

WORLD

Mission Report

Go ye . . . into all the world.

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Young men of Central American Union College, being ordained as deacons and elders. A new men's dormitory will enable more young men to train for the ministry and other positions of church leadership.

INTER-AMERICAN DIVISION

PROJECTS:

- * Completion of the new hospital, Port-au-Prince, Haiti.
- * Construction of a new men's dormitory, Central American Union College, Costa Rica.



General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists



INTER-AMERICAN DIVISION

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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

CABLE "ADVENTIST" MIAMI

Dear Sabbath school members around the world:

Saludos From the Inter-American Division!

The Lord has marvelously blessed His work in Inter-America. In the last five years more than 210,000 new souls have been added to the church by baptism or profession of faith. The membership in the Division has soared to almost half a million members. This phenomenal growth has, of course, caused some problems—the need for more workers, more places of worship, more schools, more health facilities, et cetera.

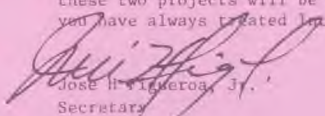
I can assure you that our workers and members are doing the utmost to face these tremendous needs. They are sacrificing in many ways to meet their portion of the church's needs at home and also in the world field.

During this quarter we will be looking to you again to assist us in two special projects which the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering Overflow will benefit:

1. *The completion of a hospital in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.* Haiti is a country of great possibilities, but also of many needs. For the last eight years, an out-patient clinic has served the Port-au-Prince area, taking care of 1,450 patients per month. With the help of the organization and a group of members called "Missions International" a new hospital was begun in 1975; however, they certainly need all the help they can receive to finish it. Your contributions to the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will help to achieve this goal.

2. *The construction of the men's dormitory at the Central American Union College.* Seven countries which in themselves form seven local fields, compose the Central American Union. From Guatemala and Belice in the north, to Panama in the south, these seven fields look to CADES, as the union college is known among them, for their workers and as the place of refuge for their youth. The present men's dormitory is quite old and inadequate for the needs of today. It is imperative that a new dormitory be built to accommodate the young men who are attending this institution to become workers. Your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for this quarter will also help to build this much needed men's dormitory at CADES.

We know that with the help of the Sabbath school members around the world these two projects will be a reality soon. For the liberality with which you have always treated Inter-America, again we say *MUCHAS, MUCHAS GRACIAS!*


José H. Figueroa, Jr.
Secretary

SABBATH, OCTOBER 1

This Is Inter-America

by B. L. Archbold

[President, Inter-American Division]

When Christopher Columbus landed in the New World he landed in the "Inter-American Division"! He wrote these prophetic words in his journal: "These lands are another world, where Christianity will have so much enjoyment, and our faith in time so great an increase." Though he spoke of his own faith, his words have certainly been fulfilled in the fantastic growth of the Inter-American Division. Adventism is on the move in Inter-America.

When you think of Inter-America you may see in your mind's eye a rotund little man asleep against a wall, a huge *sombrero* covering his face, and the word "mañana" ("tomorrow") written above his head. If that picture ever was true, it certainly is not true today. The word in Inter-America is NOW. Our division theme is: "In Inter-America, the most important thing is evangelism." Ask Elder Castro Majeda (Ma-hay-da), a district pastor in the South Mexico Conference who baptized 601 people in *one* year. Ask evangelist K. S. Wiggins, of the Caribbean Union, who has baptized an average of 700 people a year for the past five years. Ask evangelist José Osorio, of the Colombia-Venezuela Union, who baptized more than 1,000 people in *one* campaign in Colombia. Ask the church members in the city of San Pedro Sula, Honduras, where one

church was multiplied into ten in one year. Ask the administrators of the Mexican Union, one of the fastest growing unions in the world, where baptisms are averaging more than 1,000 per month.

From Mexico in the north, to Colombia in the south, and the chain of islands extending from the Bahamas off the coast of Florida to Trinidad, off the coast of Venezuela, the Inter-American Division covers 2.9 million square miles of desert, jungle, oceans, and mountains. One word describes Inter-America—colorful. Inter-America contains within its boundaries everything from tiny island nations to metropolitan provinces of France. Thirty-six nations, four major languages, and hundreds of dialects make up Inter-America's cosmopolitan population. An item of major importance in Inter-America is the establishment of the first Seventh-day Adventist university outside of North America, in Montemorelos, Mexico. The main school will be the School of Medicine, offering medical training within our own school system and in Inter-America.

Yes, Inter-America is on the move. And you can help next thirteenth Sabbath with two projects—a hospital in Haiti, and a men's dormitory for Central American Union College.

Adventist medical work on the island of Haiti has been growing, but is totally inadequate to handle the increasing demand by the island's population of 5.5 million, including 70,000 Seventh-day Adventists. Begun in 1960, the clinic originally was housed in a small building near the entrance of the Franco-Haitian Seminary on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince, the capital city of the is-

land republic. It was initially staffed by volunteer doctors and nurses, and local pharmaceutical firms contributed free samples of medicines to be given to patients who are unable to purchase regular prescriptions. Even though the clinic was open only afternoons, hundreds of patients were treated monthly.

Many people have become members of the church as a result of the work of the Adventist clinic. When a government-run clinic was closed for repairs, six of its employees were sent to work in the Adventist clinic. Before their short stay ended, three of them had been won to the church. A Mrs. Mary came to the clinic suffering acute abdominal pains. She had consulted several doctors without success, when a friend told her about the Adventist clinic. This friend had been a patient there herself and was enthusiastic. Mrs. Mary visited the clinic, arriving just in time for morning worship. After the worship service she was ushered into a consultation room, but before examining her the doctor offered an audible prayer for Divine guidance, and at the same time asked the Lord's blessing on Mrs. Mary. Her case was diagnosed, and the proper medicines were prescribed. Within a week she was well. Her husband and friends claimed her healing was nothing short of a miracle. In due course Mrs. Mary, her husband, and two friends were baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In the Inter-American Division the individual pastors win an average of 79 people to the church each year. These converts come from all walks of life, and they come in contact with the church in various ways.

For instance, two colporteurs encountered a woman in the foothill city of Coamo, on the southern coast of the island of Puerto Rico, who had once attended the Adventist academy in the Dominican Republic. She was currently studying with the Jehovah's Witnesses and declined the invitation to receive Bible studies, but she did purchase a number of books. The two colporteurs reported the visit to the local pastor, who, as it turned out, had also attended Dominican Adventist Academy.

The pastor, interested in the prospect of meeting a former schoolmate, called at the home of Mrs. Hance, the woman in question. After reminiscing about the academy, the pastor again attempted to interest Mrs. Hance in taking Bible studies, but without success. It occurred to him that she might enjoy seeing an old year-book from the academy, so on a subsequent visit he left a 1968 year-book with her.

Sometime later a letter arrived from Mrs. Hance requesting another visit by the pastor. The old academy yearbook had brought back many memories to Mrs. Hance. "This year-book," she remarked, "has caused me to remember so many of the things from the academy, especially the worship services, the MV meetings, and the prayer groups. I want to begin attending the Adventist church again." It seems the Lord uses even old school yearbooks to bring pastors into contact with candidates for baptism.

Today Mrs. Hance and two of her daughters are baptized Adventists and active members of the church in Puerto Rico.

During 1976 the East Puerto Rico

Conference distributed in one three-week period 300,000 copies of *El Centinela* magazine, and they followed up with Bible studies. They raised enough money to buy tents seating 200 people each for every district pastor, and launched aggressive evangelistic campaigns. Hundreds have been baptized as a result.

How I wish each one of you could have the thrill of seeing someone won to Christ in the Inter-American Division as a result of your personal witness. If this is not possible now, there is a way you can become partners with us this quarter. Your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for the Central American Union College men's dormitory will enable more trained ministers and other workers to preach the gospel.

SABBATH, OCTOBER 8

The Case of the Prohibited Book

by Calixto Acosta Arévalo

[Lay Bible worker, San Salvador, Central American Union]

Now that the situation had reached a crisis, Olivia had to decide what to do about her new-found faith. Looking over the books her father had sent her out to burn, she suddenly discovered on the top of the pile the Protestant Bible she had been secretly reading. It had belonged to her Catholic grandmother, a member of a prominent family that included Mon-

señor Ravelo (Mon-say-nyor Ra-va'lo), bishop of Santa Ana, her hometown.

She had begun to read her grandmother's Bible secretly because she knew that her venerable old father, a secretary to the Archbishop of San Salvador, kept a watchful eye on her. Even though she was a fervent Catholic, her sincerity drove her to seek Biblical truth. At that time she was the secretary of both the Santa Marta and San Antonio Catholic Associations.

Now Olivia had to decide. Despite the pressure put on her by her friends and family against her new-found faith, she finally made her decision to accept Christ and to be baptized.

Some years before, Isolina (Esollee-na), her sister, had found the same Bible carefully secreted in a square basket. She had hurriedly begun to read it until her grandmother surprised her in the act. "Don't read that book," her grandmother had admonished her, saying: "That is a prohibited book."

