

Editor's Note

Please address all communication for the English pages to The English Editor, 'Morning Star', UDUVIL, CHUNNAKAM.

THE MORNING STAR

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RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTETH A NATION BUT SIN IS A REPROACH TO ANY PEOPLE

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Varany Mission Trainees in India

Three young men selected by the Varany Mission Farm are now following a course of bee-keeping at the Y. M. C. A. Rural Development Centre in Kanyakumari, South India.

They will also spend a few weeks at the Marthandan YMCA Centre. On completing the course on bee-keeping, they will proceed to Bangalore where they will follow a few months intensive course in various aspects of poultry farming, including the management of hatcheries.

The three selected for the course are: N. Vethasundaram, Ranjit W. Selvarajah and K. Thanapalan.

Jaffna Clergy Fellowship

A meeting of the Jaffna Clergy Fellowship was held at the Presbytery of St. Anthony's Church, Manipay on Monday November 9th at 9 a.m. The Clergy of the C. S. I. Anglican and Methodist Churches participated. Among those present were the Rev. Wesley Ariarajah, Chairman of the North Ceylon Synod of the Methodist Church, Very Rev. Fr. Michael Samy, the Vicar General of the R. C. Diocese of Jaffna and the Ven. Sam. D. Horshington the Anglican Archdeacon of Jaffna.

After a short tea break, the Clergy assembled to discuss the report of a statement of Pope Paul II on the subjects of lust, love and family planning. The Rev. Wesley Ariarajah opened the discussion.

The next meeting of the Fellowship was fixed for February 9th at the C. S. I. Presbytery, Tellipallai at the invitation of the Rev. D. R. Ambalavanar. The Rev. Fr. Justin Gnanapragasam agreed to conduct the devotion. As 1981 is *The year of the Handicapped*, it was decided to study the subject "Rehabilitating the handicapped in Society". The Rev. S. P. Jeyasingam agreed to introduce the subject. The meeting closed with a Fellowship lunch provided by the Rev. Fr. Mary Bastian, the Parish Priest of St. Anthony's Church.

Anglican Diocese of Perth

Archbishop Geoffrey Sambell of the Anglican Diocese of Perth has announced his decision to resign, owing to ill health, from the end of this year.

The Archbishop is deeply committed to ecumenism. During his period of eleven years in Perth, there has been an addition of 20 new parishes and inauguration of a number of Social service projects.

Christians Face Harassment

In Ethiopia

Between March 1st and April 6th this year, 28 members of the Synod of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church *Mekane Yesus*, were arrested on suspicion of anti-government activities.

Twenty five of these were young people who were worshipping during an Easter Camp-Meeting. All 28 of them were charged with neglecting the national production campaign.

In Poland

The forcible take-over by Roman Catholic Congregations of Protestant Churches in a Polish province, according to a West German newspaper, is not motivated by anti-ecumenism.

The situation in Poland is that in many places, Catholics have not enough churches and the Protestants attend infrequent services in their churches and cannot maintain them.

IN BRIEF

○ *The Fellowship of the Least Coin* observed its Twenty Fifth Anniversary in November at Manila.

○ *The Rev. (Dr.) Oommen Koruthu* has been consecrated as the Bishop of the Mar Thoma Church. His new name is Zachariah Mar Theophilus.

○ *Tubeless Textile Radial Tyres* will be produced from next year at the Keleniya factory of the Sri Lanka Tyre Corporation. The total investment for the project is Rs. 22.7 million which the Corporation will raise from its own resources.

○ *The Constitution of Sri Lanka* lays down that any by-election resulting from an election-petition should be held under the election-law that was in force prior to the commencement of the new constitution. The Kalawana By-election will be as gazetted under the old law.

○ *Religious Ceremonies* were held on 23-11-80 in many parts of Batticaloa in Remembrance of the fury of the cyclone which devastated the district last November.

