increased and in 1943, a temporary building was built with thatched roof in the present Church compound. In 1946 with less than Rs. 2,000/- available, Rev. H. R. Cornish decided that it was time that a Church was built at Matugama. The Mission refused to assist financially in the building of this Church as it appeared that prior approval had not been obtained. Rev. Cornish's firm belief that the building of the Church would not be hampered by lack of funds was fully justified. At no stage was it found necessary to slow down the work, and over Rs. 17,000/- was contributed from within the Circuit, the bulk of which came from the members of the Matugama congregation. Only Rs. 500/- was received from outside—from a well-known Methodist of Panadura. Revs. H. R. Cornish and S. B. Sathiaraj, the late Mr. G. Solomons and Mr. Paul S. Jacob will be remembered for the tremendous amount of work they put in, in connection with the building of this Church. The Matugama Church was completed in 1946.

General: In connection with the growth of the work in Kalutara Estates Circuit, the names of late Rev. S. Selvadurai and the late Mr. Pitchamuthu will be remembered as both of them almost spent their life time in the service of the Circuit.

GAL OYA VALLEY

Rev. L. J. Julian, M.A.

THE clearing, colonisation and development of the Gal Oya Valley is attributed mainly to the initiative of the Rt. Hon. D. S. Senanayake. The project was launched in 1941. After the war the construction of the dam and power-station at the Senanayake Samudra, Inginiyagala, was entrusted to the Morrison Knudsen construction company of the U.S.A. The influx of engineers, planners and administrators, both Ceylonese and American, itself constituted a call to Christian work—mainly pastoral. For the period 1945—1956 Kalmunai was the operational base for Methodist work in the Valley. The Rev. Ronald A. Jefferies (whose untimely death occurred in 1946), Miss Barbara Atkins, Sister Malar Chinniah and the Revs. M. I. Newton and E. S. Nodder travelled the rough jungle tracks in what was still the territory of the elephant, jackal and jungle fowl. Their shade in the heat of the day was the jungle foliage. In the cool of the evening they visited and prayed with Ceylonese and American Christ-

ians in their quarters at Inginiyagala and Amparai. Regular services were first held at Inginiyagala.

The vision of those early years was of a Union Church in the Valley—an ideal which was not realized. Protestants of various denominations worked, worshipped, prayed and gave their thank-offerings in one fellowship. In 1949 the first Protestant church in the Valley—the Union Church; Inginiyagala, a cadjan building standing at the foot of a hill—was consecrated by the Rev. S. George Mendis, then Chairman of the Methodist Church in Ceylon. In 1957 the impressive, indigenous-style church at Amparai was consecrated by the Rev. S. G. Mendis, successor, the Rev. J. S. Mather, and a Sinhalese minister was stationed there. By this time thousands of colonist families were arriving in the Valley, and it was at this point that the Church's missionary task in the Valley may be said to have begun.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIPS

Miss Phyllis de Pinto

THE Methodist Women's Fellowship, first known as "The Methodist Women's Union", was inaugurated in 1938 with Rev. A. S. Beaty as President.

The first Women's Union District Council was held at the Kollupitiya Methodist Church on June 23rd 1938, and its first Committee consisted of Revds. A. S. Beaty, G. A. F. Senaratne, Mrs. A. S. Beaty, Mrs. L. G. Loos, Mrs. H. I. Fernando, Mrs. Kanagasunderam, and Miss E. Toes as elected members. The representatives from the then existing branches were—Mrs. Roland Perera (Rawatawatte) Mrs. J. D. Fernando (Moratumulla) Mrs. D. Salgadoe (Kurana) Miss L. Fonseka (Kara-gampitiya) Mrs. L. R. Fernando (Ratutara) Mrs. J. E. Fernando (Pettah). Mrs. Beaty very kindly offered to be the first travelling secretary until a permanent appointment was made at Synod in 1939. Miss E. Toes was the first District Secretary, and Mrs. H. L. Fernando the first South Ceylon District Treasurer.

Although the District Council met in 1938, the above branches had their own activities in their respective circuits.

In 1940, with the late Rev. H. R. Cornish as President, new branches were formed, namely Maradana, Angulana, Kollupitiya. The late Mrs. E. W. Kannangara was the first Ceylonese Vice-President that year, and the first Ceylonese Secretary was the late Miss Edith Perera.

With the amalgamation of the North Ceylon and South Ceylon Districts, the first Central Council of the Women's Fellowships was held on the 4th September 1950, with Rev. S. G. Mendis as Chairman, Miss Barbara Atkins as Secretary, and Mrs. J. L. C. Rodrigo as Treasurer.

The first All Island Rally was held on the 27th October, 1951. Now the Methodist Women's Fellowship consists of nearly 70 branches in the island, holding meetings in Sinhalese, Tamil, and English, and consists of 1409 members.

While looking back into the past 24 years in the life of women in the Church, this period has been one where women have taken their place in the service of the Church.

