

August, 1951

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**This Special Issue is Dedicated to
The United Mission of the Church's Youth**



Old Saint Mary's Church,



And The New

The Holy Cross Magazine

Aug.



1951

How It All Began

BY HERBERT HAWKINS, O.H.C.

IN October 1921 there appeared in the HOLY CROSS MAGAZINE a statement telling of the plans being made through Bishop Overs, the then Bishop of Liberia, for opening up missionary work in the Hinterland of Liberia. After reading the article I wrote at once to the Superior telling him that I would willingly go to that field when the time came if he so desired. On a certain Monday in January of 1922 I received a telegram—for I was still in the middle-west—telling me to make arrangements for a passport and to get to New York as quickly as possible for plans had been made for me to sail for England en route to Liberia on the following Saturday. By Wednesday evening of the same week I was in New York where Fr. Hughson was waiting for me.

He then told me that a certain Fr. Francis W. Barnett and a Fr. Hazzard were planning to establish an industrial mission in the Hinterland of Liberia, that they planned to make an exploratory trip through the interior and that, since the Order had already come to an agreement with Bishop

Overs, he had asked that one of our number might make that trip with them.

By Friday morning a passport was in my possession with the necessary visas so that we were then able to complete plans for sailing. Since we were to sail on Saturday this left little time for the purchase of things needed for one living in the Tropics. It had been a busy week. Fr. Schlueter, Vicar of St. Luke's Chapel, Hudson Street, had furnished us with rooms and Altars so that instead of setting out from the Mother House I left from those hospitable quarters.

Before sailing I asked Fr. Hughson what I was to do when we finally reached Monrovia, the capital of Liberia. He replied, "Report to the Bishop" but it would be impossible for me to tell you in a short article of all that happened until the day came when Bishop Overs asked me "Where do you want to go?" I replied, "My instructions were to report to you, I will go where you send me," to which the Bishop replied, "I want you to go to Masambalahun."

We had arrived in England thirty-six hours late because of the weather. Two days

later we set sail for Freetown, Sierra Leone, so named because the slaves taken off the slave ships by English war ships had been "dumped" there. In due time we had arrived at Freetown, and a few days later journeyed to Bo, waited there for Fr. Haines and Fr. Dwalu who came overland from Cape Mount, and then we all went on by rail to Pendembu at the end of the line. From there we proceeded on foot to Kabawana, a Liberian Customs Station, and from that point began our exploratory trip. We spent the first night at Vahun in the Mende section of Liberia, at which place George Lahai is now carrying on the work of the Holy Cross Liberian Mission. Leaving Vahun we were soon in the Gbande country spending our first night in Popolahun, our second at Masambalahun, and from there proceeded to Kolahun, the seat of the headquarters of the Liberian Government in the Gbande country. From this place a party made a trip into the Kissi country. Proceeding again we went to Vezala, Vonjama, Bakeomai close to the French boundary, Pandemai and to Zigeta to mention our principal stopping places. In each of these places as in every other village we visited we met the people, inquired about native industries and the customs of the people and about their willingness to accept us if we should be able to return to live among them telling them of our main purpose to establish a school, to bring a doctor, and to teach God palaver. Having finished this exploratory trip for "spying out the land" we

made preparations for our long trek through the big forest which was to end at Monrovia about 225 miles to the south. We reached there in about ten days, rounding out a trip of about 800 miles of which only 227 had been by rail, the rest on foot.

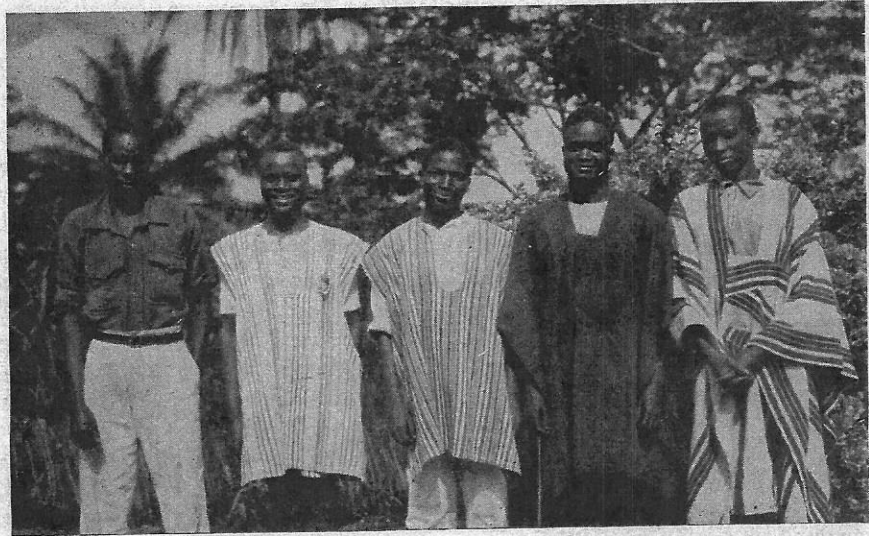
We had by that time decided to recommend to the Bishop three places which we believed would be strategic centres for Christian Mission Stations; Saru in the Kissi country; Masambalahun in the Gbande country, and Pandemai in the Loma country. The latter place had been previously recommended to the Bishop by the late Fr. Ramsaur. It had been expected that the Order would begin its work at Pandemai but Frs. Barnett and Hazzard had asked for it and so that left me free to follow the Bishop's instructions and to return to Masambalahun.

With this decision made I talked with the Bishop about a plan of procedure. In a previous ministry he had been a pioneer missionary in Nigeria so he was not without experience in opening up work among a primitive people and he said that our aim should be to establish a School, a Church and a Hospital. So it was I went back to Masambalahun to begin the actual work of establishing a Mission along such lines among a people, few of whom had ever seen a white man, and none of whom knew his ways.

Masambalahun was about sixty miles from Pendembu in Sierra Leone and from



NATIVE SUSPENSION
BRIDGE CONSTRUCTED
OF VINES
AND STICKS



NATIVE GROUP—ALAN SORI (LEFT), GEORGE LAHAI (RIGHT)

this source we had to obtain supplies, money, mail, etc., all of which had to be carried on the backs or the heads of the native carriers. On the way back I had plenty of time to think of what it was we were to do and of methods to be used. Reaching Masambalahun I reported to Fofi the Paramount Chief in that section and told him we were ready to begin the work we had outlined to him and to his people on the occasion of our first visit. Fofi was a Mohammedan, and not the only Gbande Paramount Chief, so eventually he called the others to meet with him and with the Liberian District Commissioner at Kolahun. Here we had a palaver (conference). After the elapse of some days and they had "hung head" they sent for me and told me that they were willing for me to begin work at Masambalahun. We returned there. Fofi gave me the "freedom of the city" by saying "the country is yours."

Then it was necessary to find a site for the Mission. I think by this time Morlu, a native Gbande boy, had appeared on the scene, so we scoured the countryside and finally decided on a place at the top of a small hill with a small river at the foot. The "grass" on the hill was from ten to fifteen feet tall. One could not see a foot in any direction, but as we began to clear the ground we found it had once been the site of a small village named Bolahun, which is

now the seat of the Holy Cross Liberian Mission. One should remember there was nothing in the Gbande country to remind one of what we are pleased to call "civilization." No streets, no telephones, no stores, no lumber yards. We had to start from scratch, from the cutting of the trees to the sawing and finishing of the lumber one board at a time. The three carpenters I had hired in Monrovia eventually reached Masambalahun bringing with them one saw and one hammer minus the claw! Then it was I began to realise that the white man who had told me in Freetown that "the first lesson one had to learn was patience, and the second lesson was patience, and the third lesson patience" was true.