Time had passed, but the puzzle remained. What was in that book?

Manuel, Isolina's husband, was not only completely indifferent to religion but he was very much addicted to alcohol. For more than 23 years he had found only bitterness in the bottle. In his search for help he had studied with Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Baptists, and even with the Rosicrucians, all in vain.

It was during this period that an Adventist member, Sister Cristales (Crees-ta-les), met Manuel (Manoo-el). She had been visiting the neighborhood in her missionary endeavors when she came to the home of Manuel and Isolina. She invited them

to begin studying the Bible with her. As a good Catholic, Isolina's first reaction was definitely negative. Later she began to have second thoughts when she saw the change that Manuel had experienced. Although she felt ashamed of her husband's decision to study the Bible, she accepted the fact that he needed more than prayers to help him stop drinking. However, her family was not willing to approve this decision.

One night Isolina had a dream in which she saw three angels taking the hand of an unknown preacher while a woman with all the appearances of an authentic saint sank into the water. In the dream Isolina saw that the woman was a fake, but that the preacher had the truth. Some time later she accepted her husband's invitation to visit the Adventist church in Usulután, where they lived. Imagine her surprise when she saw there the preacher of her dream.

Now Isolina became interested in the Adventist Church and began to study the Bible correspondence course lessons and to compare them with the Bible and with the book, *The Great Controversy*, which she had recently acquired. A great inner struggle took place, but slowly light began to dawn in the darkness of her doubts. Her husband was baptized on September 28, 1963, but she did not make her decision until April, 1965. That was when she began to pray for the conversion of her family.

Although her youngest daughter was baptized shortly afterward, the other four children showed no intention of becoming "heretics," as they expressed it.

Sonia, her eldest daughter, refused her invitations time after time and

was completely indifferent to all reference to abandoning the faith of her grandparents. All of Isolina's efforts served only to strengthen Sonia's resolution. The magazines, *El Centinela*, that her mother sent her served to cover the seats of her boyfriend's car, even though she did appreciate the pictures and the recipes. Sonia questioned the conversion of her cousin Lupita (Loo-pee-ta) and her brother Carlos, who, though not yet baptized, showed great love for their new faith, and she continued to resist "brainwashing," as she called it.

Years passed before she accepted her cousin Lupita's invitation to study the Bible on Sabbath afternoons. First she said that she would study only after watching the soap opera on channel 4 at three o'clock. Then she began an interminable series of questions, observations, and criticisms. But finally the wall began to crumble.

Three years later, when she was baptized in a simple ceremony in the church, her old opposition was not only something of the past but it was also forgotten. "I have already asked God's pardon for that," she said when reminded of the torn *El Centinela* magazines. By then she had become an active missionary.

Meanwhile, God had intervened in the lives of Isolina's other brothers and sisters. Benjamin, who was a born artist, was surprised one day to see one of his paintings of a saint being carried in a procession through the city. This lowered his respect for the saints and may have influenced his final decision to accept the Advent message. He was later baptized and became a top-rank literature evangelist, winning first place a number of

times in the sale of Adventist books.

Alfredo, Isolina's eldest brother, who was also a great drinker, mostly interested in making money, came into the church as the result of a missionary letter sent by the district pastor on behalf of Isolina.

Isolina's father, however, never accepted the message. On his deathbed, having called his ten sons and daughters together, he assured them that he would die with his crucifix and his Catholic faith. But since religion was a personal matter, he told them that those who wanted to follow Isolina's religion were free to do so. For Lolita, the other sister, this was a complete surprise, since she had long tried to become an Adventist in spite of her family's opposition. A few months later she too was baptized.

Manuel and Isolina are now happy grandparents with eleven grandchildren, who are growing up in the church. But their untiring efforts did not stop with the conversion of their own family. At least 40 individuals have been baptized as a result of their zeal and patient witness—a continued story of soul winning that began by reading a prohibited book.

El Salvador, like the rest of Central America, is a country of gradual expansion, where the needs multiply with the growing population. Thousands of souls long to know the way of truth. Where there is one church, we need twenty; where there is one preacher, we need fifty. All correct means are used to carry out the work among the 16 million inhabitants of Central America. May the Lord help you direct your attention and generous offerings to this region as you heed the cry: "Come over into Central America and help us!"

SABBATH, OCTOBER 15

A Night of Terror in Don Juan's Hotel

by Albino Ixcot Ordóñez

[Sabbath School and lay activities director,
Guatemala Mission, Guatemala]

Santiago was tired. He'd been working hard all day knocking on doors and selling books to those who opened their homes to him. In addition to his regular work, Santiago, an associate in the publishing department, was training two new colporteurs, Consuelo (Con-soo-ā lo) and Maria Luisa, girls who hoped to earn college scholarships by selling Adventist literature.

The three literature evangelists quit work late the afternoon of February 3 and went to get rooms in the only hotel in the small town of Comalapa (Coma-la-pa). They were working in the highlands of Guatemala, an area where the farmers and craftsmen are descendants of the ancient Maya Indians, a few Mestizos, and very few Europeans.

Life is simple in Comalapa, a town of adobe brick houses with tile roofs of burnt clay. The villagers work in their fields, weave at their looms, and form graceful pottery pieces for the kiln. Since they are in the cold highlands, the people go to bed quite early. The colporteurs staying in Don Juan's Hotel followed the local custom and went to bed early to keep warm.

Hours before dawn, Comalapa woke up suddenly. Since the highlands area is volcanic and has nu-

merous earthquakes, an earthquake was not too unusual, but this one was like nothing in the past. Men shouted orders, and women quickly awakened their tired children.

The earthquake intensified in force. Men, women, and children began streaming out of their houses onto the streets, but the waves of the quake knocked them off their feet.

Santiago barely managed to open the door of his hotel room. It seemed as if the earth were running away from under his feet, but he struggled from the second floor to the first. Just then he remembered Consuelo and Maria Luisa, who had been sleeping in the room next to his. They were under his care! He headed back up the swaying stairway, staggered back to the door of their room, and began calling loudly for them to wake up and come out.

Consuelo and Maria Luisa had been awakened by the first movement of the quake, but they could not find their room key and make their escape. Electric power had been cut off by the initial quake, so they were feeling around the strange hotel room in total darkness. Their fumbling fingers just could not find that key. They were locked in the hotel room—and the earthquake continued!

The quake was caused by the Motagua (Mo-ta'gwa) fault, and the epicenter of the earthquake was only 124 miles (200 kilometers) from Comalapa. As the longitudinal and vertical waves met with maximum force, Don Juan's Hotel vibrated like a train running off its tracks. Although Comalapa's residents were unaware of it at the time, the magnitude of the quake went up to 7.5 on the Richter scale, which is the energy release

equivalent to 30,000 atomic bombs.

What the residents *were* aware of was the total horror and confusion of the scene. People ran from one side of the street to the other—and then back again. The injured were screaming and crying. Parts of the hotel roof fell into the street, raising a new cloud of dust in the already powdery sky.

One minute of anguish passed. Finally the earth became quiet, as if some mighty vehicle had passed by in great jerks and finally ground to a stop. It was 3:04 A.M., February 4, 1976.

When the earth finally quit shuddering Consuelo and Maria found their key. Santiago met them in the hallway, and they decided to get out onto the street as fast as possible. That plan was impossible—every exit was blocked.

When the three young Adventists were finally able to fight their way onto the street they found the most terrifying sight of their lives. The town of Comalapa had been totally destroyed. The streets were heaps of rubble from buildings that had collapsed. The only building in the whole town still standing was Don Juan's Hotel—the very place where they had been locked up.

It didn't take the three long to realize that the lost key had very likely saved them from death, because they were surrounded by the dead and dying who were maimed or killed in the falling rubble. With tears in their eyes, they thanked God for His protecting hand.

After that impromptu praise service, Santiago, Consuelo, and Maria Luisa began to help in rescue operations. They were surrounded by cries, sobs of injured and frightened chil-

dren; screams of mothers trying to locate lost children; pleadings of husbands needing help to unearth their families, and the howls of dogs.

In addition to being in a shambles physically, Comalapa was in psychological disarray. No one could agree on what should be done next. People wandered around in a daze.

Although it seemed as if dawn would never come that terrible fourth of February, when the sun peeked over the mountains the sight was worse than anyone had imagined. It was as if some great giant had placed his boots on top of Comalapa. Of the 18,000 inhabitants, more than 3,000 were dead, and 5,000 more were injured.

Comalapa was not the only city destroyed. More than 100 cities and towns in Guatemala were either partially or totally destroyed by the earthquake. Throughout the country death totals reached more than 25,000, with nearly 100,000 wounded. Yet out of this tragic number only five Seventh-day Adventists perished.