No. 47

LAYMEN'S MOVEMENT OF CEYLON

Mr. B. E. Fernando B.Sc.
Leader.

Mr. J. T. Bernard
General Secretary.

THERE is a portion of scripture which many persons ignore—"Now in the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness." Luke 3 v. 1 & 2. The average layman was similarly ignored by himself and others. But this passage from the Bible inaugurates the age of the common man. For note that the word of God

did not come to Caesar the Emperor, or to Pilate the Governor or to Herod the tetrarch. Indeed it did not come to the High Priests either—though these were considered the important persons of State and Church. The word of God came instead to John the common layman. It is a tremendous thought, but that is how God acts in history.

This truth was seen by some Methodist laymen from Ceylon who attended the

Swanwick Conference of the Methodist Laymen's Missionary Movement in England. It was Mr. H. W. Peiris who was father of the Ceylon Movement. He was ably assisted by the late Mr. O. T. F. Senaratne, its first leader and, Mr. B. E. Fernando, its first General Secretary.

After a discussion in the Synod of 1952 and an exploratory conference at Yakkala, the inaugural meeting was held in Scott Hall, Kollupitiya, on 14th January 1953. The object was to mobilise Methodist men in the cause of the Kingdom through fellowship, study and service. The fellowship aspect was developed in the early days through annual conferences. Eminent visitors were invited for a meeting and a meal. Later the concentration was on retreats. It was realised that while there was power in speech, there was even more power in silence. The programme was extended to include the Sinhala and Tamil-speaking also. Members of the committee visited different parts of the Island. The membership grew; so did the extent of the activities. Those who attend retreats have experienced the new birth spiritually and the healing of the body physically. There is follow-up work too. Harmony between circuits began to grow. Study groups were

promoted and prayer groups formed. "Sidupiyanila" in Bandarawela was converted into a local "Swanwick".

Study is another important aspect of the work. At the Conferences, subjects of topical interest are dealt with. The Church Union Scheme was examined in detail and a pamphlet put out which had far reaching consequences. The draft Deeds of Foundation and Church Order for an autonomous Church in Ceylon were similarly studied and a statement published. There is a library consisting of several carefully selected books housed at the Methodist Headquarters. Religious literature is produced and distributed.

The service aspect of the programme flows naturally from what has been mentioned earlier. Mere spectators began to participate. Stewards become better and more devoted. Members become responsive and responsible. Above all there has developed a new and happy relationship between the Ministry and the Laity, a yearning for each to help the other in the work of our beloved Saviour, so that both may hear the commendation of our common Lord: "Well done thou good and faithful servant".

No. 48

THE METHODIST DRAMA SOCIETY

Mr. Hope Abeywardene

THE Methodist Drama Society was revived in 1962 chiefly due to the efforts of Mrs. G. B. Jackson and Mrs. S. A. de Silva. They were also the co-producers of our first play, "Second Thoughts" staged as a part of the Anniversary celebrations of the Wellawatte Methodist Church.

We do only Christian drama. Our aim is the production of plays of such quality as would deepen an understanding of God and Christian Living and make them a means of Christian witness. Member-

ship is open to all Christians, but the office-bearers are limited to Methodists.

The Society has monthly meetings. At these, we read plays, get suitable people to talk to us on drama, discuss future productions etc.

Our membership is about 35. Besides, those who act, we have our own producers and members who see to various other matters which arise in the production of a play. This Society is beginning to play a significant role in the life of the Church.

SOME EARLY MEMORIES

Rev. A. Stanley Beaty*

I ARRIVED in Ceylon on the 15th October 1906 along with my sister, Mrs. H. J. Philpott (whose husband was in charge of the Wellawatte Home) and their young daughter. Wm. C. Bird was also of the party and went up to Jaffna. That evening I went to the Pettah Church to speak at a Home Mission Meeting presided over by Mr. Highfield and two Wesley College boys were the other speakers—P. G. de Silva and Stanley Amarasekera.

Next afternoon I left by train for Galle where Stanley Bishop met me. Two things about the drive up to Richmond Hill remain—the fireflies lighting up the trees, and the enquiry from my companion as to whether I knew anything about the Classics! A few days later I was to discover the reason for this as I found myself facing a Form in the College who were revising Virgil for the Cambridge Senior, at an alarming rate. The Chairman, the Rev. Robert Tebb, was waiting to meet us on the steps of the College and took us to the little bungalow where he was living. The three Districts—Galle, Colombo, and Kandy had been united that year to form the South Ceylon District and, for a time, the Chairman was living in the South. At that time the big bungalow was being used as a Boarding Hostel and Bishop and I occupied one end of it. The new Principal, W. J. T. Small, arrived about the end of October. At that time an epidemic of enteric fever was raging in Ceylon. Mr. Darrell had died in July and several of the boys contracted the fever. In December, James Harris and his wife, who had only been married in September, died at Kalmunai within a few days of one another and in the early part of the next year Mrs. Highfield fell victim to the same scourge.