We started to build the monastery along native lines looking forward to the arrival of the next Father. Then without warning I was ordered to stop all work. This necessitated the long trip on foot, by train, by ship to Monrovia to see the then President, the calling of a special meeting of the Cabinet of the Liberian Government, and, after a wait of two weeks, then the welcome word, "You may go back now." I lost no time and two weeks later was back at Masambalahun. Then word came that Fr. Campbell was to arrive at Freetown in September bringing with him a Mr. Harold Manley who was to supervise the building operations, which was

a splendid thing for the Mission. The "old" church which he built still stands, the only building of the original group which does, for the site of the Mission has been enlarged, the expansion made necessary by reason of God's abundant blessing upon the work.

This has told you briefly about the beginnings from the material side. How about the spiritual? I was the only white Christian in the Hinterland. Tom Hunter my "boy," who had been with me from the time we left Bo on the exploratory trip, had been trained in a Roman Catholic School at Sherbro, Sierra Leone. He spoke and read Mende, but not Gbade. Salifu was a Timne boy, nominally a Mohammedan, had been Fr. Barnett's boy and was the cook. He had been joined by his "brother" Sori, and Lahai had come to follow the white man. These boys constituted the household. They cooked and slept in the hut next to mine in Masambalahun. Tom was willing to serve me at Mass and so it was on May 7, 1922, we piled up some packing cases, put a cloth, Crucifix and Candlesticks upon them, and said the first Mass to be said in the Hinterland of Liberia. I could not yet talk "God palaver" to the people. They did not know my language, I did not know theirs; and so it was forced in upon me that the best sermon a man can preach is the life that he leads. So I settled down among them to live as a Christian should. At night the boys crowded into the hut. I felt like

a monkey in a cage. I had never been so gazed upon in all my life. They were there the minute I opened the door in the morning to hang my shaving mirror on the door post till I went to bed. They wanted to see everything I had and to see what I would do next. So at night, around the little table, I began to learn from them on word at a time as they pointed to nose, or mouth, or hair, or teeth and gave me the native word for them and I in turn gave them the English word. In the day time they brought the sick, the people with horrible ulcers, with yaws, and with "diver diseases." Fortunately I had a good medical kit and was able to do a land-office business in glorified first aid. The work of teaching "God palaver" was to come later, but the actual beginning was made in the living among these people, trying to understand their need and then at least in one's mind exploring the possibilities of actual going on with the work of a Christian Mission when in God's time we should be able to move to Bolahun to our Monastery and to take up the regular routine of Monastic Life made possible by the coming of Fr. Campbell. It was a glorious experience. It will never fade from my memory and, God wills, I shall continue to look forward to the day when I go back to see George Lahai, Salifu, and Sori—all now Christians and to thank them as the ones who have been with the Mission "from the beginning



"SOCCER"
IN FRONT OF
ST. AUGUSTINE'S

The Early Days

BY THE RIGHT REVEREND ROBERT ERSKINE CAMPBELL, O.H.C.

WE have all heard the story of Pandora and her wonderful box. Curiosity led her to open it, and forth there streamed all the ills which plague the world. The legendary treasures of Captain Kidd have stirred the imagination of thousands. But our story concerns one of our Blessed Lord's treasure chests which was given to Holy Cross about thirty years ago. It contains neither gems nor pieces of eight, neither misfortune nor war, but only the souls of men. It became ours when in 1921 a request was granted: for Bishop Overs of Liberia had asked us to open the Bande, Loma and Kissi countries that our Master might claim those jewels as His own.

Thus it was when Sori stood on the brow of the lofty hill Sakbawa and exclaimed, "See, Masambolahun," he was pointing to the first of these boxes of treasures. I never had been in Africa before. In the midst of the rough hills I could not locate the village of two hundred brown thatched roofs. Yet, as we found an hour later, that village was there, round mud huts, people and all. Our faithful Sori showed us where we might begin to unlock the treasure chest. But, as always, our Lord had the keys, and it took us ten years to learn from Him how to use them.

Our first urgent problem was material. We had to build. The tribal chiefs had agreed to give us the site of an ancient town known as Bolahun. It lay about a mile N. E. of Masambolahun. Nothing was there but jungle, and enough wild life to outfit a small circus, but without any cages. It was sixty miles to Pendembu, our nearest supply center. That distance we measured often along rough narrow trails. We walked, for of course neither roads nor motor cars were awaiting us. Over these paths was brought to us all we had from the outside world. All the tools and implements to help us start God's work, to open the mission, to open the country for Him, came over those rugged hills on the heads of toiling porters.

To build our first mission monastery taxed all our ingenuity. True, plenty of lumber was right there, but in the form of giant trees deep in the forest. For six months Father Hawkins and I lived picnic-style in a mud hut in Masambolahun while that house was being built. We had to collect gangs of laborers from the local chiefs, for such an item as free labor did not exist. How fortunate we were to have the invaluable assistance of Mr. Harold Manley. He was an American engineer who knew all the details of construction, all the way down to the sawing of planks and rafters.

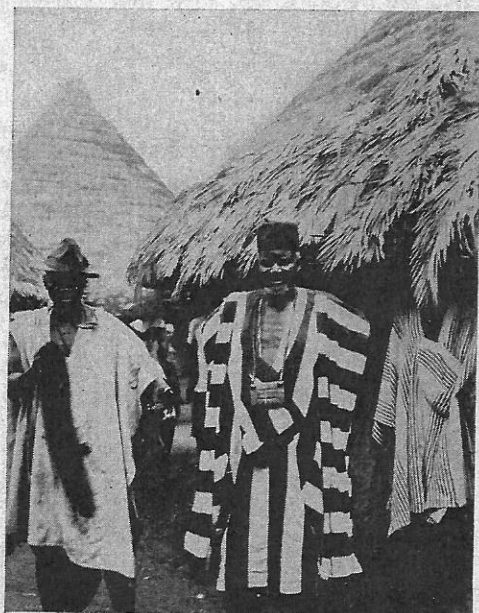
During those six months our education began. First we learned that the people, while quite primitive, are certainly not savage. Their spoken language is musical to the ear. Their culture reaches back thousands of years. Their society is a sort of simple communism with the family as a basic unit. Their medicine is an odd mixture of common sense and superstition. On the whole, their laws are quite just. So far as we could observe, people seemed very poor and very happy. Yet we learned also that gnawing fear lurks on every side.

One day Paramount Chief Fofi with a large retinue paid us a formal visit. Much snapping of fingers, many smiles and noisy greetings indicated their pleasure. We served tea, one cup of which they passed around that all might have a sip. We finally produced a magazine which contained really excellent pictures of railway trains. Through the interpreter we explained how in our country one could ride at ease, eat and sleep in such a "house on wheels." Indeed, in such a conveyance one could reach Pendembu in one hour. The chief and his men were obviously impressed. But Fofi's loud "Kwoh" indicated amazement, but also polite incredulity.

Then too, we had to write letters. When we beat the typewriter it usually attracted a gaping crowd. Moslems understand pen-and-ink writing. But this typing was to them

nothing short of magic. Which reminds us of the very first Sunday in Masambolahun, when we unpacked our shiny new phonograph. A dense crowd of men and boys in their blue and white-stripe gowns gathered at once. Soon we learned why. They thought that when we cranked the machine we were flogging a devil inside the box. When punished enough, he would whistle for us, and sing. We soon realized the exciting task God had set before us.

