

WEST AFRICAN ADVENT

MESSENGER

VOICE OF THE WEST AFRICAN UNION

MISSION OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

VOL. 13.

JANUARY, 1959

No. 1



Courage

MAR - 2 1959

For The New Year

By Howard J. Welch,

President,

West African Union

A WELL KNOWN POEM in the English language expresses man's longing for 'some wonderful place called the land of beginning again.' How true that most of us would like to forget the mistakes and blunders of the past and start anew. Fortunately in God's plan we can do exactly that at any time we will to do so. How wonderful that as we begin a New Year we can have the assurance that through faith in Christ our sins are all gone and we stand as new spiritual creatures clothed in the righteousness of our Saviour.

To you my brothers and sisters in West Africa I would like to say as we face the New Year together, "Be strong and of good courage, be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whither soever thou goest." Joshua 1:9.

This wonderful message given to Joshua as he faced a difficult untried way is just as applicable today for God's people. We too in 1959 face a way we have never gone before. There will be some giants to conquer and some walled cities to take. But there will also be unprecedented opportunities for conquests for God if we keep faith and courage. First of all we need to be sure our lives are completely surrendered to God. When this is done and all selfishness put away we have nothing to fear. Then we are ready to pray for guidance and power.

I believe the time has come for the Adventist message to be given in West Africa with Great Power and Glory. Let us as workers and as church members determine by God's grace to Arise and Shine in Nineteen Fifty-Nine.

Church Organized

at

Matotoka, Sierra Leone

By T. K. Kagbo

THE YEAR 1958 has been one of notable achievements for our small company at Matotoka. My readers will see from the narrative below that these achievements are relatively small to some other achievements in some other parts of West Africa and the world at large, but they are really greater in terms of conditions, hence we are thankful to God for His wondrous works through His servants.

The work at Matotoka started nearly fifty years ago, but the overwhelming majority of muslim population in the area stood as a great obstacle to the progress of the work. However, the work continued steadily, and the company grew. An attempt was made to organize a church in 1951, but the plan was frustrated by conditions made possible by the adversary. This did not daunt the spirits of the members who continued to work cooperatively in spite of the many set-backs.

God did not sleep. He heard their prayers and saw their efforts which He really blessed. After some years of hard work and anxious waiting, the long looked for event came on Friday, September 12, 1958, when the company was organized into a church by the district Pastor Brother S. C. Nicol, with the assistance of Pastor J. S. Myers and Brother J. L. C. Muderspach from the headquarters office at Bo.

With Joshua 3:10 "the living God is among you" as his key text, Brother Nicol presented the major church principles of our faith. Though the majority of the church members were absent, having gone to the diamond mining areas, yet at the end we had sixteen members to make the new church. Together with our visitors, we happily partook of the Lord's supper.

Field News Notes

Ingathering And Harvest Festival

On the 20th of September 1958, after reading the Ingathering Message and explaining the Ingathering Canvass to the members, the writer organized the members

into groups for the ingathering and they all responded heartily, "For the people now a mind to work" Nehemiah 4:6. The ingathering report was very encouraging, especially when one thinks how small the working area was, and the overwhelming majority of the Muslim population.

On Friday, October 24, a Harvest Festival was held in the N. A. Court Barrie, to which the people brought their first fruits according to the commandment of God as recorded by Moses in Exodus 23:13-19. The presence and services of Pastors A. Moyer, J. S. Myers, and Brother J. L. C. Muderspach, J. F. Amara and J. A. Ted Fofana from Bo, and that of our district pastor, Brother S. C. Nicol, helped to make the Harvest Festival a real success. At the time of writing, the small company had brought in £11-8-10d to the Ingathering Pool, and a little more is expected before the Ingathering closes.

Baptism at Roson

That was not the end of events at the Matotoka church. The greatest and happiest of all, yes, one in which even the Angels in heaven joined us in rejoicing, for "joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth" Luke 15:7, came on Friday afternoon, October 31, when the writer, on behalf of the church, presented thirteen souls to the district Pastor, Brother S. C. Nicol for baptism. On that day, in the presence of many Christians, and yes, Muslims too, who had been invited, not by the Christians this time, but by the Spirit of God through their curiosity, eight men and five women were immersed in the stream of Roson, and the forests and the valleys nearby gladly echoed our spirit-filled songs of praise.

With happy hearts, the thirteen new people returned with us to the town to walk with Christ in newness of life.

We at Matotoka are very thankful to God for blessing our efforts, and we are very happy for all these events which God has worked through us, but we know that we have done all these things "For the Love of Christ constraineth us" to do them. 2 Corinthians 5:14. And we ask all our readers all over West Africa, and throughout the whole world, to pray for us here at Matotoka.