When Synod came I was transferred to the Tamil work and sent to Hatton, which was to become my home for many years. W. J. Noble was my Superintendent for the first year. He lived in Kandy and came to visit me once a month. My studies in the Tamil language had not progressed very far

when I was faced with a marriage to conduct. I had no Minister colleague, so the only thing was to carry on through interpretation by the Evangelist. We got along all right until the crucial part of the service where there was a danger of getting the interpreter married to the girl—I have never tried this expedient since.

There were services every Sunday morning in English and it was then customary to use the Prayer Book order and Hymns Ancient and Modern. This dated back to the time when services were begun in the Station Waiting Room, conducted by Mr. John Northmore, the Resident Magistrate. Sunday afternoons were devoted to services both in English and Tamil at various points along the Railway line. At one of my earliest services, in the Waiting Room at Talawakelle, there were two young men in the congregation who turned out to be S. F. Pearce and H. J. Charter, recently arrived Baptist missionaries who were on holiday. In those early months the Tamil service was conducted by a "Local Agent" and I took part in the Communion Service as far as I was able. Travelling was chiefly by train or bicycle; sometimes on horseback, and later by motor cycle. Talking of modes of travel reminds me of my first journey to Negombo. I had to go for the service which was on Sunday afternoon and this involved setting out by the horse-drawn Mail coach which left Colombo G.P.O. at 2 p.m. on Saturday. The return journey was made by steamer, a small vessel that left Negombo at about 6 a.m. and by way of the lagoon and canal got to Victoria Bridge on the Kelani river at noon.

I always remember with gratitude that one of the examiners for my first Tamil exam. in Colombo, was the Reverend Daniel Niles (grandfather of Dr. D. T.); later ones were at Jaffna and Batticaloa with James T. Appapillai, and Charles Casinader to see that residence on the tea estates had not quite ruined my pronunciation. I think it was in 1908 that I was asked to open schools on some half dozen estates of the

Nuwara Tea Estates Co., and this led to the opening of work in the Kandapola area. For some time, services in English had been taken monthly by various ministers, generally at the tennis club, but once, I remember, in the upper room of the engineering works. When the Church was built I was able to suggest that the wording on the foundation stone made it clear that this was to be an open Church for the use of all denominations. Experience in some other Planting Districts had made this seem desirable.

In 1910 my solitary existence came to an end with my marriage and during the next nine years all our family were born at the Mission House. When I went to the Post Office to send a cable home announcing the birth of our first child, the Hindu clerk ventured to remark "She must be very beautiful". I thought this must be a delicate compliment to her parents; but when I asked why he thought so, the reply was "Because it is full moon."

Furlough came in 1914 and with it the First War. After we returned I found that, in addition to Hatton, I was to be in charge of Kandy, Kurunegala, Kalutara Estates, and the Tamil schools in Colombo. The strife seemed a long way off, though we had

our troubles in 1915. Two things that come to mind are, seeing a large contingent of Russian troops marching along Katukelle road, Kandy; and, while travelling along the coast road on a Saturday afternoon, seeing the "Worcestershire" in the distance which was sinking after an explosion on the previous night.

The work at Kandy brought me into close association with John Simon de Silva, and we were both kept fairly busy. Each Sunday there used to be five services at Brownrigg Street, Sinhalese, English (morning and night), Tamil, and Portuguese which was regularly conducted by Mr. Van der Straaten.

In 1926 there was a break in our life in Ceylon as while the children were all at school, I took up work at Handsworth, Birmingham. Then, after four years I returned, alone for a time, to take over from Mr. Restarick. It was a great joy that he continued to live with us, except when on leave, up to the time of his death in 1938 and what I owe to him in friendship, guidance and example can never be told.

* Mr. Beaty came to Ceylon in 1906 and left in 1939. He is now living in retirement in England.

No. 50

REMINISCENCES OF MISS A. D. DIXON B.A.

(In Ceylon from 1909—1945)



Miss. A. D. Dixon

PERHAPS these reminiscences of two Methodist Girls' Schools, as I knew them in the first half of the century, will help to illustrate the spirit that has inspired our Methodist schools, and enabled them to send out into the public life of the island many men and women of integrity and strength of purpose, with wide sympathies, prepared to seek the welfare of all their fellow-citizens, and happy to serve them. Such people are the 'salt' and 'leaven' (and what a wealth of meaning those words carry!) of the rapidly changing life of today. Among the many congratulations that reached Kandy Girls' High School for her Jubilee celebrations was this message from the Governor General, Sir Oliver Goonetilleke,

"Girls' High School, Kandy, was my first school. Wesley College, Colombo, was my last school. I owe a great deal to the Methodist Church of Ceylon."