'Asianise' the UMN

The Rev. Carl Johansson, Executive Director of the *United Mission to Nepal* stresses the need to 'asianise' the UMN.

Among the 276 UMN missionaries there are only 35 from Asia. They are from Japan, Philippines, Hongkong, Thailand, Singapore and India.

There are some 10,000 Christians in Nepal today.

The Sunday School Movement

(Continued from last issue)

But after a few months, Mrs. Meridith could not manage the boys and girls and she gave up the work and asked Raikes to shift the Sunday School from her kitchen to somewhere else. So Raikes shifted the children to Mrs. King's kitchen and appointed Mrs. Mary Critchly as the teacher. She was able to handle them better. Only then did Raikes make public his work.

In order to avoid the children getting involved in any vices, Raikes kept them in his school from morning ten till evening five with only a lunch-break. In the school they were taught to read, to write. They were also taught cleanliness, catechism. Well behaved children were presented with Bibles, combs, clothing etc.

There is a great difference between our present Sunday School and the Sunday Schools which Robert Raikes started two hundred years ago. As Sunday Schools spread over the world, they were no longer schools for teaching poor children to read and write, but schools to instruct children, rich and poor in the Christian faith. And another important difference is that Sunday Schools are run by the church now. Today almost every church has a Sunday School. The Sunday School Movement spread from Gloucester, to different parts of the world in a simple way. Raikes often wrote in his journal about his Sunday Schools. In that way, many people became interested and started Sunday Schools. More and more schools were started in England, then in different parts of the world. It is remarkable that the Sunday School Movement began because one man who loved the Lord, cared so much for the poor that he did something to help them. but it was no easy task, for there were many who criticized Robert Raikes and tried to stop him from having schools for the poor children, but in spite of all the difficulties he faced, he continued in his efforts and with God's help he succeeded.

As I read about the life and work of Robert Raikes, I am reminded of what the Apostle Paul said about himself, which could also be applied to Robert Raikes. He said "I have fought a good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day".

C. T. Roberts

(concluded)

[Roberts is one of our ministerial candidates and is now a student at U.T.C., Bangalore] —Ed.

FEBRUARY FIESTA

A variety entertainment presented by the Student Christian Movements of

- Chundikuli Girls College
- St. John's College
- Uduvil Girls' College and
- Jaffna College

in aid of
Casurina Camp House

at
Veerasingham Hall, Jaffna on
Saturday 7th February, 1981
at
6-00 p.m.

FOR SALE

Austin Jeep No. 5 Sri 1909

Contact:

Treasurer,
Diocesan Office,
Vaddukoddi.

On Tuesdays & Fridays
8-00 a.m. to 12-00.

Comment

Graft, Theft, Redundant Labour

The following extract is a comment of *Tribune* (22-11-80) on the Milk board and Transport services in Sri Lanka :-

"In the midst of the general gloom in the country among the salaried, the self-employed, the underemployed and the unemployed, because of the sudden and unexpected increase of *Milk Board prices and Transport Board fares*, there is growing resentment and anger that nothing is being done to eliminate waste, graft, theft and redundant labour in these two organisations".

According to news reports, the SLCTB has a total of some 63,000 employees, and 7000 buses of which not more than 5000 are in operation on any single day, due to breakdown or absenteeism of the crew. Free travel facility is provided to every SLCTB employee to and from work, within a 30 mile radius.

IN BRIEF

○ *Women soldiers*: 13,000 women in Sri Lanka have applied for hundred vacancies for the posts of women soldiers in the Sri Lanka Army Women Corps.

○ *Gulf Air*, the second airline to fly direct to Middle East made its maiden flight yesterday. The Thursday Service leaves at 8-30 p.m. and the Saturday Service at 9-20 p.m.

○ *The Tristar* service from Colombo would offer 462 passenger seats every week and 20 tons of cargo space.