Thus the weeks grew into months. Small adventures met us. There was that cow one rainy night which ran her horn through the mud wall right at the head of my bed. There was the thrill of picturesque dances with tom-toms and singing, or with a fantastic bush devil to amuse or annoy us. The Mohammedans held a spectacular new year's party at the end of Ramadan, their "hungry moon," when they donned new clothes and exchanged gifts. In the midst of such happenings we really did not miss radios or newspapers. Mail once a fortnight was enough. Then March came. Men went out to clear a fresh strip of forest for their rice crop. Great trees fell, and were burned. With their little hoes they scratched the hard soil, while women followed them closely to scatter the seed. Thus we learned how our



PARAMOUNT CHIEF FOFI

own ancestors used to farm long, long ago.

That was a happy day when Mr. Manley announced that next week we could move into our new home. That would be Holy Week, 1923. The move turned itself into a gala procession, for nearly all Masambolahun seemed to move to Bolahun with us. Our slender equipment seemed like fabulous wealth to them. Chief Fofi and his men meant to be courteous and help. Little did they realize how they stood in the way. At any rate, despite hungry rats by night and throngs of curious visitors by day we were fairly well established by Easter. We had a place to eat and sleep, and a chapel in which to pray.

Then began the real work for which we had come. In May one day, Fofi brought us six little boys for school. They spoke no English, knew no alphabet, and never had heard of the Lord Jesus. They had to be taught to eat rice, not with their hands but with a spoon. In June dear old Father Allen joined us to open a dispensary. It was this medical work which broke down the last remnant of opposition to our Mission. And the Church, they all liked that even though they probably thought it the source of our magic "White-man medicine," they called it "strong too much."

One day at noon we received an unexpected call from Janga, the one man in the area who knew a little English. The chief had sent him to beg for a small can of milk. Our curiosity turned to mirth when we learned the reason. They were laying the corner-stone for a new village. Part of the ceremony was to imprison a friendly spirit in the stone to watch over the town and protect it. The witch doctor had told them the milk must be poured over the stone to give the guardian spirit a sweet drink. All morning, said Janga, they had chased a cow to catch her to get the milk. But the cow didn't see things that way. So, could we give a tin bit of canned milk? We did.

Every teacher knows how necessary it is to establish a point of contact with his pupils. This we proceeded to do with the native people through school, dispensary and church. Everybody approved of the medical work. Most liked the idea of a school. But the

Church was a mystery. So it was that Father Hawkins and I took to the road. We went to nearby villages for evening services to reach ever more people. When men came in from their rice farms we would be there. The town chief was always glad to give permission for us to hold a service. The phonograph would attract a crowd. A large brightly colored Bible picture would supply the text. Then with the aid of an interpreter we would preach. One time when we were far from Bolahun in the Kissi towns a small "bush war" broke out in which several men lost their lives. But the word of God could not be stopped for it was to that same town that Father Allen went to minister after a regular doctor came to Bolahun in 1926.

We have mentioned the crowds of people who used to throng us in those early days. They must have been not unlike the multitudes which surged about our Lord. Some were idle sightseers. Some came to beg. Others were curious, like the man who asked us how we made our money. Apparently he thought by high magic we had only to turn a crank to have shillings come rolling out of our "copper-box." Yet there were others whose hearts the Lord had touched. They asked about our religion. Moslems know of Allah and Mohammed. But the heathen think of God as dead or far away. They believe that this world is run by spirits, some friendly, some hostile. Unfriendly spirits must be pacified by sacrifice. They must be controlled by powerful charms.

Thus it was that within a year we made a small start. We had learned something of the native language and customs. We had baptised six school boys in the little frame church. We had preached God's Word in many villages. We healed the sick and won the good will of the people. Church services were jammed with men and boys. But there was one problem it took us a long time to solve. Women and girls stayed away.

After several years we finally woke up to the cause. According to tribal code, women can have no part in men's affairs. It is too long a story to tell in detail, but in 1931 the English Sisters of the Holy Name came to our rescue. Their advent solved the problem at once. From that time, thanks to the zeal

and the skill of the Sisters in hospital, schools and evangelistic work, the harvest has been great. The bravery of those consecrated women tramping over the hills and through the forest to carry help to the needy suggests an epic yet to be sung. Not merely on soft moonlit evenings, but through storm and rain, these Messengers of the King of Kings brought health and peace and joy to many an aching heart. They kindled the light of faith for them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. Thank God for the work of these devoted Sisters. Now the African women folk have a real place in our Christian community.

During the early months while our monastery was abuilding, and Father Hawkins and I were living in our native hut in Masambolahun, we were reading one night by the light of our little kerosene lamp. In the midst of all this a caller arrived. It was Janga. He said that the chief had sent him to inquire why we had come to his town at all. We explained our purpose, to bring to his people the Glad News. To help the people understand the Gospel, we would have schools to teach and medical work to heal. Not till long afterwards did we learn the reason for this call. On two separate occasions smooth rascals had appeared years before, and had told the same story we did.

Power of Personal Witness

BY GOWAN H. WILLIAMS

RECENTLY, our Evangelist David visited a nearby pagan town and found the people in great fear. They said that the gafwangi (ghost) of a woman was molesting them and that he should not walk back to Bolahun that night. David replied that God would certainly protect all who strongly believed and trusted in Him. So David set out for Bolahun and proved to the people that there was nothing to fear.

Some years ago, on a similar occasion, our Evangelist Zacharias told the people not to fear and to prove it, he spent the night at the grave, in prayer. Thus personal witness of Christians dispelled the superstitious fears of the pagans, and won by their strong faith in our Lord Christ.

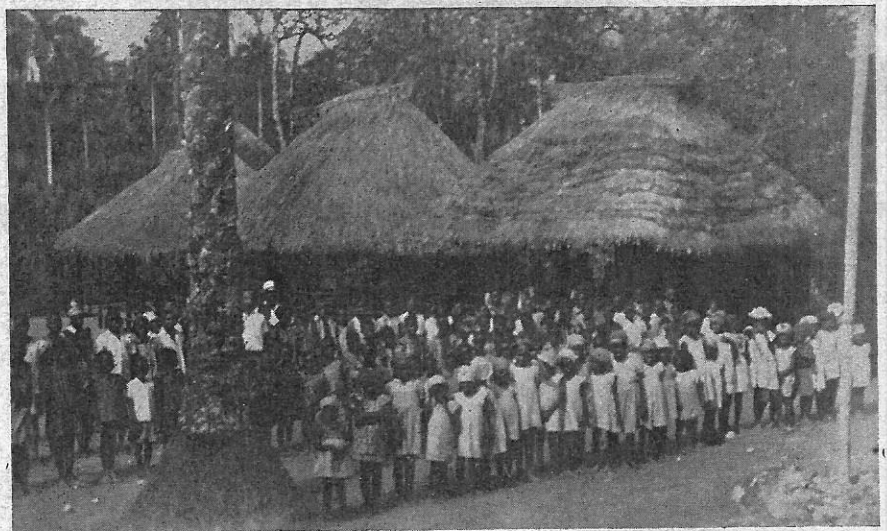
They had gotten plenty of boys for school, and then disappeared, taking the boys with them. Who can blame Fofi for wondering whether we likewise were slave traders?