I arrived in Kandy in January 1909, having been appointed by the Methodist Missionary Society to the staff of the Kandy Girls' High School of which Miss F. R. Sansom was then Principal. I was told that the school was then 30 years old. It was well established, with a well founded reputation for sound and successful teaching. The Honours Boards reminded us that two Old Girls, Miss Prissy and Miss Ruth Marshall had obtained the B.A. degree some time previously, being I believe, the first Ceylon girls to gain degrees.

The school was housed in a hall which formed part of the premises of the Methodist Church in Brownrigg Street, a busy and noisy spot in the centre of the town. Two small classrooms were screened off, and a back verandah was used as a classroom. It was rather dark, and not very cheerful, but none appeared to mind this, and everyone seemed busy and happy. There was no room for games, and the only game I remember being played was Hopscotch, which was very popular.

We had no graduates or trained teachers on the staff, for Ceylon had neither Training College nor University in those days. But we had some very good teachers, and those who were not very good were very painstaking! When the Training College was opened, the Government offered scholarships to any girl, or woman teacher who would go. How hard Miss Sansom tried to persuade someone from our staff to go! But all in vain for some time. It was not 'done' for girls, or young women to leave home, except for marriage. 'Father would not allow it,' they would say.

My greatest difficulty in teaching was the apparent inability of the girls to give an audible answer in class. It seemed to be good manners for a girl, when asked a question to stand, cast down her eyes, rub one foot on the other, and murmur something quite inaudible. This was maddening enough in class, but positively infuriating when the Inspector made his annual visit. For in those days the Inspector required to examine every child, in every class,

individually in the three Rs, (and in the upper classes in certain 'specific' subjects, Geography, History, etc.) And the Government grant, on which the finances of the school depended, had to be 'earned' by the passes of the individual children. As far as I remember, the value of a pass in each subject in Standard I was one rupee, in Standard 2 one-fifty, and so on. This system of 'payment by results' had many bad effects, and there was great rejoicing when it was abolished and replaced by Attendance Grants.

I think the reason for the inaudible speech of the girls was that many of them were very shy, (or else it was good manners to assume shyness?) They were kept in the background at home, and not encouraged to make themselves conspicuous in any way. Later, when it became possible for them to take part in Guides, organised Games, Sports, and other out-of-school activities, it was a joyful thing to see how their inhibitions dropped away, and they became natural and spontaneous and eager in their enjoyment of school life.

The question of "What language shall be taught in schools?" never troubled us in these early days. The situation was that the Government 'recognised', (that is 'gave grant to') three types of school, named in accordance with the language that was used and taught in the school.

1. "English" schools, multi-racial, fee-paying, working up to Camb. Sen. Certificate or London Matric. found in or near towns.
2. "Sinhalese" or "Tamil" uni-racial, non-fee-paying, found in towns and rural areas.
3. Anglo-Vernacular, using English and either Sinhalese or Tamil.

These were usually boarding schools and taught some industry as far as I remember.

In my early days in Ceylon I never heard anyone question the wisdom of educating the Sinhalese and Tamil children in the "English" schools where they had no chance of learning to read, write, and use their own home language. Certainly the parents made no objection, but approved

the system that gave the children such a thorough knowledge of English—a sure pass to 'advancement'. The first voice I ever heard raised against the system was that of Rev. A. G. Fraser, Principal of Trinity College, Kandy, who pointed out that some of the boarders of Trinity College were unable, during term time, to communicate with their parents, who knew no English unless the parents came to visit them. His plea that Sinhalese and Tamil should be taught in the lower classes of "English" schools was met by a storm of journalistic abuse, accusing him of wishing to check the advancement of the Ceylonese! How far has the pendulum now swung in the opposite direction!

My years at Kandy Girls' High School were a period of quiet and steady progress. The most definite step forward was the erection of a building adjacent to the hall to serve as a Kindergarten, (at the sacrifice of a precious piece of our 'playing ground'.) The admission of such small children to a school was a novelty, and the Kindergarten flourished from the start. Numbers were climbing upward, and when I left stood at 270. The curriculum was being widened, and the work of the upper classes strengthened. Any further advance seemed to be precluded without better buildings and more land. Yet that was not so, for within a month of my departure and Miss Calverley's arrival, she had started a Company of Girl Guides—the first in Ceylon!

The great Influenza epidemic, followed by the Rice famine, followed by a outbreak of bubonic plague in Brownrigg Street brought problem after problem to the school, and called forth the greatest resourcefulness and devotion from all concerned. The transfer of the school to the Katukelle site seemed the providential answer to the situation, and opened up new and wonderful opportunities of advance.

Another school in Kandy should be mentioned, a boys' school, which later became Kingswood College. At this time it was a small private school in unpretentious buildings, but with a reputation that bigger schools might envy. Louis Blaze its proprietor and Principal was a stout individualist, who took his own line and went his own way. He was also an idealist, who firmly believed that the first aim of a

school should be character-building. His ideal was that every boy should be worthy of the title "Gentlemen of Kingswood" by which he always addressed the boys. He had the gift of making the smallest boy feel that he was important, just because he belonged to Kingswood. He believed in his boys, and they became worthy of that faith. He was a scholar and a great Christian gentleman, and his influence over his boys far outlasted school days.