Editorial Comment

Bilateral Decisions

"Better three hours too soon, than a minute too late" — The Postal Department seems to have realised, not 'too late' the wisdom of Shakespeare's dictum.

"A same day delivery service" has been announced (CDN 2-12-80) between Colombo and certain provincial towns — Kandy, Kurunegalle, Galle, Ratnapura, Puttalam, Anuradhapura, Chilaw and Kalutara.

Ordinary Express Letters accepted up to 12 noon at the G.P.O. Colombo will be delivered on the same day between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. at any of the above destinations.

Letters accepted at these privileged "destinations" before a particular time will be delivered between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. in Colombo. The fee for this privileged delivery service, which has been organised, by the Postal Department jointly with the Sri Lanka Transport Board will be Rs. 6 plus postage, for every letter.

Whether the two departmental heads (Postal and CTB) had the blessings of their respective Ministers or acted on their own, we do not know. All that we could say is that the whole exercise does not appear to us to be administratively tidy, especially in the context of "financial discipline" which the Finance Minister has been at pains to underscore in his budget speech. It is common knowledge that the postal department (with some of its employees allegedly involved in the examination scripts racket) has been in a pretty pass for some time.

Especially after the recent 'strike' in which many Postal minor employees were involved, letters, telegrams, express letters, money orders etc. all came under the category of "unwanted articles" and were dumped at the will and pleasure of "locum" postal messengers, who hardly knew one street from another in the hinterlands and seldom made an honest effort to discharge their responsibilities with a clean conscience.

What is now necessary is to 'recuperate' the whole service and make it serve the needs of the people who put this government into power by a five sixth majority. Postal rates may be increased as many 'rates' have now been. But that should be done through normal administrative channels and the rate of increase determined by the Ministry of Finance.

We strongly protest in these columns against any decisions taken bilaterally by departmental heads, individually or jointly in any matter pertaining to the public weal, unless such a matter is debated and passed in Parliament.

This practice may amount to a subversive trend in this country at the executive level which, the President has to curb with his 'long arm,' if it is his intention to keep the people together at this crucial time in our economic and political annals.

Sri Lanka today does not exist only for the convenience and comfort of a few living and working at executive levels in regions where the gem industry is flourishing or where massive development projects are booming and who can meet our inflationary trends with a smile.

A Postal facility should be a facility for all. According to the decision of the joint collaborators (The Postal Department and the CTB), an ordinary express letter from Colombo with a special charge of six rupees plus postage to certain privileged destinations, is assured of a safe and prompt delivery on the same day, within a stipulated time.

But what about the delivery of the ordinary express letter to which the Postal Department alone is responsible — the one sent by the rate payer (paying the additional charge for express delivery) and sent to a not so privileged destination? Is such a letter to be an unutilised entity, left to the whims and fancies of postal employees?

We are happy that the government has now called back the postal strikers. We hope the government will not make the mistake of allowing the Postal Department or any department of State to be 'half wise' in adopting solutions to our national problems which really require statesmanship of a high order, particularly when such solutions affect the day to day life of the average citizen.

It was Goethe, the German Philosopher who once said with great wisdom "Fools and wise men are equally harmless. It is the half fools and half wise that are dangerous".

For the Record

The 30-year Voting Pattern

	UNP Votes	SLFP Votes
The voting patterns from 1947, according to President Jayawardene will ensure a UNP majority in 1983, under the proportional representation system. We are quoting the statistics he cited in Kandy recently, because of its interest when the elections take place in 1983, which year is not very far off :-		
1947	751,432	—
1952	1,026,005	361,250
1956	718,164	1,045,725
1960 Mar	908,996	648,094
1960 July	1,143,290	1,022,154
1965	1,579,181	1,226,823
1970	1,876,956	1,812,849
1977	3,148,651	1,855,331

BETHLEHEM (House of Bread)