From the very first we planned opening a school for boys. That was to educate them for a rounded life in their own environment. Medical work came as an afterthought. We found so many people of all ages in such needless suffering we felt it to be a challenge. What about that infant accidentally rolling into the fire one night; or that poor old granny so crippled that she had to crawl about on hands and knees? Our Lord healed the sick. The least we could do was to use what skill we had. Thus it was that the hospital began.

All the time our main objective was to make Christians of all we met, Moslem and heathen alike. Others could probably run a better hospital. They might operate better schools. To lead men to our Lord Christ, to show them His law, His love, His forgiveness was our principal task. It was slow, painfully slow at first. We baptized a few school boys those first years, and one old woman. Ma Tenna was her name. The preaching of one of the Fathers in the marketplace had converted her. When the chief and people of her village learned that she would become Christian they drove her out into the bush. She was the only adult in the first confirmation class of 1927.

Others can tell of the later mission and growth better than the present writer. The large, new church building, schools for over 500 boys and girls, rapidly expanding evangelistic and medical work tax on strength. We recall fear, sickness, ignorance among the people, for they had never known anything else. There are still plenty of sick folk, and plenty of pagans too. Yet the Liberian Government, which represents the large civilized population on the seacoast, has recognized officially the outstanding work we have done. For this token appreciation we feel highly gratified.

Even more are we gratified with our Lord's blessing. We have, with His strength and guidance, found many of His treasures. These are the souls of men and women and children. Liberated from superstition and fear, they have been baptized and confirmed. Thousands have been healed of their diseases. Hundreds have been and still are in school. Sunday by Sunday scores walk to church to worship God and to receive Holy Communion. God meant for us to see Him open the windows of heaven and pour out such blessings that there is not room to receive them. The Holy Cross Liberian Mission is one of God's treasure chests. It makes us recall His promise by the prophet Malachi, "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up jewels."



SAINT AGNES' FRESH-AIR CLASSROOMS

Our Medical Work

BY LEOPOLD KROLL, O.H.C.

IN the April 1923 "Hinterland" is this brief statement, "Fr. Allen arrived at Freetown on May 29 after a good voyage from England. He proceeded to Monrovia to get his government permits and if all went well, is now at Masambolahun." And so without any fuss began our medical work which would soon grow into St. Joseph's Hospital. Just ten years later, during one twelve-month we gave relief from their awful tropical diseases to 20,000 patients aggregating 140,000 separate treatments and performed about 300 major operations.

In 1923 Fr. Allen, now over seventy years old had taken a six months medical course in tropical diseases at Livingstone College in London before going out to Liberia. Later in the same year the following appeared in the "Hinterland." "Frequently, the combined talent of the Mission staff cannot diagnose the complaint, but we do for each of our suffering brothers and sisters what we can. On some days the queue of Fr. Allen's patients reaches out to such a length that he scarcely finds time to eat."

In 1924, Fr. Stretch, who also had some medical training at Livingstone College, became a member of the Mission staff. For the next two years Fr. Allen and he worked together at the dispensary thus preparing the way for our first doctor.

Dr. Maas, our first fully trained doctor, came to us in 1926 and was on our staff until 1930. Under his supervision the first hospital buildings were erected and the first native men trained as dressers, one of whom is still with us.

Next came Dr. Werner Junge, also a German, who was the doctor-in-charge from 1931-1933. When Fr. Hughson, then our Superior, visited the Mission late in 1931, and saw over a thousand patients a day at the hospital, he decided on the spot, that we would have to get another doctor. A friend of Dr. Junge's, a Dr. Krueger, was secured and came to Bolahun in 1932. All this time, from about 1928 on, one of the in-

valuable workers at the hospital was Miss Kolbe, a young nurse, technician and ready helper.

This ideal staff was not to be kept together for a very long time. In 1932 the depression caught up with us and in 1933 we were unable to re-employ Dr. Junge and Miss Kolbe. Dr. Krueger agreed to carry on for just his room and board. He was with us until early in 1935 when, because of ill health, he was obliged to return home.

The next three doctors, Dr. Clatworthy, Dr. Fowler and Dr. Selden were able to stay with us only a year each. However they all made their contributions to the medical work, training new dressers, introducing new methods and showing us how a hospital could be run on a very slender budget.

Just before Dr. Seldon left in 1941, Dr. Veatch was sent to our part of the interior by the Firestone Rubber Company to conduct a campaign against sleeping sickness. He made his headquarters at Bolahun, and after Dr. Seldon's departure, supervised the dispensary, and did a few operations when not on trek through the country. This sleeping sickness campaign was carried on until 1945, Dr. Veatch being away only once for a short furlough to the United States. During this campaign he trained several native men as microscopists, one or two of whom we still have at the dispensary. Since his departure we have been unable to secure the services of a doctor until just this year. However one of the Sisters ably assisted by the native dressers has been kept busy running the dispensary. They and all the sick folk are looking forward to Dr. Beasley's arrival later this year.

Experience in a tropical hospital provides endless strange cases and incidents. Here is a sample:

A MAN OF DISTINCTION

When Dr. Maas arrived in Bolahun sometime in 1926 the way had been prepared for him by the dispensary work done by Fr.

Allen, O.H.C., and Fr. Stretch. The natives knew that what the white men gave them for their illnesses was "strong medicine" and that it worked. However, no major operations had been attempted, so there was considerable doubt as to whether any native would have the courage to be the first to be cut open. Fortunately, one of the big Bande Chiefs, Ndolle, who feared neither man nor devil, had been troubled for some time with a hernia. It didn't take too much to persuade him that the new doctor could easily relieve him of his distressing condi-

tion. So with many retainers and wives he arrived at St. Joseph's Hospital, very proud of his courage and the distinction that was to be his. Several days after the operation, he approached Dr. Maas with a "dash" of 20 pounds begging him not to operate on any other person. He was not satisfied with being the first to be operated on, but wanted to be the only one. Quite understandably the doctor couldn't agree to this. Since then there have been perhaps a thousand or more operations, even with a very limited staff and very primitive equipment.



MISSION DRESSER GIVES INJECTION FOR SLEEPING-SICKNESS

"Luke, The Physician"

BY RALPH T. MILLIGAN

ONE day, a few years after the hospital work had been established at Bolahun, and when there was a resident doctor here, a woman from the Gizi country came for treatment. She brought her son too; his name was Menjo. The boy was evidently a keen and attractive youngster. His mother stayed here only a short time, and when she left, the doctor asked her to let Menjo stay on as one of his houseboys. Menjo was about fifteen years old at that time. He picked up enough English to be able to carry out his new work in the doctor's house. Menjo proved himself in many ways, and after a while the doctor gave him

a place at the hospital. He washed old bandages and was responsible for keeping part of the hospital clean. Later on, he was allowed to assist the doctor in the operating room, holding the patients and handing the instruments to the doctor. Later still he was allowed to give injections. This was in the days when the treatment for yaws was the main work of the hospital, and when the line of patients stretched out sometimes from dawn until dark. Menjo was unusually capable and under Dr. Krueger, the third doctor who came to the Mission, he became the chief dresser.

With the exception of a few years when

Menjo went to work at the hospital at Cape Mount on the Coast, he has remained here with the Mission. We have had no resident doctor for several years. During that time, under the supervision of Sister Hilary, C.H.N., Menjo has done the hospital work. Naturally he is not qualified to perform major operations, but patients receive good treatment, and the hospital is still a busy place.