What happened to the three literature evangelists who spent a night of terror in Comalapa? Consuelo Alvarado and Maria Luisa Morales are now studying in the Central American Union College preparing to serve the Lord more effectively. Santiago Ixcot (Ex-cot) is finishing the teacher-training course at the college and will soon join the corp of teachers in the scores of schools in the Guatemala Mission. Consuelo, Maria Luisa, and Santiago lived through their night of terror, but they want to help others in Guatemala prepare for and even blacker night that will climax in a boundless tomorrow.

SABBATH, OCTOBER 22

A Witness Wherever She Went

by Mrs. Ralluahi Chhange

[Teacher, Adventist Training School, Meghalaya State, India]

(Note.—You will not find India on the map depicting the field that will receive our offering overflow this quarter, but we must not let 14 Sabbaths pass by without hearing about the work of God in other parts of the world other than the Inter-American Division, to which we shall direct our offering overflow.)

The Adventist Training School (formerly Assam Training School) is a boarding school situated in the hilly country of Northeastern India. Only a narrow piece of land connects the territory of this Northeast India Section (conference) with the rest of India. Otherwise its borders are contiguous with Bhutan, Tibet, China, Burma, and Bangladesh. The students attending this Adventist training school speak many different languages and dialects. Many of the customs, dress, and ways of life of these mountain people are different from those of the plains people of India. The people from one area of the section may be as distinctly different from their neighbors, only a mountain range away, as they are from the peoples of the plains of India. One group is said to resemble some of the red Indians of America, while another would fit in beautifully with the Polynesians of Hawaii.

The traditional religion of the hill people is animism. In times past many a sacrifice was offered to the devil to appease his wrath. At times

human sacrifices were offered. Many of the old customs and beliefs are still held where animism continues as the way of life.

In addition to its role as an educational institution, the Adventist Training School is an evangelistic center. Each year a number of non-Adventist Christians, as well as non-Christian young people, become Seventh-day Adventists. About 90 per cent of the workers in Northeast India Section are former students of the Adventist Training School.

When her husband went to Spicer Memorial College, Mrs. C. Saikhuma moved near the Adventist Training School so her children could attend an Adventist high school. Spicer Memorial College is more than 1,000 miles from the Adventist Training School. Though lonesome for her husband and far from her own people, she was a positive Christian witness wherever she went.

During the time Mrs. Saikhuma lived near the high school she suffered from hypertension and was admitted for a brief period in a hospital about four miles from the school. There she became acquainted with a fellow patient suffering from tuberculosis. Mr. Renga proved to be a religious-minded man. Mrs. Saikhuma welcomed this opportunity to share her faith. They had many discussions on religion. The Adventist beliefs interested Mr. Renga greatly, and he asked for Bible studies.

When Pastor Saikhuma returned home from college for the vacation period he gave a number of Bible studies to Mr. Renga. When her husband returned to Spicer Memorial College, Mrs. Saikhuma arranged for some of the students from the Ad-

ventist Training School to assist her in giving Mr. Renga Bible studies, since Mrs. Saikhuma did not have a formal education. Mr. Renga was particularly interested in the Sabbath and the second coming of Christ.

Mr. Renga's response to the treatment in the hospital was poor, and his condition worsened. That he was not improving was not the greatest shock he was to get, however. Mr. Renga had a wife and one child whom he dearly loved. When it became apparent to Mrs. Renga that her husband would not recover she left him, to live with another man. He could not understand how the one he loved the most could desert him when his need was greatest. Instead of becoming bitter over his personal loss he found the love of God becoming dearer than ever before.

Mr. Renga wrote to his father about his new-found faith and told him of his decision to join the Adventist Church. Instead of rejoicing, as Mr. Renga had hoped, his father became very angry. Thinking that a threatening letter might cause his son to change his mind, the father told his son that if he became an Adventist he would be disinherited and that he should never expect to see his father again. In spite of this, Mr. Renga joined the church, knowing that, although his earthly father had disowned him, he was now a child of the heavenly King. He still continued to write to his father about his beliefs, occasionally including some tracts in his letters.

Brother Renga's physical condition continued to deteriorate. He realized that death was near. On Mrs. Saikhuma's next visit he said, "I feel that I am not going to recover from this

illness. I do not have many more days to live. When I die I would like to be buried in the cemetery at the Adventist Training School."

One rainy day in July the hospital telephoned the school and informed the principal that Brother Renga had passed away during the night. In one last act of love and respect to a man who loved his Lord more than all else, the whole school family joined in laying Brother Renga to rest. The boys dug the grave; the men made the coffin, and the girls made wreaths of orchids and other locally grown flowers. When all was in readiness Brother Renga's body was brought to the school, where a sad but loving service was held in the chapel. He was laid to rest in a grave on a pine-covered knoll. He lies there awaiting the resurrection morning.

There is another chapter to the story. A few months later, Mrs. Saikuma returned to the hospital for a check-up. As before, she spent some time witnessing to any who would listen. To her surprise she discovered that one of the seriously ill patients was Brother Renga's father. In visiting with him she found that after his son's death he had done some very serious thinking. He had heard what the school family had done for his son's funeral. He had learned how much his son loved the Advent message. Could it be, he wondered, that his son was right? He read the tracts his son had sent him and compared them with the Bible. He found that the beliefs of the Adventists were in harmony with the Bible. He realized that he had been blinded to truth by just one thing—his desire to be loyal to his mother's church.

His own problems were diagnosed as an advanced form of stomach cancer. Little could be done for him. He requested a special visit from the teachers of our school, so on a Sabbath evening several teachers, with the principal, visited him. They gathered around his bed, and on hearing his wish the principal asked him some questions to enable him publicly to seal his testimony. "Do you believe in the three angels' messages? Do you believe in the second coming of Christ? Do you accept Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour?"

To every question Brother Renga's father nodded in the affirmative. Even though he was too weak to say very much, his face told of a peace that was truly his. He was a changed man. A prayer of commitment was offered.

A few days later Brother Renga's father was taken the 150 miles back to his village. After several more weeks of suffering, he passed away looking forward to the time when he will be able to surprise his son with the good news that he too had found the peace that comes with a complete surrender to God.

SABBATH, OCTOBER 29

Sandra's Long Journey From Cashier to Colporteur

by Mrs. Teresa de Casañas

[Dean of women, Central American Union College, Alajuela (Ala-whay'la), Costa Rica]

Sandra grew up in a humble Guatemalan home. One day her usually routine life was shattered by a letter from the United States—her aunt wanted Sandra to come and live with her!

There were so many things to be taken care of—passport, visa, ticket, packing—that Sandra's days were jam-packed with activity. Soon it was time to bid her family good-by and begin her long journey to the United States.

Life became more harried for Sandra in the big city. Everybody was in such a hurry in America! Cars zipped up wide streets, people bustled down crowded sidewalks, and everybody watched the clock, waiting for time to hurry by.

Soon Sandra found a job as a cashier in a supermarket. She did her work thoroughly and well, and the owner became fond of the dark-haired girl from Central America. She could be trusted with responsibility, he noted.

One day a colporteur came to the supermarket and requested permission to place an advertisement for *The Bible Story* in the store. Sandra was one of the first people to pick up the sample book and the referral card. She tucked the card away with her books, then finally decided to go ahead and mail it in.

A few days later the colporteur returned, canvassed Sandra, and sold her a set of books. She was interested in his work, and in the course of the conversation he told her that he was a Seventh-day Adventist. Sandra in turn told him that she was a Baptist, and then began telling the colporteur what she knew about the Bible.

Soon they were into a discussion about the proper day of worship.

Sandra tried to convince her new acquaintance that he was keeping the wrong day. The young colporteur let Sandra express all her ideas, but when she had finished talking he gently said, "Now I want you to listen to me."

He began explaining things from the Bible that she had never heard before! And he showed her texts that proved he was not just making up his own theories. Sandra listened. And wondered. Why did the Baptist Church worship on Sunday when the Bible so clearly teaches that the seventh day is the Sabbath?

The next day Sandra went straight to her pastor and told him what she was learning. He tried to reassure her: "Sandra, the Sabbath was abolished by Jesus, so you don't need to worry about keeping the seventh day. Only remember that Christ has saved you; that's the really important thing, anyway. And you should stop talking with this Adventist fellow. He'll fill your head with foolish ideas," he concluded.

But when the colporteur came back for the rest of the money, Sandra was waiting for him with many questions. Slowly God was revealing truth to her, and she was accepting it. The Sabbath was a real test for Sandra. The owner of the supermarket couldn't let her have Sabbath off, because it was his busiest day of the week. Although he really appreciated her work, she must continue working on Saturdays or he would have to let her go.

Sandra was torn between loyalty to her boss and a growing loyalty to God. Just at this time she received a letter from her father in Guatemala telling her that he needed a certain amount

of money. The owner of the supermarket offered to raise her salary to \$100 a week if she stayed on the job—including Saturdays.

The temptation was great. Sandra felt a responsibility to her earthly father, yet she now believed her heavenly Father expected her to be faithful to Him above all others. She finally decided to keep the Sabbath holy—and trust in God's promises despite the consequences. It was another step in Sandra's long journey.