Bethlehem, a town in Judaea, spreads across twin hills on the fertile plateau of pastures, grain-fields and groves. These are fields where Ruth toiled, gleaning behind the reapers in the fields of Boaz. Here King David, was born and tended his father's sheep. In the same fields, a thousand years later, the humble shepherds of Bethlehem were the first to hear the "good tidings of great joy... Ye shall find the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger... Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men". (Luke 2)

Long before the Christian pilgrimage that originated in the fourth century A. D., it had been a minor centre of Jewish pilgrimage, early in the second millennium B. C. that Rachel, favoured wife of the Patriarch Jacob died and was buried (Genesis 35), and the tomb has drawn Jewish visitors throughout the ages.

It is, however, as the birthplace of Jesus Christ that Bethlehem is best known to the world. Saint Justin Martyr ca 155 A. D. and the apocryphal Book of James (Protoevangelium) written about the same period say that the birthplace, was a cave. St. Mathew says that the Wise Men came into the house and there saw the young child with Mary his mother; St. Luke says that she laid him in a manger because the inn was full. The traditional site of the Nativity was actually fixed in 325 A. D. when the mother of Constantine, the Great Queen Helena visited the Holy Land. She determined the locations of the principal events associated with life of Jesus Christ, and commemorated them with impressive shrines which she had persuaded her son to build. Over a Grotto in Bethlehem, Constantine erected the church of the Nativity and it became one of the holiest sites

in Christendom, a centre of pilgrimage, of Christian study and of monasticism. About two centuries later the church seems to have fallen into decay. About the middle of the sixth century A. D. Justinian I rebuilt the church on the same site and it was enlarged into a Basilica. The nave of the Basilica is divided into five aisles by four rows of monolith pillars. Two flights of steps from both sides of the choir descend to the Grotto of the Nativity. On the floor beneath the Altar of the Nativity, encased in marble is a silver star surrounded by a Latin inscription "Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus Natus Est".

The real date of our Lord's birth is unknown. In the fourth century it began to be generally observed on December 25th in the West, perhaps as a counterblast to the Roman festivals of the "sun-god" at the time of the winter solstice. The collect for this Day does not claim that this is the actual day; it is rather the official day "as at this time".

In Bethlehem the Western Church celebrates Christmas on December 25th, the Eastern Church on January 6th and the Arminian Church on January 19th. In 1970 and 1971 we had the rare privilege of attending all three Christmas functions. We were most inspired by the singing of the Carols in the Shepherds' fields in all its simplicity as it made us one with the shepherds who watching their flocks by night heard the angelic tidings. "Wherever men did accept him, he gave them power to become sons of God. These were the men who truly believed in him and their birth depended not on the course of nature nor on any impulse or plan of man, but on God" (John 1). He was

"Born to raise the sons of earth
Born to give them second birth".
V. S. D. S.

Appreciation

"Feed my sheep"

"Simon, son of Jonnas lovest Thou me?...then feed my sheep".

This in essence spells out our Master's injunction to His disciples; and one feels Rev. Jeyasingham carried out the Master's wishes to the letter. He cared. He was sensitive to our every need and made it his business to make them his. Every individual, every family has again and again experienced this unique reaching-out quality in the context of his pastoral relationships. To me his attitude to people was a revelation, one might almost say an object lesson, in Christian caring.

Right through the ages Christmas has been a season for caring, for Christian giving. The Christmas tide carries us on a wave of love for all our fellow men,

IN BRIEF

O *Ferry Service*. The Shipping Corporation of India has announced that the "T. S. S. Ramanujam" will resume ferry service from Rameswaram on 2-1-81. The first sailing from Talaimannar to Rameswaram is scheduled for 3-1-81 at 9 a.m.

but Rev. Jeyasingham embodied this spirit of Christmas in his person permanently. We shall miss him greatly on this, our first Christmas season without him and yet perhaps, in remembering, may be thank God for such a life lived among us.

"Feed my sheep" said the Master and His sheep were fed.

S. J. S.

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