What a change it was to leave Kandy, with its lovely hills and lake, and its busy streets, and to take up my work at seaside Negombo, also lovely in a different way. The Mission grounds were right on the beach! Here I found a small boarding school, whose existence was a miracle, for it had been 'condemned to death' six years previously, as being 'understaffed, inefficient, and heavily in debt'. But, at the darkest hour, Rev. C. H. S. Ward had been appointed to Negombo Station, and his arrival, with his wife, and her sister Miss Lawrence, changed the situation. He begged for the school a reprieve of three months, and that was sufficient to turn the tide. They threw themselves into the task of reviving the school, with devotion and enthusiasm, and their courage and faith saved the school. 'Mrs. Ward' wrote her husband, 'lived for the school. She superintended the 'Boarding' to the last detail, and gave valuable help in the Day School. She felt that at all costs the school must be a success, and this made it a success.' She was 'the beloved founder of the modern Newstead'. When the Wards left after six years, numbers had risen, buildings had been erected, old debts had been paid off, the first girl had passed E.S.L.C. Miss Celile de Vos was in charge of the Day School, and the future looked bright with hope. Newstead was founded on a faith that 'laughed at impossibilities, and cried 'It shall be done!'

So when, at this point, I arrived at Negombo in 1917 a spirit of optimism was in the air. We were all convinced that the school was ready for a 'leap forward'.

And so the story went on as internal development kept pace with external expansion. A two-storey block was built as a Domestic Science centre, and the purchase was made of a large adjoining piece of land,

with a bungalow. This became the home of our large Kindergarten Department, giving them ample accommodation.

Very soon after I took charge of the school in visiting the homes of the girls and Old Girls, I realised the great need there was in the district for training girls in all that pertains to the management of a home. Before the present Housecraft scheme was formulated by the Education Department, Miss de Vos had begun to teach this subject in all the classes from Standard 5 upwards, and from that time no girl left the Upper School without some knowledge of Hygiene, the causes and prevention of disease, the care of the sick, and the proper ordering of a home. In addition, an increasing number of girls specialised in this subject, taking the Junior and Senior Domestic Science Certificates. The latter admitted them to the Training Colleges.

I was often asked how we found time for so much Housecraft without neglecting the basic school subjects. We managed by starting it early in Standard 5 and having a lesson each week right through the Upper School. Then, at the end of each of the last four years of their school life, the girls took a public examination. In Form 3, the Junior Domestic Science Certificate. In Form 4 and the J.S.C. In Form 5 the Senior Domestic Science Certificate and Form 6 the Senior S.C.

I should like to acknowledge the debt our girls' schools owed to the women of the Dutch Burgher community who taught in our schools at this time, especially in the Housecraft training. Miss de Vos was an outstanding example. She had inherited from her forerunners the traditions that had given the Dutch housewives in Europe a reputation for the sparkling cleanliness of their houses and the excellence of their housekeeping and cooking. In Ceylon these traditions had been modified to suit a tropical climate, and different foods and kitchen equipment. A number of Newstead girls now happily settled in Australia have written to me expressing gratitude to Newstead for the wonderful preparation they had received for life in a servantless country.

There was another subject besides Domestic Science that I had on my heart, and I

wondered if the school could do anything about it. It was the retarded development of many of the children who came to us. I do not mean physical retardment, nor exactly mental, but of the whole personality. They were like little dolls, unable to do anything for themselves, and would sit still for a long time looking into nothingness. I knew the cause of this mental torpor, which explained the fact that a boy of seven, admitted to the Kindergarten was quite unable to wash and dry his hands, and little girls who came as boarders would sit at table in front of their plate of rice waiting for someone to come and feed them, (literally from hand to mouth!). The problem was caused by the ubiquitous presence of ayahs in the homes, (and in the schools if that was allowed!) These (usually ignorant) women, were often devoted to the children for whom they cared, and smothered them with super abundant attention, discouraging all their attempts to do anything themselves. This kept the children at the baby stage of helplessness, deprived of initiative and responsiveness. So, when it became possible, we made our own small contribution to the solution of this problem by opening a Nursery Class, and inviting parents to send their three and four year olds to attend. Here the children by games, occupations of all sorts indoors and out, speech training, hand training, and sense training were stimulated to initiative and response, and prepared for school life.

I left Ceylon in 1945, just as the war ended, and just before Independence Day. So of the great changes that have taken place in our schools I know only by hearsay. Whatever the future may be, we thank God for what He has wrought through the Christian schools of Ceylon, and for what they have contributed through the lives of these who have been trained in them. We know that God is now, as always at work in the world, in the midst of the widespread "distress of nations". Our part is to try to understand what He is doing—in Ceylon, in Rhodesia, and put our shoulders to the task.