Within a few days the Lord blessed Sandra with a job with a good salary. She was also given the opportunity to colporteur herself, which she began right after she was baptized.

Although her job situation was settled, Sandra began having problems at home. Her aunt didn't like this new religion, and finally Sandra had to move out of the house that had been so much like home to her.

But she was not abandoned. An Adventist family opened their home—and their hearts—to her, and she lived with them for the next two years as she continued to canvass.

One day a group of young people from the Carol City church, to which Sandra belonged, decided to go to Central American Union College to study. How she longed to join them and prepare herself to work more efficiently in God's church! But how could she afford it? Again she felt trapped, because her visa was soon to expire and she would have to leave the United States. Where would she next stop? But she knew the Lord was leading now in her life's journey.

A gift of \$100 from the Adventists with whom she was living gave her the answer she needed. Tears washed her cheeks as she prayed, "Thank

You, Lord, thank You for being so good to me."

Sandra returned to her homeland and continued colporteur, hoping to earn enough money to enroll in college. She had made contact with a priest who was interested in the medical encyclopedia and all of *The Bible Story* series. Sandra hoped for a large sale that would help with her entrance fee.

The Guatemala earthquake of February, 1976, shattered her hopes in that direction, but a few days later she called on the priest again anyway. He told her that he had given everything he could to help the needy people left homeless in the wake of the disaster. But he asked, "Didn't you tell me that you wanted the money for your studies? Let me see how much money I have."

He came back with \$50. It was the exact amount she needed to enroll in college.

Sandra is studying in the college today, preparing to be a Bible worker, thanks to the generosity of a brother in the United States. She is also working as a secretary to help her school fees.

Part of our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will go to Central American Union College. In this way we can participate in educating students like Sandra—students who are eager to complete their schooling so they can be more effective workers for the Lord.

**"Thrust in your sharpened sickle,
And gather in the grain; . . .
The Master calls for reapers,
And shall He call in vain?"**

SABBATH, NOVEMBER 5

Lighting Peru With Torchlight Evangelism

by Luis Alaña Barrezueta

[President, Panama Conference, Balboa, Canal Zone]

The lay evangelism course was over. Young people in the Porvenir (Por-ve-near) church in Lima, Peru, had been trained in personal witnessing techniques. Now they needed a project to challenge their newly improved talents.

"What method should we try now?" asked Robert, president of the Adventist Youth Federation. "How can we best capture the attention of the people of our city?"

"Let's go out on a Friday night—two by two—and meet the people in their homes," suggested Judith. "Each couple will take their own Bibles, as well as gift Bibles and sets of lessons. To symbolize the spiritual light they are bringing, each two will carry a lighted torch."

The young Adventists liked Judith's suggestion, and the rest of the evening was spent discussing details of the plan. "Let's go to the city authorities right away and get their permission. We wouldn't want anyone to get in trouble for carrying a torch or visiting homes," someone added.

The next week representatives visited the chief of police. They explained their plan to him, telling him that on the specified Friday night they wanted to visit 1,000 homes near the Seventh-day Adventist church.

Their primary objective, they emphasized, was to help the government in their program of spiritual and moral betterment for homes. This would be accomplished by leaving a free Bible and Bible lessons for those families who were interested in studying.

The chief of police, who was also an army officer, was impressed that the Adventist young people were different from many other youth. Although he could not understand what made them so appealing and clean-cut, he decided that as a gesture of friendship he would personally sign up for the Bible Speaks course they were giving away. In addition, he offered to send 50 policemen from his personal contingent to give not only protection but also his official approval to their program.

When the long-awaited Friday night arrived, the Adventist army was ready. Two hundred torches were ready to be lit; two hundred couples were ready with their own Bibles and sets of lessons. From the church the group fanned out into the darkness of the night, their torches bobbing along the city streets and alleys.

As they met people on the streets and buses the young Adventists attracted a lot of attention. People wanted to know what they were doing. Seeing the personal bodyguards of the chief of police reassured questioners that the government approved the project.

But the most important aspect of the evening's activities was knocking on doors. A typical conversation began like this: "Good evening. Do you see this torch? It's a physical symbol of the spiritual torch that we would like to leave in your home tonight. Wouldn't you like your home to

be lighted with brightness and warmth?" More than the 1,000 homes they had been aiming for opened their doors—and many of the householders opened their hearts to the warmth of Jesus' love.

A happy group of young people gathered at the entrance of their church at ten o'clock. Amid the excitement was a unified spirit of praise. The venture had been a complete triumph for the Lord. Climaxing the evening was a testimony meeting punctuated with sounds of "Amen" and "Thank the Lord." Individuals shared their own feelings and experiences.

A teacher from the church's primary school confessed that it was his first missionary experience for six years, but he had thoroughly enjoyed this type of witnessing. A young woman told of arriving at a home and being greeted by a sophisticated woman who looked a great deal like herself. They stared at each other for a long moment, then fell into each other's arms. They were sisters, who had been separated by circumstances. For 15 years they had been completely out of contact with each other. The sophisticated sister, it turned out, was now a dentist. She found her blood sister that night—and eventually a spiritual sister, as well.

A third group told of a woman who invited them to come into her home. When they urged her to accept the Bible course she immediately accepted. With tears in her eyes she asked whether they would leave all the lessons that night, explaining that she would like to finish them as soon as possible. She had recently visited her doctor, who told her that she would lose her vision soon, so she

wanted to study the Scriptures before she was completely blind.

The testimonies continued—and so did the contacts first made that Friday night. As a direct result of that one evening, nearly a hundred persons accepted Christ and were baptized.

Bibles, lessons, and friendly young people knocking on doors. What an impact they made on that city! What a powerful light 200 flickering torches generated!

We may not be able to carry lighted torches around our community, but stop and think for a moment. In what ways am I letting my own light shine? Am I doing anything to help dispel the darkness that surrounds so many? Can I do more to reach the families in my own neighborhood?

SABBATH, NOVEMBER 12

How Big Are Your Dreams?

by Arturo Weisheim

[Lay activities and Sabbath School director, Colombia-Venezuela Union, Medellin, Colombia]

Puerto Tejada (Poo-erto Ta-ha'da) is a typical small town in the southwestern part of Colombia. Between the central and western mountain ranges, the city of 20,000 inhabitants is in a region bathed by the waters of two rivers. Along the banks are banana plantations and sugar-cane fields. The climate is ideal for

agriculture, and larger cities nearby depend upon the products grown in the region.

But the area is good for nurturing things other than bananas and sugar cane. The church in Puerto Tejada is known as a seedbed for lay preachers, consecrated laymen who carry on their missionary activities despite the hot climate.

Into this type of region and this type of church was born Marcos Terremos (Teh-re-ros), one of five children. Although he grew up in an Adventist family and heard his parents speak about and worship the true God, he had not made his decision to be baptized, as is usually expected in a Christian home. Since Marcos' family didn't seem to be doing anything specific to help their teen-ager, Necesimo Rodriguez (Ne-se-see-mo Ro-dree-kez), a layman, began to work with him.

Gradually Necesimo labored with Marcos, encouraging him to develop a personal relationship with Christ. And he kept praying for Marcos, too, both with his friend and privately. When he was 19, Marcos made his decision to join permanently with the Adventist family, and he was baptized in 1972.

As so often happens when young people become Seventh-day Adventists, Marcos suddenly felt that he did not have enough education to work most effectively for the Lord. He had taken his elementary education in his home town, and then had completed a teacher-training course in a larger city nearby. But Marcos now dreamed about going to our union college and studying for the ministry.

Where would financial support come from? Right at this time Marcos

learned about a temperance contest that was being advertised in all the churches. First prize in the contest would be a college scholarship for the next year. Marcos began dreaming.

"Perhaps this is a special opportunity the Lord is giving me," he said to himself. "I must try to do my very best, and then let the Lord's will be done."

Marcos prepared his speech thoroughly. Then he memorized it. He practiced diligently. And he prayed that the Lord would direct the outcome of the contest. When the day of the contest came Marcos competed against young people from seven local fields—and came out the winner! He won a scholarship to study at Colombia-Venezuela Union College, our senior college in Medellín, Colombia.

Naturally, Marcos was excited about winning the contest, but the Lord was not finished blessing his efforts. Someone who heard Marcos speak that night was impressed to give him additional financial help in beginning his college education. His dream was beginning to take shape!

Marcos began his theological training in 1974. What a happy school year he had. He was successful not only in his studies but also in his own spiritual life. His association with other theology students helped him grow personally. Life was rich and good, and he rejoiced in the Lord.

When summer came Marcos joined the scores of summer colporteurs and began working toward a college scholarship. Again he was successful. After his second year at the school he sold so many books that he earned four scholarships! Part of the money he earned that vacation went to his local church for much-needed repairs.

For Marcos colporteur was more than making money. With the help of his companion he won five persons to the love of Christ. It was a good background for his chosen career in the ministry.