Menjo is untiring in his work. There is never a day that goes by that he is not at work with the patients. He is quiet, kind and gentle. The people all trust him. He manages to instill them with the great confidence that he has in himself.

When Menjo was baptised, many years ago, he took the name of Luke, after St. Luke, the physician. Luke Menjo fills a great gap in our work these days when we are without a real doctor. Although the

number of patients is not large at present, still there is much work being done. Any doctor in America would be proud of the work that Luke is doing for Christ in Bolahun.

It was old Fr. Allen who first began the medical work here, and who also was the first to go into the Gizi country to preach Bread that is cast on the waters always comes back. Luke Menjo, from Giziland is doing Fr. Allen's work now in St. Joseph's Hospital.

God does answer prayer, does He not? It is such a comfort just to be able to refer everything to Him with the conviction that His love and wisdom is guiding everything. It is faith that gives us this sure knowledge. This is the only "social security."

—Father Hughson, O.H.C.

Sister Hilary, Hospital Supervisor

BY RALPH T. MILLIGAN

SISTER Hilary has been on the Mission staff for over 12 years. Before entering the Community of the Holy Name in Malvern Link, England, she had been trained as a nurse and so, even from the first, she has been connected with the hospital work. We have been without a doctor for years and during all this time the hospital has been under the supervision of the Sister.

One really must see the work to know all that this means. In America there are those who take care of the business end of the hospital, the admitting and discharging of the patients and the keeping of the accounts; there is the training of the nurses and orderlies and dressers, there are the medical supplies to be looked after, the management of the hospital in general; there is the microscopic work and the diagnosis, the daily routine of dressings, the surgical cases—not to mention numerous other things that go into the daily life of doctors and hospital work. For all of these things Sister Hilary is responsible. Of course her years here at St. Joseph's Hospital have

given her much experience and while there has been no doctor in residence the only surgical work that is being done is that which can be done with certainty and with the help of one of the dressers who himself has been well trained in the many years that he has worked here. But even so the work is great. The hospital clinic is open on three mornings a week and a full morning's work is put in by the entire staff, but the Sister bears the responsibility of it all!

She can bear the responsibility of it all because she puts the whole matter in God's hands. Much of the work is done in the Convent chapel when the Sisters are on their knees, where patients and their needs are brought by name to the heavenly throne. With her own knowledge and experience of what ought to be done, and her faith that God will see her through the many problems that confront her every day and night, the Sister goes about her work with the assurance of the blessing of God on what she does. Her confidence is always in proportion to the need. The less she knows herself, the more confidence she has that

God will see her through, and what is probably the best of all she spreads this confidence, both in herself and in God in whom she trusts, to all her staff and her patients.

Often we are not outwardly very grateful for what we have until we have lost it. In Bolahun the Fathers and Sisters and the people of the town, school boys and school girls seldom worry about their ailments because they know that if they go to Sister she will take care of them. One dreads to think of how this atmosphere of assurance would change if Sister were not here, for

sickness and disease and other ailments of the body abound in this land.

In addition to the Hospital work, the Sister also has her share of duties at the Convent, is responsible for the sacristy work in the Church, and once each month goes off on her out-station work of preaching and instruction to the Gizi people.

I love Thee only in order to love Thee more perfectly.

—Avrillon

Touring Bolahun and Jungle Trails

By FRANCIS W. G. PARKER, O.H.C.

HERE is an extract from the Hinterland giving the impressions of my first day in Liberia: "First, the trek from Buedu to the Mission is amazing. There had been the overnight stop at Pendembu, the end of the railroad. That was my first experience of a 'rest house,' empty rooms, no lights, no furnishings. But Brother Sydney had circled over from his Vaahun patrol and met us with lanterns, cots, mosquito tents, and chop. The next morning we paid some calls of respect and journeyed thirty-five miles by lorry to the end of that means of transportation, Buedu. The day long trek to the Mission from Buedu is not just a 'walk.' It is hill-climbing, rocky foot-paths, descents into muddy swamps, swollen streams over which one is carried pick-a-back by one of the carriers if the bridge has been floated out. I managed to walk most of the journey, only using the uncomfortable hammock for an occasional rest, for, said the guide, 'Mission far; we must get there before dark . . . no place can stop.' The welcome before reaching the outskirts of Bolahun was also amazing. They had the band out—one bass drum, one kettle drum, some flutes and three or four hundred voices. All pressed forward to snap fingers and give the greeting, 'Ese,' Hail. Soon all the Sisters and Fr. Parsell came into sight and we all swarmed into the big St. Mary's Church, lighted only by altar candles. The short service of welcome was amazingly good. They

sang in Bandi, 'Now thank we all our God.' The volume and the quality of the singing shows Brother Sydney's musical direction. After other vernacular devotions the Prior gave us an English blessing. Sister Hilary (returning after furlough) and I remained to say our 'Thanksgiving after a Journey.' I was greatly moved, deeply thankful for a Christian community in this part of the 'Dark Continent.' The magnificent church, filled with boys and girls of the schools and others raised one's drooping spirits. A bath, strong tea, and a good night's sleep did the same for the body. The next morning, after Mass of Thanksgiving, I toured the place with the Father Prior, but of the amazing growth of the work I must tell you some other time. It is a bright spot and there is a spirit of Christian joy about the settlement and people, so evidently and depressingly absent in most of the towns passed en route.

We took the path going south-west from the monastery and reached the hospital just as Sister Hilary and the dressers began the day's work with brief prayers, and a line of patients were awaiting treatment. In the crude men's ward was a man accidentally shot while hunting, being prepared to have the bullet extracted from his shoulder.

Then on to St. Agnes' School where we now have nearly one hundred girls and one hundred and fifty small boys, all under the Sisters of the Holy Name, who have their convent beyond the campus. There has been



AFTER THANKSGIVING SERVICE

a great expansion these past few years, under the wise and able direction of Sister Mary Frances, assisted by four or five Sisters.

The Sisters share in the work of the hospital, all the work with women and girls around the town, go on the same trails to visit and preach at the out stations. Their work is beyond praise.

Returning, we went over to St. Philip's Grade School and its hundred boys. Their Headmaster is Mr. Stephen Manley. Miss Mintie Simpson, a Texan, is head of St. Augustine's High School of about 20 boys and girls. Excepting the Fathers, Sisters and Miss Simpson, all our teachers and dressers have been trained at the Mission. All are Christians and all speak English, and teach it too, for all wish to learn. By the time they reach the upper grades, the students attain fair proficiency in English speech and writing. The St. Agnes' Students have week-day services in a mud and thatch chapel on their compound. This is far too small and is one of the first permanent buildings planned for the Youth Offering. The rest of the boys go to St. Mary's Church every morning for the Eucharist, then to classes. Natives eat only two meals daily, noon and evening. Assigned students

prepare the "chop" which is always rice plus palm oil or something for "gravy."

Near the big church is our fine new "Palaver House," used for meetings, court and teaching the grown-ups. Sister Mary Frances started a women's sewing class which is very popular. The evenings are assigned for women's and men's classes in English. Students assist in all these activities. Saturday nights Brother Sydney gives Christian teaching, using lantern slides. By these means every person in Bolahun receives instruction.