*Thrice blest is he to whom is given
The instinct that can tell
That God is on the field when He
Is most invisible.*

In conclusion Miss Dixon mentions two Old Girls of Newstead, whom she calls "High-ranking wives." They are,

Annette de Alwis (Lady Ranasinghe)
wife of Sir A. G. Ranasinghe,
and

Cecilia Samuel (Mrs. F. S. de Silva)
wife of the President of the Methodist
Church, Ceylon.

No. 51

REMINISCENCES

Rev. Dr. J. S. Mather

It is said that the two greatest needs of man are a creed to believe, and a song to sing. These two, are abundantly supplied as one looks back and makes a survey of the way our Church came to be founded in Ceylon, 150 years ago, and of the wonderful way the good Lord whom we love and serve, has been with us, and guided our fathers and us, ever since. The story of our Church is an excellent illustration of the great truth found in the last words of John Wesley. You know how the day before he died, he asked for paper and pen, and when they were taken to him he was too weak to write. He was asked to tell someone what to write, so that it could be written for him. His reply was, 'Nothing, but that God is with us'. The same afternoon, to everybody's surprise, he spoke in a loud and clear voice these memorable words, "The best of all is, God is with us"—words the Church can never forget, words that every Methodist should ever remember.

Five years ago, I stood on the front steps of the Brunswick Chapel in Liverpool. The Minister of the Church told me that it was while standing on those steps in 1818 that Dr. Thomas Coke had wept as he came out of the Methodist Conference which had rejected his appeal to be sent out to preach the Gospel to those in the East. That whole night he knelt in prayer, and the next day something unusual happened, the Conference decided to reopen the discussion, and accepted Dr. Coke's offer, and made arrangements to send him and his friends to the East.

In this Jubilee year, 1964, I complete 56 years as a Preacher of the Gospel, the first

occasion was an Open Air Meeting at Kankanthurai market, when I was 18 years of age. Many old memories come to mind, every one of them convincing me deeply of the truth of John Wesley's last words, I referred to earlier.

About 45 years ago, one of our Schools in a village had strong opposition, and one night some one set fire to it, and the next morning the whole school was a heap of ashes. It was all well planned and cleverly executed, that not the slightest evidence was available to find out who did it. Several months later, a middle-aged man was brought to the Mission Hospital at Manipay, my own home town, with one of his hands badly burnt, while making crackers for a Hindu festival. The Doctor examined him, and said that only amputation of the hand would save his life. The patient replied, "before you do it, please pray for me, it is this hand that set fire to the Mission School".

My first visit to Batticaloa was in April 1915, forty-nine years ago. There was no railway to Batticaloa then, and I took ship in Point Pedro. The Commander of the ship was Captain Lawson Robins, father of the present Principal of Methodist College. The whole voyage took three days, the ship stopping one whole day in Trincomalee. A few weeks ago it took me an hour and a half to fly from Batticaloa to Jaffna! I was met at the Bar jetty, two miles north of Batticaloa Town by a student, who later blossomed into Mr. A. W. L. Kirubairatnam, retired C.C.S. and now on active worker in the Colombo City Mission. From Batticaloa to Kalmunai, I had to go by steam launch—Kaladdy bridge had not

- been built then, and there was no bus service. At Kalmunai, Rev. Arthur Lockwood and Rev. D. S. McLelland had arranged a joint Convention for the three Circuits in the area. We had a most blessed time together. About 80 people signed decision cards. Among the students who attended the Convention, were the Rev. R. V. Thambipillai, now Chairman of Batticaloa Area Council, Miss Grace Thilalaiampalam, now retired Principal of Kalmunai Girls' Boarding School, and Mr. G. S. Chinniah who is now Circuit Steward of the Kalmunai Circuit. I have a long list before me, but it is too long to give all the names.
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In one of the Circuits where I was stationed in reality wonderful miracles happened, and I know it was all the result of the emphasis the Circuit gave to prayer. There were many men and women, who regularly met in small groups for prayer. As a result an atmosphere of God-consciousness pervaded the whole place. Attendance at Church services increased so much, that often many people had no seats, and had to stand at the doors. I remember one Sunday morning, in the course of my sermon I made a remark, on a subject I had not previously ever thought of. I apologised that so many had to stand, and added that I wished two wings could be added to the Church, on either side, making the building cross-shaped. The Service over, I was in the vestry when a layman stepped in and whispered in my ear that he would pay for the cost of one wing. I went to the Manse and was telling my wife and children about it when another layman dropped in and said that he would build one wing. The next day we went to the Architect, and within six months both wings were built and dedicated.