Many of us want the rest of the people to treat us as though we were lords and masters. Suppose we try this: "And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant."

Refreshed Beyond Measure

By A. F. Tarr

IT HAS BEEN a heart-warming privilege, in company with the brethren and sisters of Northern Europe, to share in the blessings of the 1958 annual meetings and biennial conference sessions. Some of these meetings came later than usual this year on account of the General Conference Session in Cleveland, but without exception all brought their full measure of spiritual refreshment and hearty good cheer as brethren and sisters from isolated homes and widely-separated churches united again in their conference families in thankful worship and happy fellowship.

Said Union Home Missionary Secretary, Odd Jordal, at the Conference session, beyond the Arctic Circle: "Great distances often separate one member from the other, but it is only a short way between each and God." It was thrilling in the roll call of delegates to hear the responses of members from Hammerfest, from the North Cape, and other places, which to many of us seem so far removed from the rest of the world as we have learned to know it. Many had been engaged in dangerous occupations. Their testimonies rang with gratitude, with appeals for prayer for all of God's family, and with a renewed determination to remain steadfast to the end. Pastor Roald Guleng, himself a son of the Arctic Circle, delivered a most impressive message on the closing day from John 16:32, adapted to the conditions he knew so well. "Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me." At some of the testimony services not a soul present failed to voice a fervent, rugged confidence in the abiding presence of God and in the rapidly approaching fruition of the Advent hope.

It seems strange when visiting some of our northern lands, to look out from one's

bedroom window at midnight or more particularly between one and three o'clock, usually the night's quietest hours, and see the sun shining brightly over a silent, sleeping city.

The baptismal services at Finland's annual meetings are always inspiring occasions. This year the service at the East Finland meeting was held beside a picturesque little stream on the outskirts of Joensuu, a town not far from the Russian border. The time was in the early morning before most of us had had our breakfast. Among the hundreds gathered at the water's edge were a number of strangers who followed the service with very deep interest. It was a beautiful picture to see the candidates, all with little bunches of tiny red roses pinned to their white baptismal gowns, waiting their turn to enter the stream. With marked solicitude the lady Bible workers helped each candidate to and from the officiating minister. Where there was husband and wife both would enter together, the husband being baptized first. Then on the wife being baptized the husband would take her from the minister's hands, embracing her affectionately, and she placing her arm in his would walk beside him up from the water. It was a moving sight to see the family bond made stronger and more loving by a new partnership of each with God.

Present at one of the ordination services in Finland was a former policeman, now a Seventh-day Adventist. Years ago he had repeatedly arrested for drunkenness the father of one of the present candidates for ordination. The mother, a faithful Seventh-day Adventist and the bread-winner of the home, was likewise arrested for not sending her children to school on Sabbaths. There

**Happy
New
Year !**

We extend to all readers of the West African Messenger our warmest Christian Greetings. We trust that the New Year will be one of Happiness and Prosperity for you all, and that it will be a year of closer co-operation between each of us in our service for the Master.

THE ADVENT PRESS

were their five children at home, all dependent on her. She was sentenced to one month's imprisonment but on account of her home situation, the court, at her earnest request, gave her the alternative of a shorter, harsher sentence—one week in prison on a diet of bread and water. So impressed was the policeman with her life and witness, that he decided to join her church. Now an ardent member himself, he was present at the ordination of one of those children for whom the sister had suffered in prison. One little lady in Finland told with radiant joy of this being the thirty-fifth annual meeting she had attended without a single break.

In connection with the conference session in Harstad, there was dedicated the newly erected and what the conference and union officers considered to be the most beautiful church we have in all Norway. Many messages of goodwill were received from far and near, including a telegram from the priest in charge of the local Roman Catholic community.

An excellent press and radio coverage attended all our gatherings. At one place the newspaper representative met our flying boat at the wharf, and after taking a picture on landing, motored us, bag and baggage, to the hotel where we had been booked to stay and where he then remained for the desired interview.

So many times during our various gatherings there came to our minds the words of the apostle Paul to one of the early Christian churches: "For I long to see you . . . that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me." Rom. 1:11, 12 At the conclusion of one session the conference president inquired of the congregation, how many had been spiritually refreshed by the messages and associations of that gathering. As every hand went up it was intriguing to witness the unconcealed delight with which the members watched the visiting ministers raise their hands also in hearty response. Again our minds turn to the appeal of Paul to the church in Rome: "I beseech you, brethren . . . strive together with me in your prayers; . . . that I may come unto you and with you be refreshed." Rom. 15:30, 32. Surely we who ministered were refreshed beyond measure by the consecrated lives and witness of our stalwart, faithful members.

And now there remains alone Poland's meetings to be held, and it is from Warsaw on the eve of these meetings that this report has been written. We anticipate blessing for us here as rich as any we have ever yet received, and we know we shall not be disappointed.