When this story was prepared many months ago Marcos was into his last year of theology. While studying he was also working as a reader in the theology department. In that capacity he earned the love and respect of not only his classmates but also his teachers. With what he earns during the school year he is helping two of his friends finance their education, in spite of his own personal wants and desires. And each Sabbath he participates in the worldwide mission offering.

As you listen to this story today Marcos will doubtless have finished his ministerial training and will be in charge of a church. A few years ago he dared to dream a dream that seemed impossible, but with a lot of hard work—and the blessing of God—it's all coming true.

How big are your dreams? If you feel hemmed in and stuck, take a lesson from Marcos. Your dreams, with the Lord's help, *can* come true!

"Thoughtless Christians manifest by their neglect of others that they are not in union with Christ. It is impossible to be in union with Christ and yet be unkind to others and forgetful of their rights. . . . Our lives should be consecrated to the good and happiness of others, as was our Saviour's."—Testimonies, vol. 3, p. 539.

SABBATH, NOVEMBER 19

Behind Prison Walls

by R. H. Henning

[Associate director, Publishing Department, General Conference. Formerly publishing director, Afro-Mideast Division]

(Note.—Today we have a story from East Africa, which will keep us in touch with the progress of the message in parts of the world other than the field that will benefit from the overflow this quarter.)

Mrs. Nyagabona (Knee-yá ga-bona) is the wife of the publishing director of the South Nyanza Field in Tanzania. She is the mother of ten children, four of whom are still at home. In addition to her duties as a wife and mother, she is not too busy to work as a literature evangelist. Day after day she can be seen leaving her home with a brief case, containing truth-filled magazines and books, in her hand. Mrs. Nyagabona seems to possess the secret of salesmanship, and she must use it mightily, for she is a very successful literature evangelist.

One month each year the unions in East Africa challenge their literature evangelists to achieve the highest sales. This month is called BIG MONTH. It helps the literature evangelists test their abilities, explore their potential, and at the same time see what can be accomplished in the field, thus broadening their vision. August is always set aside as BIG MONTH in the Tanzania Union. Mrs. Nyagabona didn't know it, but a most unusual experience was awaiting her as she set out to make her contribution to BIG MONTH.

The manager of a cooperative, a former Seventh-day Adventist, had been sentenced to imprisonment. The solitude of the prison cell caused him to go back several years in his memory. He thought of the unselfish love of Christ, how He had lived and died on earth to save undeserving man. He observed the dull, hopeless existence of his cell mates and saw how desperate life is without Christ. Without Christ how futile are human efforts! But could he work for Christ? Among those in prison were some who had at one time had much of this world's goods. Now, without the things that money could buy, life was one miserable day after another. The more he thought about what he could do for Christ and for those around him, the more he felt the desire to read some of the books he had been too busy to read before. He felt the need to become better acquainted with Christ so he could share his knowledge of a better way with those around him.

That day his father came to the prison to visit him. He asked his father to find a Seventh-day Adventist literature evangelist so that he could get some inspirational books. Shortly after this the father met Mrs. Nyagabona and requested that she bring some books for his son. Mrs. Nyagabona immediately went home and packed her brief case with ten volumes of *The Bible Story*, *The Great Controversy*, *God's Answers*, *Your Bible and You*, *God Speaks to Modern Man*, *The Desire of Ages*, *Modern Ways to Health*, *Free at Last*, and several others. She brought these to the man. The total sales amounted to more than \$210 (1,500 sh.). He was overjoyed as he took the books to his son. What an outstanding experience!

The son received the books in prison and determined to witness for Christ. He did not leave the printed pages idle. He vigorously used the material to preach to his fellow prisoners. Recently one of the prisoners was released. In his heart burned the new-found faith he learned behind prison bars. Today he is a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

We do not know as yet what the final results are, but we know that the seeds were sown in many hearts.

A flame can be kindled wherever there is the necessary equipment. Our literature evangelists are on fire as they go about seeking to present the truth-filled pages to the homes.

Sister White commissions that our publications should go everywhere. The Africa Herald Publishing House supplies the literature evangelists in East Africa with books, and in keeping with the slogan on the building wall, "Books for the Heart of Africa" they supply other countries in Africa, as well. We have been asleep, as it were, regarding the work that may be accomplished by the circulation of well-prepared literature. With the wise use of periodicals and books, the word can be preached with determined efforts, and the world will understand the message that Christ gave to John on the Isle of Patmos.

There are countless numbers just waiting to receive God's message. These could be reached if only there were more books available. Many of our publishing houses around the world work with outdated equipment. What would happen if they would be put into a position to produce efficiently and could blanket the world with truth-filled literature?

From the pen of inspiration we know that "more than one thousand will soon be converted in one day, most of whom will trace their first convictions to the reading of our publications."—*Colporteur Ministry*, page 151.

You can help spread the gospel by giving a generous Thirteenth Sabbath Offering, thereby increasing the band of believers that will proclaim, "The end of all things is at hand," "prepare to meet thy God."

SABBATH, NOVEMBER 26

Shoot-Out at the Academy Gate!

by Robert S. Folkenberg

[President, Central American Union, Guatemala]

"The Adventist school has plenty of land," shouted Don Raguel Alvarado (Ra-gwell Al-va-ra-do) to his hastily gathered band of ne'er-do-wells. "Why should they have it and not us?"

The battle was joined, and it went on for years. Don Raguel, the village strong man, demanded land from the school in Peña Blanca, Honduras, promising it to the poor. He tried legal maneuvering, threats of armed attack, village meetings augmented by imported, noisy mobs—all ventures designed to intimidate the academy family and steal the land. The school, however, held on to its

property; and Don Raguel, in spite of his rhetoric, was not really interested in the poor but in his own financial gain at the expense of the school.

The Lord has a way of protecting His own, and Don Raguel always failed. Early in 1974 he thought he saw a new way of getting the land he wanted. A recent agrarian reform law seemed to give him a legal foothold. More lawsuits and confrontations! On one occasion he induced the county manager to subpoena the Adventist leaders, but the meeting ended with Don Raguel arguing heatedly with the county manager himself, while the Adventist leaders quietly left, the school property still intact.

Frustrated again, Don Raguel decided to attain through foul play what he could not legally obtain by fair means. Again, using the promise of free land, he incited some of the townspeople with the idea of invading the school itself and taking the land by force. Excited at the prospects, a secret meeting was held by Don Raguel and a group of neighbors. Three Honduran teachers who had been the school's spokesmen were marked for death, and the date was set for the attack. The school personnel had no forewarning of the impending crisis.

On a cool October afternoon, Don Raguel stepped out of his car near the academy gate, and across the road spotted the son of a mortal enemy, Cantalicio (Con-ta-lee-see-o) Paz. Don Raguel apparently went berserk at the sight of the young man. He whipped out his pistol and began shooting at young Cantalicio. Realizing the attempt being made on his life, Cantalicio reached into his truck and grabbed the rifle he always kept there. Just as he was aiming at Don

Raguel, he was hit in the leg by a bullet from Raguel's pistol and at the same time his own rifle misfired! Wounded, Cantalicio stumbled around to the back of the truck for protection and exchanged the rifle for a pistol which he also kept in the truck. He shot once, and then four more times, killing Don Raguel on the spot. Thus ended tragically a drama that had seethed around our academy for many years.

Don Raguel was killed the day before the invasion was to take place! The list of the teachers to be executed was discovered in his pocket. Just as in the days of Gideon, God had provided a victory for His people.

The Lord protects His schools because they are havens of refuge for students from all over Central America.

Some of the students who come to Central American Union College have not had the benefit of Christian education in the early grades. Francisco caused more than his share of problems when he first entered the college. Because he was unaccustomed to an Adventist environment, old habits predominated, which conflicted with the school's behavior code. His continued presence in the institution was being debated, and the college president was surprised when Francisco knocked on his office door and announced, "Pastor, I have decided to be baptized. I want to do something worthwhile with my life." Francisco was baptized and remains a convincing evidence of the transforming power of the Spirit of God in human lives. But the story does not end there. The school year ended, and Francisco returned home. Some feared that he would not remain

faithful once he was in his old environment, but about halfway through the vacation a letter came to the president's office. It was written by a woman who apparently lived in Francisco's home town, had known him before, and was surprised at the changes she had seen in this young man. "Dear Sir," she wrote, "I have a son whom I would like to send to your school." And after giving certain information in regard to the boy, she continued, "I would like to have my son be like Francisco. If that college can do what it has done to change Francisco's life, it must be a good school, and it is the place to send my son."

However, we were sorry to have to tell this mother that we had no space available in the boys' dormitory. She would not take "No" for an answer and called long-distance, insisting that we accept him. "Please accept my son," she pleaded, "I want so much for him to be like Francisco."

In our present dormitory, seven boys are jammed into rooms designed for two. Nearly every student in the institution has a story of sacrifice to tell, but each one considers himself fortunate to have been accepted into a Christian institution. The heart-breaking fact is that hundreds of young people who have applied to go to school have had to be turned down simply because space is unavailable in the already overcrowded dormitories. One can't help wondering how many are being condemned to a Christless life as a result of our lack of space.