On Sundays all baptised attend the joyous 8:30 Sung Eucharist and the Church is well filled. The offerings are carried up, often on people's heads and placed in big baskets near the chancel rail. There may be fresh rice, bananas, sugar cane, cassava, oranges and etc. All this latter goes to St. Joseph's Hospital or is carried by the Evangelists to the poor of the town. The native acolytes are barefoot and also the Evangelist who acts as Sub-deacon. Almost all the natives go barefoot in the Hinterland.

During part of the Eucharist those who are "hearing" the Christian teaching have their instruction in the Palaver House. It takes four years to prepare for Baptism. The first two years they are "hearers" and when

they express the desire to proceed to Baptism, they become Catechumens for a further two years' instructions and testing.

On Good Friday the whole town is in retreat until 3 p. m. "No talk, no eat. God-Palaver all day."

At our carpenter shop, the older boys get manual training in simple carpentry and building. To the west and north west of St. Mary's Church are clusters of native huts for our carpenters and laborers.

One special work of the Mission is to train Evangelists, the native preachers and interpreters. Every weekday all who are in Bolahun attend a meditation and an instruction. Only men of approved Christian character are chosen for this important work.

THE OUTSTATIONS

As the work has grown, we have pushed out in five main directions within a radius of about 27 miles. At the most distant parts, Vezala, Kpandemai, Foya Dundu, Vahun and Gondolahun, we have small schools of 25 to 40 students with resident teachers and Evangelists. These latter, together with those stationed at Bolahun, preach in about forty towns and villages. Of course, the only method of travel is on foot and this is often strenuous labor, particularly when the heavy

rains mean swollen streams and much swamp in the valleys.

These stations are regularly visited by the Fathers and I must add that our grand Sisters of the Holy Name brave the same conditions on the jungle trails with an enthusiasm and zest for the work of Christ which is slowly proving to the natives that the Christians really love our Lord and His people for His sake.

In a few outstations we have native churches. At others we use the Palaver House. After evening meal, the town crier sometimes goes around to announce God-Palaver, and the Evangelist may ring the ship's bell to call the people for the prayers and instruction. Like every priest on his first trek, I realised the thrill of celebrating the Eucharist at sun-up in a Palaver House, open on all sides. After the offertory there is left just a few Christians. The others stand outside and watch the priest as he offers the Holy Sacrifice and pleads that all may be drawn to our Lord and God.

When on the trails in pagan villages and at the outstations, one looks toward Bolahun as our Holy City, for there many hearts join in work and glorious Christian worship. Please sometimes pray that we may help toward deepening and extending the reign of our Lord Jesus Christ over the hearts and lives of His African children.



SISTER AND SCHOOL GIRLS

Good Progress on the Vezala Patrol

By GOWAN H. WILLIAMS

FR. Parsell went up to Kpandemai the first of March to begin the long awaited combination class-room and chapel at the school there. The gift of the Alumni Association of the Episcopal Theological Seminary is responsible for the completion of this building, begun in 1933 during the depth of the depression but never finished. It has been a job getting the iron pipes, the zinc and other supplies such as cement, up to Kpandemai. It is about two and a half day's journey from the motor road in Sierra Leone and all these building supplies have to travel a great distance into the interior *beyond* the Mission at Bolahun which is really only the first lap. Fr. Parsell laughingly told Miss Simpson that "Fr. Williams would give him no rest until the job was finished!" He's quite right about that. But Fr. Parsell has been unusually busy since his return last spring building, building. And so God continues to bless us, the work goes forward even in the face of financial difficulties and the news in Loma country in the year 1951 is definitely a bit brighter. Do pray that at last the Light of the Christian Gospel may shine in the hearts of these very primitive heathen, among the most backward and superstitious of any of the tribes among whom we work.

The Chief at Kpakomai, who is a good friend of the Mission, told me that the roof of the church (St. Florence) needed a new roof. When I took over the work there was a huge bug-a-bug hill in the middle of the church, and this was removed by the town fathers shortly thereafter. However, the bug-a-bugs had done their damage and had eaten away the wood in the roof, the thatch showed great gaping holes due to high winds. Even the chief was concerned about it. He said he would repair it for \$10.00. That seemed a high price to pay for a thatch roof made of material gathered from the bush, and for a church used only once a month, and Fr. Parsell agreed we just could not afford it as much as we wanted to see

the church kept in good condition. I told the chief we would just have to give up using the church, and that would mean that we would not have our monthly Mass in the town upon each visit I made, following the custom of Fr. Bessom. I also told him that if we didn't have a Mass then God's chosen means of visiting and blessing the town would be withdrawn. This worried the Chief and he agreed it was not good to leave the church in a bad condition and that he personally would see that the roof was put on for five dollars. We have two small rooms in the back of the church and Fr. Bessom and I had used these as our living quarters when in the town, but toward the end of the rainy season last year the roof was leaking so badly that I knew I simply could not live there another rainy season. I hope the chief gets it fixed before June and the rains, but meanwhile I am living in a house on the edge of the town.

At Vezala, the Church of the African Martyrs is progressing. We have the roof supported with new pillars, the walls nicely finished in a smooth native mud plaster job, Holy Cross Press supplied us with a fine set of Stations of the Cross and they will go up shortly on the walls. The red wood for the front of the altar and the Lady Shrine and credence table is purchased and being fitted and the central panels of the altar are to be decorated with the same symbol, the Chi Rho, used in the altar of the Mother Church in Bolahun. I hope soon we can have a wayside Crucifix on the road going from Vezala to Vonjama, the government seat, as a daily witness to all who pass by "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

Sometimes the Fathers and Sisters have felt that the work in Loma country is heart-breaking. Years of steady labor involving a monthly trek of about sixty miles in all weathers, over hills, forest jungle and swamps, preaching at the Mission Stations and overseeing the schools, has actually

brought little in the way of Christian converts. Fr. Bessom and all of us feel the strong pagan opposition. Fr. Parker felt all this very keenly when we did this patrol together and on our return to Bolahun, we had a "council of war" and roughly planned out new methods of attack.

One thing was evident. We needed a stronger staff of Christian workers, who could support each other. Out of this has developed a scheme of colonisation. Our Vezala evangelist is now at Bolahun for a further period of training. After ten years of hard work, our capable teacher resigned to take a government job. This opened the way for a complete new staff, everyone of whom is of course the product of Bolahun Mission.

Sister Mary Frances wisely pointed out that if some women and girls were sent to Vezala, we could hope to win more Loma girls as students for St. Stephen's School there.

The new head teacher, Moses Janga, is teaching second and third grades. He has a fine wife, Audrey, and she is teaching Primer full time. With their tiny daughter Josephine, that is one happy Christian family.

Then another is Jacob and Vida Clare Morris, with their six month old son Peter. Vida is teaching first grade, and has Peter in his crib in the classroom, too! Jacob is acting as Evangelist for Vezala and the neighboring towns. He is also teaching Sacred Studies to all grades.

Then, we also have our latest married couple, Dennis and Katherine. Dennis teaches Hygiene, runs our school dispensary, and makes monthly visits to Kpandemai to preach and to take care of the medical needs of the boys.

What a glad place Vezala now is, with three Christian families! Plus the change in staff, there has been the addition for the first time in the history of the school of nine girls at St. Stephen the Martyr, Vezala. Six of these are boarding girls in the second grade. Sister Mary Frances arranged this and three cheers for her. Two of these girls are Loma, two are Gizi, and two are Bandi. One of the girls is a Christian, Susan, and another is from a Christian family in Bolahun, who will be baptized when in the fifth grade.