The Division

By Howard

West Africa



Members attending the
held at Skodsborg, Denmark

This Picture
on the Step of the Beautiful New Church

on Council

J. Welch

ion Mission



northern European Division
k from November 5th—12th.
e was taken
ch Building at the Skodsborg Sanitarium

IN THE BEAUTIFUL new church on the grounds of the Denomination's largest sanitarium at Skodsborg, Denmark, the delegates from all parts of the Northern European Division assembled for the Winter Council. Representatives were there from Greenland, Iceland, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Great Britain and West Africa. Poland too was represented for the first time since the war.

The General Conference was represented by Elder V. G. Anderson, one of the Vice-Presidents and by Elder C. L. Torrey, treasurer of the General Conference. These two men alternated in conducting the morning devotional services. These meetings were indeed inspiring and deeply spiritual.

The entire programme of the council had been well planned and the business moved along with dispatch and in a spirit of good fellowship. A number of important resolutions were passed. Some of these will be passed on to the West African Field by our own constituency meeting.

The election of Division departmental secretaries and Presidents and Secretary Treasurers of Mission Unions took place as this at a biennial session. Pastor Odd Jordal was elected Home Missionary and Temperance Secretary for the Division. He was formerly Home Missionary Secretary for the West Nordic Union. The present officers for the Missions were all re-elected to serve for the next two-year period.

The evening sessions were devoted to reports from the various Union Conferences and Missions comprising the Division. These were very encouraging as they showed that God is blessing his work. Throughout the field there are excellent gains in all departments and many souls are being baptized. It was especially interesting to hear the report of the Polish brethren since up to recently little was known of the Adventist work in Poland. It was good to hear that the church has freedom to worship and that they are again operating their training school.

Mrs. Welch and I were grateful for this opportunity to share in the council and to visit Denmark as we returned to West Africa from our furlough. We shall have many happy memories of our visit in Denmark. We found our Adventist believers there very strong and loyal. Many of them said, "Greet our brothers and sisters in West Africa." Pastor Lohne and Brother Hendrickson who have previously visited in Africa especially asked to have their greetings extended to friends here.

Stop!

There is Danger in Alcoholic Drinks

By Thomas A. K. Yatheh

Bo, Sierra Leone

IT MAY SURPRISE someone to hear this from the lips of an African, because our race has been already stamped as people behind the bottle. Yes, it may be partly true, but one can be sure that out of all, it is possible to find some faithful ones. For the sake of five that great City of Sodom might have been spared by God. It is probable that in every sphere of life, or community, there will be found a few trustworthy ones in whom God can work for the betterment of all. Africa can still be saved, if there are a few temperate souls through whom God can work. Bear this brief introduction in mind and read on!

Now let us examine the evils of alcohol basically. This article is for everybody to read, but I think that we as workers of the Seventh-day Adventists will acquire more from it morally and spiritually. Let us take our body as a whole, made of many organs working in systems. Each part of organ is doing its share in team work to enable our body as a whole to function properly. If one part, like the heart, stops pumping the blood, the other organs will automatically stop their functions.

In any large town in England or in this country all people appear much alike, but each is doing a special job for the good of the community. We have engineers who repair machines, water-men who work at the pumping station to supply every body with water, butchers, grocers, bakers, and fruit-growers who supply every body with food. In this way every one living in the town helps many people as well as himself.

One of the commonest and foremost poisons is *alcohol*. It paralyses the cells of the brain and stops the natural functions of the body. It makes the individual dull, lazy, wicked, and ungodly in some senses. If you have already tried it, my friends, leave it, or else it will make you mentally, physically and spiritually dull.

Pastors, Evangelists and Teachers, let us all take this advice, because we are all working to gain everlasting life, not machines

that can be mended when spoilt. Let us be sober and do our work well, in order that we may gain everlasting life. May God find us faithful in preaching against this great evil. St. Paul says in Romans 10:1, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable Service."

Missionary Volunteer Rally

In North Nigeria

By B. A. Roberts, President,
North Nigerian Mission

DOUBTS WERE EXPRESSED, questions raised. Could it be done? With so many companies scattered so widely out in the bush, would there be other than the local district present if an M.V. Rally were held? After careful consideration the M.V. Secretary for the mission, Mr. Felix Chima, was told to go ahead and lay definite plans for just such a rally.

A programme was outlined to start Friday evening, October 31, and to close the following Sunday by mid-day. A large booth was well prepared by energetic volunteers and local ministerial interns. How happy everyone was to see the booth well filled for that Friday evening M.V. meeting. Then disaster struck! Shortly before the closing song was to be sung the grass roof caught fire. Fortunately, no one was injured or burned in the rush to escape. But what to do to care for the people during the Sabbath services? Well trained Missionary Volunteers learn to cope with every situation. Before sunrise Sabbath morning the damage was carefully evaluated and repairs were started. Before long, willing hands from pastors to juniors had repaired the booth. True, it was not as nice as the first booth, but it gave shelter from the sun to those who came to worship God.