Central American Union College will be one of the beneficiaries of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter, and will build a desperately

needed boys' dormitory with these funds. Recently the President of the Republic of Costa Rica remarked during a visit to the campus, "I admire the work you are doing, and we can learn much from you that will benefit Costa Rica."

Though this may seem to be an "ordinary" appeal, be assured that in the eyes of these young people who have eternity at stake, it is by no means "ordinary." Our deepest desire is that this new housing will open the way for many more young men to attend a Christian school and to find a new and eternal life in Christ.

SABBATH, DECEMBER 3

Lost Tribe Becomes Adventist

by Xavier Soto Valle

[Sabbath School director, Mexican Union]

The aircraft plummeted crazily, the hot steaming cloud of vapor from the jungle suddenly cancelling its lifting power. Below, the green jungle spread as far as the eye could see, and somewhere under the impenetrable foliage lived the legendary last of the Mayas (Ma-yas), the Lacandon (Lacandon) Indians of Southern Mexico. A medical team was winging its way to visit a group of these Indians who had become interested in the Adventist message.

Mayan civilization was at its zenith some few hundred years after the

time of Christ. Mathematics and astronomy were highly developed. In fact, the Mayan calendar was far more accurate than the ones we use today. The sons of chiefs and priests attended schools and studied history, writing, the sciences, and even medicine. Stone roads thirty feet wide connected cities.

Cities grew. Massive pyramids and temples pierced the jungle foliage. Crowds roared their approval as players ricocheted the *pelota* (peh-lo-ta), a hard rubber ball, off the high walls of the court and dropped it through the hoops at the ends in a game not unlike basketball.

Kukulcan (Koo-kool-con), the fair, blond, feathered serpent-god demanded human sacrifices. Later the sacred well at the religious center called Chichen-Itza (Chee-chen-Eet-zá) received its yearly quota of fair Indian maidens in payment for abundant water and agricultural blessings. The sun was called "our father" and the moon "our mother."

And then for unknown reasons the cities were abandoned. The jungle, like a snake with six hundred thousand coils, returned to swallow temples and ball courts alike until not a sign remained. Formerly fierce tribes turned to farming. Their cultural contacts with each other were few.

Centuries later, when the *conquistadores* came, the remnants of the great Maya empire once again fought for survival. One by one the tribes disappeared, absorbed by the new culture. They intermarried and became Christians of a sort. Today they form the Indian Catholic population of Southern Mexico and Guatemala.

But one tribe never surrendered. It penetrated farther than any other

into the shadowy realm of the jungle, and its very existence became a legend among the highland Indians, who talked of a secret Maya empire deep in the heart of the jungle.

The Lacandon are pure Maya Indians who still lead a hidden, semi-nomadic life along the rivers in the great forests. A deeply religious people, they worship the sun and moon, fire, and the spirit world. Man, they believe, came from maize, the Indian corn that is their main food. Before every meal they sacrifice maize to the river god. The most significant and surprising fact about them is that they have never been Christianized.

Their long cloaks, worn as a protection against the *je-jene* (he-hene) flies, and their uncut hair, a religious symbol, make it almost impossible to tell men and women apart. The results of generations of inbreeding have decimated the tribe till only a few hundred are left.

Early in 1973 an Adventist church member of Mayan descent made contact with the Lacandons and inspired them with accounts of what a teacher who could speak their language could do for them. As soon as he heard about it, Elder Jeronimo Madrigal (He-ro-nee-mo Ma-dree-gal), president of the South Mexican Conference, went into action.

Brother Saturnino Chan Can (Sa-toor-nee-no Chan Kon), a 28-year-old schoolteacher who spoke Mayan, was asked to go to the village of Mezaboc (Meh-zah-bok), deep in the Lacandon jungle territory, and establish a school. Leaving his family behind, Brother Chan Can headed for Mezaboc, his prime objective the teaching of the Adventist message to the Lacandons.

What he found frightened him! Strange customs, drunken Indians celebrating at idolatrous festivals, marijuana smoking, screams in the night. After only two weeks he prepared to return home. The night before he was to leave, he had a dream in which an old man said to him, "You must stay and teach these people. That's what you were sent here to do." The next morning, with renewed courage, teacher Chan Can went to Lacandon Chief Joachin Trujillo (Hoa-kin' Tru-he-yo).

The chief examined teacher Chan Can's Better Life Picture Rolls and listened to the story of the God in heaven who created the world. The chief was interested, and when Chan Can got to the story of how God rested on the seventh day, Joachin Trujillo admitted he was impressed. He realized the idols he worshiped were not gods at all, for they could neither see, hear, nor eat.

The following day chief Joachin called in the members of his tribe and told them about what he had learned. He put his idols into his canoe, and under the watchful eyes of his fellow tribesmen, took them far out onto the lake and dumped them overboard.

In January, 1974, a medical team made up of a medical doctor, a dentist, and two nurses accompanied the conference treasurer to Metzaboc. They were flown part of the way in a small plane. But the last part of the trip was on foot over winding forest paths and narrow log bridges. They gave not only medical but spiritual help, as well, to the interested Indians. Teacher Chan Can was much encouraged in his work by this visit. A liquor merchant had been giving him a bad time because his business

was falling off, but this was a good sign of the changes taking place in the lives of the tribesmen. In fact, before long, he stopped trying to sell liquor to the Indians.

Another medical group went in to Mezaboc on March 3, 1976, along with conference and union officials. It was a historic occasion. The justice of the peace from the town of Salto de Agua came along to perform the marriage ceremony for six Lacandon Indian couples. This in itself was a complete break with ancient practices on the part of the Lacandons. Following the ceremony, Elder Samuel Guizar (Sa-moo-el Gee-zar'), secretary of the Mexican Union, baptized Lacandon Chief Joachin Trujillo, the six newly married couples, and ten more Indians. These were the first Lacandons ever to become Seventh-day Adventists in the history of our church. In fact, they were the first Lacandons to become Christians.

What a change in their lives is seen today! Idols have disappeared, the Biblical principles of morality are practiced, homes sparkle with cleanliness, and these first converts are winning many more Lacandons into the church.

Dozens of interested Indian tribes present an enormous challenge in Mexico, but what the Lord has done for the Lacandons, He can do for these tribes, as well. Your Sabbath School offerings will help Mexico reach these other tribes as you support overseas evangelism.

"Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God."—Carey's Motto.

SABBATH, DECEMBER 10

Adventist World Radio

by E. Kilian

[Director, communications and Sabbath School departments, Euro-Africa Division]

(Note.—We have been hearing stories from Inter-America this quarter, to which we will direct our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering; however, today we have a story from the Euro-Africa Division, one of the other divisions, which will help us keep in touch with a worldwide mission program.)

Adventist radio work in Europe dates back to 1947, just two years after the close of World War II. Scars of battle were visible everywhere. In a year marked by hopelessness and hunger, a message of hope rang out. The General Conference had assisted the three European divisions in setting up a radio studio in Paris. A sense of urgency was felt in the air as speakers were found, scripts written, and newly formed quartets rehearsed. The climax came with the cable to Washington—"Radio Luxembourg commences English broadcasting Monday, 11:00 a.m., March 31." This was immediately followed by the German "Stimme der Hoffnung," and the French "Voix de la Espérance." The Seventh-day Adventist Church was the first Protestant denomination in Europe to send the gospel over the airwaves.

Envisioning a far more extensive ministry, 24 years later, on October 1, 1971, Adventist World Radio in Europe was born. With the help of the General Conference and the generous gifts of our brethren in the U.S.A. we bought fourteen and one-half hours of

broadcast time a week on a powerful strong new short-wave station in Portugal. What no one had dared dream of became a reality—the voice of the Adventist Church in 16 languages! Now every country in Europe could be reached by our message! There was great rejoicing.

In our Adventist World Radio Studio is a recent picture received from one of our listeners that we treasure. The picture is of the listener and ten of his friends taken on the day of their baptism. When this gentleman heard the Bible presented clearly in his mother tongue he was so impressed that he recorded the broadcasts so that he could share them with some of his friends. Correspondence lessons and contact with Seventh-day Adventist workers and members followed and culminated in a baptismal service. Thank God for Adventist World Radio!

One woman who had been tuning in to our Luxembourg broadcast for ten years wrote a few months back, telling her story. Unable to leave her apartment because of an incurable illness, she whiled away the hours listening to classical music, often from her favorite station in Luxembourg. Since she was not a person who liked to listen to religious music, she was annoyed by the strains of "Lift up the trumpet, and loud let it ring; Jesus is coming again!" the theme song of our program. She made an effort to get out of bed to turn the radio off, but because it caused her so much pain to move, she decided to endure the music. The message that followed sparked her interest and then spoke comfort and courage to her heart. As so many other listeners do each week, she sent for and studied

the correspondence course, and in time was visited by a Seventh-day Adventist pastor. The church members who brought cheer to her home soon became very dear to her. They will never forget the day of her baptism. They sang some of her favorite hymns before the pastor baptized her in her own home. At the time of her baptism she was full of hope and courage in the Lord, even though physically she was critically ill. In one of her letters to the broadcast staff she wrote: "It won't be long before Jesus comes. I am growing weaker daily, but what does it matter? I am safe in the arms of Christ." No more letters came.