Once I went on transfer to a new Circuit, and the first month a member reduced his monthly subscription of Rs. 5/- to Re. 1/-. He got the subscription book, and in red ink, crossed out five and wrote one. For the first few months, this was the subject of conversation, not only among the members of the Church, but also among those outside. This went on for about six months. During that time, I visited this brother's house as regularly as I did any others, and had prayers but I never talked to him on the subject, neither did he ever explain why he reduced his subscription. The Stewards offered to go and speak to him, and I said, "No, if you want to speak to any one about it, speak to God about it every day. On the seventh month, something happened. The brother went to the Circuit Steward and gave him Rs. 64/- and said that he wanted to raise his subscription to Rs. 10/- per month, and the sum he paid included the arrears for the previous six months. To this day, I do not know what brought about the change, excepting that "the best of all is God is with us," and the work is God's, not man's.

My experiences in my long ministry have been varied, passing through fire many a time, facing numerous battles, addressing meetings disturbed by hecklers and when stones were thrown, and there have been many other things too unpleasant to mention here. But if there is any one thing I learnt in my Ministry, it is this, that whatever difficulties may come, and however mighty the enemy of the Church may be, the Church has nothing to fear. Victory for Christ is certain, because "The best of all is, God is with us". This is my creed, and this is my song.

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The Secretary of the board, Mr. J. N. Jayasinghe took the initiative in the preparation of this Souvenir. He spared no pains to contact people and get the material. Our thanks are specially due to him.

We thank all who wrote and translated and finally saw the Souvenir through the press.

Chairman.

METHODIST CHURCH, CEYLON

JUBILEE

1814 — 1964

FULL PROGRAMME

INAUGURATION OF THE JUBILEE

The Jubilee will be inaugurated on Wesley Day, Sunday, 24th May, 1964.

A Service should be conducted, in every home, by the members of the family. (If more convenient several families could have a combined Service). Leaflets giving guidance for this Service could be had from your Minister, in English, Sinhalese or Tamil.

John Wesley's heart-warming experience took place at 8-45 p.m. Therefore, it is recommended that this Service be arranged for round about this time.

Listen to the Radio Message on the National Service by the President Designate

7-55	—	8-00 p.m.	Tamil
8-15	—	8-30 p.m.	English
8-30	—	8-35 p.m.	Sinhala

GROUP STUDY OF THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

Every society is expected to arrange for a study group or groups to meet weekly from Wesley Day, 1964 to Wesley Day, 1965. A Special pocket edition of this Epistle and helps to study, in all three languages, could be had from your Minister.

CENTRAL CELEBRATIONS IN COLOMBO

Thursday, 18th June, at Kollupitiya Church, at 5.00 p.m.

Service of Foundation of Conference and Induction of the President of Conference. The Deed of Foundation will be signed at this Service.

(The proceedings will be recorded by Radio Ceylon.)

Note: As the Church will not be able to accommodate the crowd that is expected to come, special tickets will be given to a limited number from each Circuit. All others will be provided accommodation in the Halls, in the compound, from where they could follow the Service.

After the service 150 candles will be lit around a model map of Ceylon by members of the Conference and other workers to make up the 150.

There will be "Magul Bera", "Raban-playing", a display of national dancing, in Methodist College compound.

All present will be served with "Kiribath" and coffee.

The Governor General will attend this service.

Friday, 19th June

Commemorative visit to Galle by Special Trains.

English Service Dutch Church:

Preacher Rev. Frederic Greeves

Service conducted by Rev G. Denzil de Silva

Sinhala Service Methodist Church:

Preacher Rev. Wilfrid Pile

Service conducted by Rev. P. B. Rajasingam

Tamil Service Anglican Church:

Preacher Mr. David Foot Nash

Service conducted by Rev. Dr. D. T. Niles

The Ceylon President will give short addresses at each of these services.

There will be a civic reception.

Saturday, 20th June

- 9-30 a.m. — 4-30 p.m. Conference will meet at Scott Hall, Kollupitiya.
(A limited number of tickets to Visitors Gallery will be available from the Secretary of Conference).
- 4-30 p.m. — 6-00 p.m. Garden Party (All welcome)
- 6-30 p.m. "Pageant of Methodism" (arranged by Miss B. Atkins) at Ladies' College Hall, Flower Road.
Admission by Programme (-/50 cts.)
- 8-00 p.m. Dinner to London Delegates by The Methodist Laymen's Movement.

Sunday, 21st June

Thanksgiving Services

- Sinhala — Moratumulla — 9-00 a.m.
Conducted by Rev. G. Denzil de Silva, *Chairman, Southern District*
Preacher — Mr. David Foot-Nash, *Vice-President of British Conference*
- Sinhala — Kurana — 9-00 a.m.
Preacher — Rev. Fred S. de Silva, *President, Ceylon Conference*
- Tamil — Pettah — 9-00 a.m.
Conducted by Rev. Dr. D. T. Niles, *Chairman, Northern District*
Preacher — Rev. Frederic Greeves, *President, British Conference*
- English — Kollupitiya — 5-30 p.m.
Preacher — Rev. Frederic Greeves, *President, British Conference*

Relay of Edited Version of Inaugural Service on the National Service Radio Ceylon—English Programme from 7-00 to 7-30 p.m.