And did they come? Estimates ran from 1000 to 1,600 people. The chief of Jos, the chief of Jengre, and other local chiefs were present for the Sabbath School and church service, as well as moslems, Fulani men, and pagans who stopped by out of curiosity and stayed for the meetings. Sabbath afternoon saw another large crowd gathered to witness the largest investiture ever held in the Northern Region of Nigeria. Over 150 individuals were invested in the various classes.

A well planned entertainment was provided for the people on Saturday night, and was enjoyed by all in attendance.

The Sunday morning activities were climaxed by a march through the town of Jengre by the Missionary Volunteers, complete with banner, with drums and flutes emphasizing the tempo of the step. As the last prayer was offered, and the last picture taken, it was agreed by all, from the delegate from Kaduna to the farthest delegate from the bush, that this had been a wonderful week end.

Layman Succeeds

at Jkot Ntuen, Abak

By J. A. Enang, Evangelist
East Nigeria

IT WAS IN October, 1955 that Okon Jim Akpan returned from Lobe Estate in the British Cameroons. During that time we were holding our first Public Meetings at Calabar. I persuaded him to remain awhile with me and hear Pastor E. Hulbert's lectures. Hearing these lectures, he became interested in the message and then chose to stay if he could find some work to sustain himself and attend the lectures until the close. Luckily for him, Pastor Hulbert took him on as cook.

While serving his master, he was zealous in helping in the meetings, distributing handbills and preaching to his friends, too. He was baptized in 1956, became a trained layman, and Pastor Keslake issued him a Lay Men's Certificate.

When Pastor Hulbert left Calabar for his home in Scotland, Okon Jim was offered an employment elsewhere with a very attractive pay, but he refused and would rather take the message to his own people at his home.

At home he at once started preaching. He first spoke to his father who had been an elder of another church for a long time. His father seemed to believe the doctrine of tithing and took his first tithe to the preacher in his own church and no further. Okon's active compound-to-compound preaching stirred

many to serious thinking, thus resulting in six new converts, excluding children, who are now keeping the Sabbath with Okon. There has since then been a marked interest among others who had not yet taken their stand for Christ, but there is still hope.

With this news Okon greeted me when I returned from the training college. I spent the Sabbath that fell on December 14, 1957, with them. They rejoiced to see me as the first worker to them for there was no worker nearby to visit them.

Brethren and Sisters, the area is fertile to the gospel seed now because the Lord had prepared it properly through the ministry of this lay man.

May we now join them in their daily prayers for increase of souls amongst them!

*What we have done for ourselves alone,
dies with us; what we have done for others
and the world, remains and is immortal.*

News Notes

Carrolling in North Nigeria

✱ The Jos church, under the direction of the pastor, G. A. Dickay, decided to try something new to them, in the way of Ingathering. Carrolling, the singing of gospel songs by church members slowly walking down the street while other members go to the houses and solicit donations, had never been tried here.

Just about a week before the end of the month (when pockets are usually empty) the Jos church tried this new method of Ingathering. The result? Over nine pounds were collected. The people visited were enthusiastic about the singing. Some even said that this was the church to which they wanted to belong. And the church members were thrilled with the experience. The people went out in Faith, and God did not disappoint them.

The Advent Messenger

OFFICIAL ORGAN of the West African Union Mission of Seventh-day Adventists. P. O. Box 1016, Accra, Ghana.

Editor - - - - - Mrs. N. B. Nielsen.

Printed by The Advent Press



Happy New Year

*The merry bells ring out the old and ring the new year in;
This is the cheery season when the whole world feels akin.
It seems on New Year's morn'ing all mankind meets face to face,
And all men stand together as they start the new year's race.
Another annual record book God gives, each New Year's Day
The record for another year. What will the record say?
For ev'ry day a spotless page, O take punctilious pains,
To fill each day with deeds of love, and mar it not with stains.
And if the old year's record book is marred with any sin,
Let us seek God's forgiveness e'er the new year's ushered in.
Let's start the new year right, my friend, and keep it right, right through.
The royal way each happy day—do what you ought to do!*

New Year's Day

*Amidst the flare of fireworks and their boisterous bursting din
We usher out the old year as we see the new year in.
The spring winds warm the hearts of men, and new toasts add good cheer,
And every home awakes to hail the dawning of the year.
As sure as New Year's morning comes there's one thing all men do:
They tear their old year's mottoes down and paste their doors with new!*

By Adlai Albert Esteb