Over the last three years we have received 10,000 letters from our listeners. We often think of the untold number we might have received were it possible for them to write. Even with the many barriers, hundreds have enrolled in our Bible course and have accepted Christ as their personal Saviour. We even receive letters from such distant places as Australia, Japan, and Russia. For many our broadcast is the only opportunity to hear God's Word. We have learned that there are many who, at great personal risk, regularly record the broadcasts and pass them on to others.

We thank God and the many broadcast supporters in various parts of the world who make possible for us to broadcast the Advent message in Arabic, Croatian, Dutch, English, Flemish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Romanian, Serbian, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish, Turkish, and Ukrainian. Thousands of cassettes are produced in our studios and sent out.

Though Europe, the home of the Reformation, has been deeply influenced by atheism and other non-Christian philosophies, there are souls who are searching for answers who must be reached. Are there problems in this ministry? Yes, they seem to multiply with each passing day. The re-evaluation of the dollar forced us to cut back from fourteen and one-half to eleven and one-fourth hours a week. Recently, when prime time on a powerful station was offered to us, which would enable us to branch out into several new languages, we had to decline. This was heartbreaking for those who had spent months negotiating to get more time, and for the workers who have been preparing to broadcast the Adventist message to their own people. In some of these language areas we have no organized work. We wonder sometimes how long we must wait.

In a continent where radio waves are often the only means of carrying the message, we face a God-given challenge to risk everything for Him who did so much for us. Thank you for your prayers.

Unfinished Business

Dear God, in all earth's mission lands
Thy world work still is incomplete.
Empower our weak, though willing hands,
Put wings, we pray, upon our feet.

Within our homes, our minds, our hearts
A noble work Thou hast begun.
We'll see, through power Thy grace imparts,
A finished work by set of sun.

Thy work for man goes on apace—
Unfinished business everywhere,
Redeeming this decadent race.
Complete this task—this is our prayer!
—Anonymous

SABBATH, DECEMBER 17

A Time for Impatience

by Mrs. Themis Nation

[Teacher and principal, Petén Agriculture School, Poptún, Petén, Guatemala]

The first whistle had sounded, and the second was about to blow. Young men and women were hurrying, encouraging one another not to be late. Boys had neckties in their hands; girls were combing their hair and smoothing their skirts and blouses. The group of volunteers who were washing dishes that Sabbath were the most hurried, because they still had the pots and pans to do, and the bus would not wait for latecomers.

It was the fourth Sabbath of the 1976 school year, the day the missionary committee had chosen to launch their work in Poptún (Poptoon'). Students and teachers in the Adventist school in Petén (Pey-ten'), Guatemala, were eager to get off campus and begin their new project.

Poptún, a town of 11,000 is situated 7.5 miles (12 kilometers) away from the school in the jungle region of Guatemala. For the past two school years the students had been responsible for both the Sabbath School and church services at Poptún each week. They enjoyed the challenge this presented them.

But enrollment in the school had trebled in 1976, and Poptun was simply not a big enough territory to contain all the eager students. The missionary committee decided that part of the volunteers should wait until the second half of the school year to work at Poptún.

But not everyone was patient enough to wait to begin their missionary project. Thelma Castañaza (Ca-sta-nyaza), the home economics teacher, was the spokesman for the Impatients. They had everything ready for a Branch Sabbath School. All they needed were a place to hold their meeting and people to listen to their program.

"Take us, Lynden, take us. We don't care how far we have to travel," they begged the committee chairman.

"Well," he hesitated, "there is another village where we might work, but I don't know how things are there. I've only seen the neighborhood, and I don't think the villagers will be able to understand you. They speak Quiché, a very difficult dialect."

"We'll manage the language problem somehow. Take us, and we'll see what we can do."

"Why don't you wait until next Sabbath?" he urged.

"No, not next Sabbath. Now. We are ready. Come on, girls. This jeep is old and doesn't run very well, but we'll take it and have our Branch Sabbath School." Miss Castañaza's words were more than enthusiastic. They carried decision, and the students followed her into the battle-scarred jeep.

And they did find Sabaneta (Sa-ba-nay' ta), a little village in the middle of the jungle. They also found a number of children and adults who had never heard about Jesus.

The first person they were able to talk to was a young girl named Pepita (Pe-pee-ta). Speaking a mixture of Spanish and Quiché, she invited them to come into her little home made of wood and palm leaves. Although it was clean, the students couldn't but

notice how well-stocked it was with idols. But Pepita was friendly, and they agreed to return the next Sabbath afternoon and present another program.

It was a busy week for both students and teachers, but when Sabbath afternoon rolled around again Miss Castañaza's group of Impatients was ready for Branch Sabbath School. Beside the school bus was the old green jeep. After prayer the two groups of students divided to travel to both Poptún and Sabaneta. A student in the fourth year of high school swung behind the wheel of the jeep and headed it for the newly entered jungle village.

Upon arriving at the village, the students saw an *Indita* (In-dee' ta) running from the underbrush, her hands gesturing them to stop. (*Indita* is an affectionate term for Indians indigenous, or native, to Guatemala.)

"No, don't go to Pepita's house," she warned. "She is very angry and says she doesn't want you to come to her house today. My mother told me to invite you to use this building we aren't using. Then Pepita cannot bother us." Breathlessly, she led them to another location away from Pepita's house.

The students jumped off the jeep and began unloading their supplies. As they were setting up the flannel graph, people began coming. Three came from one direction, two from another, five from a third. Nineteen people. Then thirty-four. Finally forty children and adults had gathered. Some without fears or inhibitions hurried in to get front seats; others were frightened and decided to observe from outside the shelter.

It didn't take long to see results

from that outreach at Sabaneta. On March 27, 1976, thirty of the children from this new Branch Sabbath School had part in the regular thirteenth Sabbath program at the college. Although they had had only five programs, they already knew the songs by memory, and how they enjoyed singing them!

After lunch at the college, their student leaders took them back to Sabaneta for their regular Branch Sabbath School. How that is blossoming!

Despite initial worries, only 30 adults in Sabaneta don't speak some Spanish. Even that group poses no special problem. After the children listen to a Bible story and see it illustrated on the flannel graph, they translate it for their parents. Three young men from the college who speak Quiché (Kee-chay') are able to do more in-depth work with the adults.

There are dozens of villages like Sabaneta throughout the Inter-American Division. And there are dozens of students and teachers like Thelma Castañaza who are willing and waiting to enter new villages through Branch Sabbath Schools and other means. Sometimes we need to wait patiently for opportunities to become available, but Thelma believes there's also a proper time for impatience.

Holiday Prayer

WHERE there is hatred—let me sow love.

WHERE there is injury—pardon.

WHERE there is doubt—faith.

WHERE there is despair—hope.

WHERE there is darkness—light.

WHERE there is sadness—joy.

SABBATH, DECEMBER 24

Uncle Esau Versus the School in the Chicken Coop

by Mrs. L. E. Keizer

[Book and Bible House director, Surinam Mission, Paramaribo, Surinam]

What are the essential ingredients for a Christian education? A good country location for the campus? A balanced budget each fiscal year? A group of certified teachers?

Well-equipped classrooms and modern scientific laboratories and carpeted libraries are nice, but they are not absolutely necessary. Enthusiastic students, a dedicated teacher, and the influence of the Holy Spirit can accomplish miracles—even in a chicken coop!

The Far Eastern Division launched a project in Irian Jaya, which is the new name for the western part of the huge island of New Guinea. A missionary teacher was sent to begin an adult-education program to train men to become ministerial workers for their own people.

An old godown (warehouse) was temporarily made into a classroom. There twelve pupils, ranging from 18 to a grandfather of 55, began their ministerial training. The teacher called them his "twelve disciples," and they were the focus of his whole attention. Although they had not been to school for years, they were a settled group and eager to continue their education.

Six months after the program began, the elementary supervisor

from the division office came to inspect the school. She was pleased to see the progress of the "twelve disciples" and could well imagine them as future workers, but she wasn't satisfied with the total effect of the missionary's work.

One morning before breakfast she shared what had been bothering her. "We need to start another class for the boys and girls who are roaming around," she told the teacher. "Something has to be done for these poor, unkempt, half-naked children."

"Yes, that's a good idea. I too have a burden for these children," he replied. "I hope that another teacher can be sent over soon so that we can begin another class. This special program for ministerial workers takes all my time and energy, but it's going to be worthwhile. Within a year or two we will be able to send some of these men back to work with their own people," he said enthusiastically.