Upon my first visit in March, after the school opened in February, I had a talk with the parents of some other girls. The result is that before I left we had three



LADIES OF BRIDAL PARTY SET OUT FROM CONVENT

more day students added to the six boarding students! Was I delighted about this! I could hardly wait to send news to Bolahun. Sister's prediction that the presence of boarding girls would encourage day girls from the town to attend was true. So we've had a 50% increase, and this is only the beginning, I am sure. When I told Sister Mary Frances about this she beamed all over.

What a joy to say Mass there this time with the church crowded on one side with about 40 boys and on the other side with the girls. They looked so charming in their new Christmas dresses with matching hats. The material for these was due to Fr. Parker and his contact with two friends who generously donated a great quantity of cotton material. Never have the girls looked so well dressed and in such an array of colors. Our thanks to these men for the cloth. Nothing delights a girl's or woman's heart so much as a gay bit of cotton cloth from which a dress and head-tie can be made.

With seven resident Christians at Vezala, they made a reverent group who knelt at the altar of the Church of the African Martyrs

to receive their Communion for the first time since their arrival on the compound. We have a Christian man at Vezala so we have eight Christians there. At 5 p. m. Sunday afternoon, we had Benediction, and it was lovely.

And still more good news about Vezala. I plan to baptize a fine woman into the Christian Faith upon my next visit. For the past two years she has been a most faithful and devout Catechumen and before that a hearer. If anyone deserves baptism as a reward for perseverance and loyalty, certainly Kpana does. She must be getting along in years. She has a grown daughter and she is a widow. She was born in Bandi country, but married a Loma man, and has lived in Loma country most of her life. I met her each day I was in Vezala and talked about her coming Baptism, during Easter week. I plan to make a big thing of it, and invite many of the town pagans to witness the Baptism of this woman, as an example of what a real conversion can do, and that perseverance will result in Baptism for those who sincerely desire it.

A Native Christian's Revenge

BY FRANCIS W. G. PARKER, O.H.C.

MANY of our earliest school boys were sons of chiefs who had a few years previous made peace after devastating wars. The conquering chief himself was murdered. His son came to the Mission School and proved more keen on the Christian religion than on other school work. He was baptized Cyprian. Later he became a school carpenter and a trusted lay-preacher, an Evangelist.

Folay, another of our boys, was the grandson of another chief several hours distant. He had told his grandfather something of the Christian religion learned at the Mission.

But the Fathers were surprised when one day they received a note from Folay, earnestly pleading that someone come to baptize his sick grandfather. The one Father on the place could not well leave, so he chose Cyprian for the journey. The tall

young Evangelist set out carrying a crucifix, two candlesticks, Prayer Book and alb. Here is his own report written for the Prior:

"My dear Father:

'I am very glad to write you few line, as I know it will meet you in good condition.

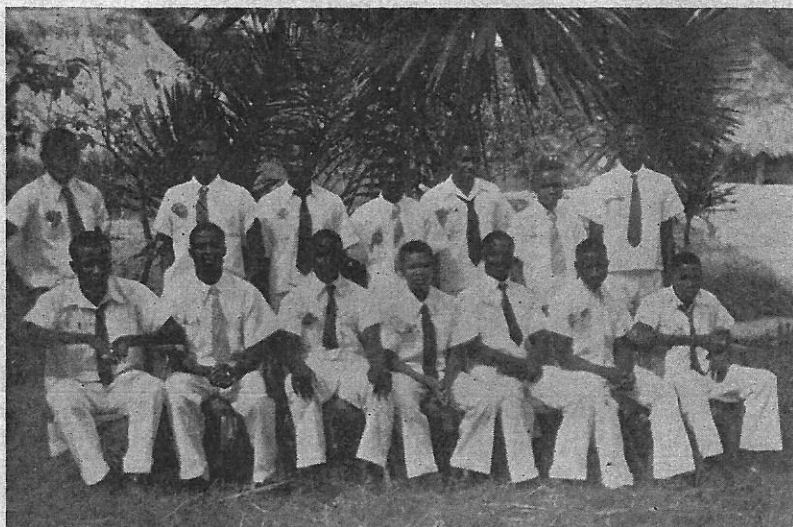
'First of all when I start to go somebody told me that the Chief is dead already, then I say anyway I have to go. Fr. ordered me to go, and I cannot help, so I start to go again, and before I reach to Lakusa it was dark and also I meet B. Folay in the road, when we reach to chief house I meet everybody there because the chief was so sick, even he cannot able to eat, so stop them all and told the old man Fr. sent me to you, then they ask, myself I show them what you send me for, and the other man who is the next chief, say let us go and hang

head so when they come back, as they told me, they say wait till tomorrow, so when day break I went there and ask them. Some of them say no, and some of say yes, then I ask the old man self. He say I want to be baptised, and then the whole company agree, and then those who say no they come to join, and before I baptised him I preach to them all meanwhile, there we saw big wind blowing and also raining, whole day, and about afternoon I

started to come at Bandawalahun, about half pass four, so I sleep there before I start. I baptised the old man, we give this name Augustain.

'Yours,
C. A.'"

Not until some time after the event did we learn that Cyprian had baptised the man who had murdered his own father, but Cyprian knew.



HIGH SCHOOL BOYS

"We Ought to Help Chicago," Says Bolahun

The following letter went from Fr. Ralph T. Milligan to Bishop Conkling

"THE enclosed check for \$22.25 requires a little explanation. Although it looks like any other check, it was actually written here in Bolahun and represents the total of our Easter offering (saved through Lent, 1948) from the Christians and Catechumens in Bolahun and the outstations. It is by this offering that we are trying to teach our people about their responsibility for Missions. But this is the first time that the decision about its destination was made by the people themselves.

"Last year the money was sent to the Cowley Fathers in South Africa, and the year before I believe it was sent to the Philippines.

"Fr. Parsell had once before put it to some of the people to decide where it might go, but as usual, they forgot about it.

"It happened that Fr. Bessom had preached last Sunday in the Church on some of the evils of civilization and mentioned some of the bad habits of some Americans in their neglect of Christianity. The following morning Fr. Parsell happened to come to the Evangelists' class which I was instructing and asked again about the Easter offering. They decided to send it to America and asked where it might be best used. What I thought might appeal to them was the fact that you have been trying to do so much for the negroes in Chicago. When I told them about this, the Evangelists said, "Since they are our own people, we ought to try to help them, so let us send the money to Bishop Conkling." Fr. Parsell made out the check immediately and asked me to write to you and send it along. It is being sent in my

weekly air-mail letter and will be forwarded to you by my mother.

"We have a rule about offerings. Nothing is expected from the Hearers, but the Catechumens are expected to give .03 a month, and the Christians .05. Even this is hard for them. There is very little money in this part of the country and even what little there is is hard to get. As in the early church much of our Sunday offering is in kind, i.e.,

rice, fruit, etc. To get .03 or .05 a month from our people would be equal to getting .50 or 1.00 from someone in a parish at home. But they are learning and this time we feel they have done well. It had been designated for Negro work in the Diocese of Chicago. It represents offerings from .01½ to .20 (a shilling) from about 300 people."

Note: The above was rated as a religious news item in "Time Magazine."

Our Hopes Through the Youth Offering

BY HAROLD J. BESSOM, O.H.C.

THE plan for using the offering of the United Movement of the Church's youth delights me when I think of its possible effect in the outstations.