Monday, 22nd June

- 9-00 a.m. — 4-30 p.m. Conference will continue.
- 5-00 p.m. Conference Public Meeting
Chairman — Mr. H. Watson Peiris, *Vice-President of Ceylon Conference*
Speakers — Rev. Frederic Greeves, *President of British Conference*
Mr. David Foot-Nash, *Vice-President of British Conference*
- 7-30 p.m. Dinner by Mr. and Mrs. H. Watson Peiris, at their residence.

Tuesday, 23rd June

- 5-30 p.m. Unveiling of Commemorative Tablet at Colombo City Mission (New Block)
- 6-00 p.m. Colombo City Mission Anniversary Public Meeting
Chairman — Miss E. Ridge
(*Member of London Delegation*)
Speaker — Rev. W. Wilfrid Pile
(*Member of London Delegation*)

OTHER CELEBRATIONS

Saturday, 27th June — 150th Anniversary of Wesley Press and 75th Anniversary of Boys' Industrial Home, Wellawatte.

Sunday, 28th June — Circuit Celebrations

Monday, 29th June — Special Jubilee Thank-Offering of 150 coins or notes to be received at Circuit Celebrations.

Sunday, 26th June
 9.30 a.m. — 4.30 p.m.
 Conference will meet at Scott Hall, Kottumbura.
 (A limited number of tickets to Victoria Gallery will be available from the Secretary of Conference.)
 4.30 p.m. — 6.00 p.m.
 Garden Party (All welcome)
 "Present of Methodist" (arranged by Miss B. A. Jones) at Ladies' College Hall, Flower Road.
 Admission by Programme (-50/-)
 Dinner to London Delegates by the Methodist Laymen's Movement.
 8.00 p.m.

Sunday, 27th June
 9.30 a.m. — 4.30 p.m.
 Conference will meet at Scott Hall, Kottumbura.
 (A limited number of tickets to Victoria Gallery will be available from the Secretary of Conference.)
 4.30 p.m. — 6.00 p.m.
 Garden Party (All welcome)
 "Present of Methodist" (arranged by Miss B. A. Jones) at Ladies' College Hall, Flower Road.
 Admission by Programme (-50/-)
 Dinner to London Delegates by the Methodist Laymen's Movement.
 8.00 p.m.

Sunday, 28th June
 9.30 a.m. — 4.30 p.m.
 Conference will meet at Scott Hall, Kottumbura.
 (A limited number of tickets to Victoria Gallery will be available from the Secretary of Conference.)
 4.30 p.m. — 6.00 p.m.
 Garden Party (All welcome)
 "Present of Methodist" (arranged by Miss B. A. Jones) at Ladies' College Hall, Flower Road.
 Admission by Programme (-50/-)
 Dinner to London Delegates by the Methodist Laymen's Movement.
 8.00 p.m.

Sunday, 29th June
 9.30 a.m. — 4.30 p.m.
 Conference will meet at Scott Hall, Kottumbura.
 (A limited number of tickets to Victoria Gallery will be available from the Secretary of Conference.)
 4.30 p.m. — 6.00 p.m.
 Garden Party (All welcome)
 "Present of Methodist" (arranged by Miss B. A. Jones) at Ladies' College Hall, Flower Road.
 Admission by Programme (-50/-)
 Dinner to London Delegates by the Methodist Laymen's Movement.
 8.00 p.m.

Sunday, 30th June
 9.30 a.m. — 4.30 p.m.
 Conference will meet at Scott Hall, Kottumbura.
 (A limited number of tickets to Victoria Gallery will be available from the Secretary of Conference.)
 4.30 p.m. — 6.00 p.m.
 Garden Party (All welcome)
 "Present of Methodist" (arranged by Miss B. A. Jones) at Ladies' College Hall, Flower Road.
 Admission by Programme (-50/-)
 Dinner to London Delegates by the Methodist Laymen's Movement.
 8.00 p.m.

Sunday, 31st June
 9.30 a.m. — 4.30 p.m.
 Conference will meet at Scott Hall, Kottumbura.
 (A limited number of tickets to Victoria Gallery will be available from the Secretary of Conference.)
 4.30 p.m. — 6.00 p.m.
 Garden Party (All welcome)
 "Present of Methodist" (arranged by Miss B. A. Jones) at Ladies' College Hall, Flower Road.
 Admission by Programme (-50/-)
 Dinner to London Delegates by the Methodist Laymen's Movement.
 8.00 p.m.

Sunday, 1st July
 9.30 a.m. — 4.30 p.m.
 Conference will meet at Scott Hall, Kottumbura.
 (A limited number of tickets to Victoria Gallery will be available from the Secretary of Conference.)
 4.30 p.m. — 6.00 p.m.
 Garden Party (All welcome)
 "Present of Methodist" (arranged by Miss B. A. Jones) at Ladies' College Hall, Flower Road.
 Admission by Programme (-50/-)
 Dinner to London Delegates by the Methodist Laymen's Movement.
 8.00 p.m.