Take a native lad who has finished or done some years in high school and is able to handle one of the schools tributary to Bolahun. Call him Koli. Give him for wife a damsel from the Sisters' school with some initiation into household economics. Call her Wiya. Here is a typical team of high potentiality for advance.

They have heard the Fathers and Sisters urging the duty of staying in their own Hinterland country to help bring it from pagan barbarism to Christian civilization especially in these present critical years.

The Mission offers salaries half or less than those paid elsewhere. It does offer valuable social services in time of trouble but these constitute an invisible salary hard for an optimistic young couple to appreciate.

At their outstation they will find a large thatched native hut for their quarters. It is not bad, most picturesque, but not sanitary, not economical, and not satisfactory to a civilized couple naturally desirous of appearing to be esteemed by the boss.

On whatever rising ground the compound affords there will be a different kind of house, located for sake of views and quiet. It is the house where Fathers or Sisters live on patrol and, if the station seems to warrant the cost, they build a little place with ma-

sonry and metal roofing. This structure, the chapel, and the school house become the show places of the outpost. The residence of Koli and Wiya is nice, by jungle standards, but no show place. That lodging occupied a very few nights a month by the white person appears to be the more important place.

But, starting soon, it is going to be made plain to Koli and Wiya that the Mission considers their work more important than that of the white missionaries. Their relatives, friends and pupils will not fail to get the point. Natives will think it puts a person among the respectables of the land to work for the Holy Cross Liberian Mission.

The fine house, the premier show place, will be where Koli and Wiya live. The magnificence planned for them is no less than a four-room cottage of adobe blocks laid on a concrete foundation and possessing a metal roof: the equivalent of an American vacation structure. The young couple will have a more sanitary home. (Thatch shelters roaches and rodents in profusion and the snakes that pursue rats unless it is smoked regularly, almost continuously, by fires below.) But the new place can be made pretty inside as no smoke-cured interior can ever be. A clay oven can help Wiya to use the simple recipes taught at St. Agnes' School. So, even if we can't do much now to give our professional helpers their full deserts in cash, we can now hope to give them the opportunities for more gracious living.

The castle of the paleface, quite a sec-

ondary show place, will still be their comfort on patrol. It will still be the size of an American two-car garage.

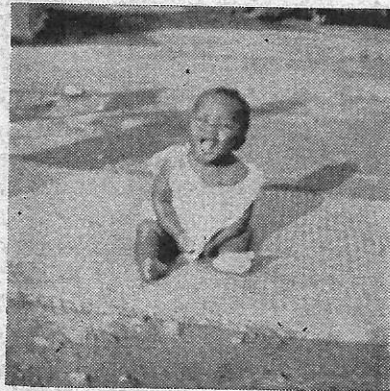
GETTING PURE WATER

Koli and Wiya have learned in school the importance of clean drinking water. They will teach their own children and pupils the same. But how shall they practice this? (Leave out boiling, please, for it would be a constant nuisance for country people to boil every drop of drinking water.) But it is quite possible to dig a well and get good water below the surface.

But the care of a well is difficult. African surface water is especially dangerous and must be kept out by a low wall. Then again, a bucket that rests on the floor or ground is not sanitary for plunging into a source of drinking water. Passers by and less thoughtful persons on the compound are tempted to use the well for a means of bathing, dipping and redipping into it a cupped hand which also serves as a washcloth.

In brief, there is no present way to provide Koli and Wiya and their people and pupils with good water except by means of covered wells supplying a stream of water that does not run back, a hand pump therefore. So until standards of hygiene rise everywhere in the Hinterland we shall need pumps. (And when standards of hygiene have risen the standard of living will be such that people everywhere will demand pumps.)

For all these hopes and blessings, thank you all and thanks be to God.



AFRICA SMILES



The Ten Commandments

By LOREN N. GAVITT

VIII. Thou shalt not steal.

THIS commandment has to do with the security of men in the possession of their property. In its widest sense, stealing may be defined as any sort of action which deprives another of that which is rightfully his. It covers a very wide field from petty dishonesty, such as avoiding the payment of a bus-fare, to armed robbery of some great sum. It may be accomplished secretly and furtively, as in theft; openly and violently as in robbery, extortion, blackmail, kidnapping for ransom, etc.; or deceitfully as in various kinds of fraud. Sometimes its basis is mere carelessness, as in the borrowing of that which one cannot hope to repay, in the incurring of debts which are beyond one's means, in the damage of another's property, or in failure to return something which was borrowed. Again, what is stolen may not be "property" in the usual sense. It may be another's ideas, writings, or inventions, the credit for which one may take. It is not necessary that the violator of the commandment gain material advantage. Sometimes property of another is defaced or destroyed out of anger or desire for revenge. Nor does stealing necessarily imply that the perpetrator is guilty of a violation of civil law. Much failure to comply with the terms of this commandment is viewed by our pagan world as acuteness and cleverness. Yet the employer who does not pay just wages for labor, or the employee who does not honestly do the work for which he accepts pay, is depriving another of his rightful possessions. All sorts of practices to gain unfair

advantage in business transactions violate this commandment. In short, this precept is a matter of just dealing, and is explained by the catechism of the Book of Common Prayer as a command "to be true and just in all my dealings."

One of the most serious aspects of failure to build our lives on this commandment is the way in which its violation undermines the whole character. It entails all sorts of deviousness, deception, lying, sneakiness, cruelty, heartlessness, etc., which all come in the train of lack of honesty and justice in our regard for the property of others. In society at large, any general failure to observe this precept of the moral law, results in a loss of mutual confidence and the creation of distrust.

The whole matter of the right of a man to possess things has been questioned in our day, but the teaching of Christianity in regard to this matter is quite clear. The right of ownership comes from the very nature of things, for every man has the fundamental right to that which will enable him to continue living in this world, to live decently, and to fulfil his obligation to support those who are dependent upon him. This right, to have any meaning, must be respected by others, who must abstain from any unjust interference with it. A man may voluntarily give up this right. He may give away everything he possesses, or he may take the vow of poverty in the religious life and thus forswear his right ever to possess anything again. But the decision must be his, freely given, and no one has the right to compel him by violence, force, stratagem or fear, to give up the right to his property.

Yet this right is not absolute, for in the final analysis, all things belong to God, who is the only Being who has absolute dominion over everything. To say that a man has the right to possess things really means that God has given certain things into his hands to use. This is the principle enunciated by Saint Paul in the question "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?"

Thus, man's right to the things of this world is founded upon his ability to use things and this puts a limitation on this right. He may use them for his needs, his comforts,

his recreation, the care of those dependent upon him, etc. But, by the very law that gives him the right to possess things, he has the duty of giving, out of anything he has left over after his real needs are met, to those who have not enough for their needs. Every man is entrusted by God with the stewardship of possessions and he has the duty of sharing them to help fulfil the rights of others to the necessities of decent living, either through charitable agencies or in direct charity. To ignore this duty, or to squander one's possessions in such selfish extravagance that there is nothing left to share with others, is really to steal from them that which God intends them to have.

This duty is further to be extended to that of sharing our possessions with God for the upkeep and furtherance of His Church. In Old Testament times, the faithful were required by the law to "tithe," i.e., to give one tenth of their income to God's Church. This custom is no longer binding upon us, although many faithful souls today still practice it. At any rate, to neglect this duty, or to give back to God, who has given us all, only the odd pennies we have left over, is to fail in the kind of living which this precept of the natural moral law requires.



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