"That still doesn't take care of the children. What are you going to do about them?" she asked pointedly.

"I'm already teaching all morning and all afternoon. Besides, I'm not trained in elementary education."

"Your wife is qualified, and she must do it," the supervisor answered firmly.

"What? Me? Impossible!" The teacher's wife was taken by surprise. "I can't even speak a simple Malay sentence, much less this local dialect. How could I teach these children?"

"Well, I'm sure you'll manage somehow," the supervisor assured her. "We have to start classes tomorrow. Right now we'll clean out that chicken coop and let those two old hens roost somewhere else. You'll do a lot with sign language at first, and

I'm sure teaching will help you learn Malay faster."

The supervisor plunged right into the clean-up project. "Let's clear everything out and scrub down the walls and ceiling first. Then we can collect scraps of boards and patch the holes and nail together some benches." She was able to enlist support from the children who were curiously standing around watching what was going on.

Someone painted a piece of hard-wood to serve as the blackboard. The improvised classroom looked meager until the new teacher tacked some pictures on the walls and put a bouquet of jungle flowers on her desk. It was beginning to look more like a classroom than a chicken coop!

The prospective teacher did not sleep well that night. Her college education classes seemed too far away. New Guinea bore no resemblance to the classroom where she'd taught neatly dressed boys and girls lined up in shiny desks. She prayed for Divine guidance, knowing that the Lord would have to be her mainstay.

The next morning an excited group of children crowded into the converted chicken coop, eager to be going to school for the first time! The nervous teacher began teaching, using her limited Malay vocabulary and relying on her son, who had picked up the language more quickly, to be her chief translator.

Those first few months were difficult, but the teacher had to rely less and less on actions as she learned the Malay language. Her pupils also picked up English words and phrases from her. Everything was going smoothly in the school in the chicken coop.

Then Maria came to school. She was a 12-year-old orphan, but how she wanted to learn to read and write! Her relatives in the village agreed to let her board around from home to home. Uncle Esau was stingy with his niece. He hardly gave her enough food to eat, and he demanded that she work long hours in his garden. And when he found out that Maria was going to school he was furious! He threatened to punish her severely, so she ran away and found refuge in the teacher's home.

Maria had been living with the teacher's family for a week. They were eating lunch one noon when they heard angry shouting in the distance. Soon they were surprised to see a group of students at the door who knew that the teachers did not like to be interrupted with school problems during their lunch break.

"Close the door!" one of the students shouted.

The teacher got up quickly, shut the door, and looked out the window just as Uncle Esau came down the path swinging his long, sharp machete and yelling. When he saw the group of students surrounding the teachers' house, he hesitated. One of the older students warned Uncle Esau not to hurt the teacher or his family.

"I don't want my niece in school!" shouted Uncle Esau. "You must make her stop coming!"

"I cannot stop anybody from coming to school," the teacher replied calmly. "Maria's other relatives approve of her going to school. Please don't make me call the police to settle this matter. Just go home quietly and let Maria stay in school," she continued.

Uncle Esau kept swinging his machete back and forth threateningly and shouting that someday he would get even with the teacher and Maria. But gradually he calmed down and left the teacher's family and Maria alone.

The day that Uncle Esau "got even" never came, but another special day took its place. Within one year his heart was softened, and he was among the group that was baptized. Uncle Esau became as enthusiastic a supporter of the church as he had been a detractor.

That chicken-coop school didn't have the latest textbooks or audio-visual equipment, but it did have a dedicated teacher and eager pupils. With those ingredients the Holy Spirit was able to work miracles in the lives of the people of that jungle community.

SABBATH, DECEMBER 31

Changed Lives in Inter-America

Part 1

by M. H. Allen

[As told by Pastor D. R. Kennedy, Jamaica, West Indies]

Is the Advent message changing lives in Inter-America? Consider the story of Owen Roberts, from Jamaica.

Owen Roberts, a 17-year-old member of a Protestant church in Jamaica, attended the 1974 Adventist Layman's Crusade meetings in York

Town, Jamaica. He soon expressed his desire to be baptized.

His decision was greeted with intense opposition by his parents, who thought he was only making a fool of himself. What would happen to his prospects of becoming a medical doctor—a career that his parents had always envisaged for him? It seemed to them such a terrible betrayal.

Then there was the added pressure of his former church brethren. They disapproved in no uncertain terms. Nevertheless, Owen remained firm and was baptized.

Some time later, he won an award as the Boy of the Year in agriculture in Jamaica, and participated in a visit to Cuba with an agricultural mission, headed by the Prime Minister of Jamaica. He was offered a scholarship by the University of Havana, and another by the Esso Oil Refinery of Jamaica to the National School of Agriculture.

Somehow Owen did not feel right about these opportunities. As necessary as agriculture is for Jamaica, he began to feel the need of making a more direct contribution to God's work, and that training at our West Indies College would be the most appropriate approach. Nevertheless, he accepted the scholarship to the School of Agriculture. After enrolling, he was still deeply impressed that he should go to West Indies College. However, his burden for the ministry was too great. There was no time to lose, so at the end of the first semester he gave up his scholarship and headed for the Adventist college.

One can imagine the reaction of his family! To them it was more than foolish—it was downright crazy! In vain Owen tried to explain the rea-

sons for his commitment. His pastor, D. R. Kennedy, tried to mollify the parents, but his attempts were unsuccessful.

But of course no door is shut to the Lord. A friend wrote Owen telling him of an available teaching position in the city of Mandeville, where West Indies college is located. Owen applied and was given the job. He was accepted by West Indies College and began his studies the second semester of 1976.

From time to time Owen would visit his home and would face the continued apprehension of his family. Why Adventism? Why West Indies College? Why the ministry? They just could not understand.

In April, 1976, Pastor Kennedy held another crusade at the York Town SDA church. To his delight, Owen came to assist him for a week during the crusade. He invited his mother and sisters to attend the meetings, as well as his father, who had been divorced from his mother for five years.

At the end of May, Owen again visited home and the York Town crusade, this time to witness the baptism of his father, his mother, and one of his sisters.

* * *

Part 2

[As told by Mrs. Brunilda de Cruz, secretary, Voice of Hope, El Salvador Mission, Central America]

The scene changes to the picturesque tropical forests of El Salvador in Central America. Pastor Petronilo Quijer (Petro-nee-lo Kee-her) and his wife are climbing a hot dusty trail toward the town of San Jorge to look

for a student who had enrolled in the Voice of Hope Bible correspondence course. His name is Israel Contreras, but since he is better known by his nickname "Carioca", because of his prowess in football, they had a hard time finding him. After about two hours they were almost ready to give up. Leaving his wife to rest, the pastor went on alone. Finally he found the man he was searching for. What a happy meeting! The young man had been wishing that someone from the Voice of Hope would visit him. Immediately he invited in some other friends, and they organized a Branch Sabbath School with eight members.

The next Sabbath the pastor found 25 people in the Branch Sabbath School, and the third Sabbath there were 70 people ready to listen to the message of salvation.

This is how the evangelistic meetings began that resulted in the conversion and baptism of this young man along with other members of his family. The fires of evangelism filled Israel Contreras' heart with enthusiasm, and he began to preach to his brothers, his uncles, his cousins, and his friends, as well as to his parents.

In 1975, Brother Contreras won 16 people. In 1976 he set his goal for 35 baptisms. By April last year his parents, a number of cousins, and his brothers had all been baptized into the church.

In Inter-America our motto is: "The most important thing is evangelism." Many, like Owen, have sacrificed much but have found that a new direction in Christ makes any sacrifice worthwhile. Inter-America looks to you for support this thirteenth Sabbath.

THIRTEENTH SABBATH December 24

I Wonder

If we could see as angels see
The stern events now just at hand,
The trials awaiting you and me,
Demanding strength and courage grand,
I wonder, would we be content
To go on living as before?
On worldly thoughts would time be spent,
Or would we read our Bibles more?

If we could see with vision bared
The Master even at the door,
Could see the mansions now prepared
And glories of th' eternal shore,
Would we more calm and patient be,
I wonder, while with snares beset?
Could ever we walk mournfully,
The same small cares our spirits fret?

If we could see the joy and light
Of those we helped God's truth to know,
Or see them lost in endless night
Because we failed His love to show,
I wonder, could mere weariness
Benumb our ardor, chill our zeal?
Would we not face all storm and stress
With hearts that just for others feel?

If we could see! But we may know,
For, ah, the "eyesalve" bought above
Improves the sight, and helps to show
God's secret things, revealed in love.
His word with guiding beacon ray
Shows future scenes, unerring, clear;
Awake, O soul, and work and pray!
Eternity is almost here!

—Pearl Waggoner Howard

**THE THIRTEENTH SABBATH
OFFERING OVERFLOW
FOR THE FIRST QUARTER
OF 1978 WILL GO TO
THE AUSTRALASIAN DIVISION**

INTER-AMERICAN DIVISION

**Completion
New Hospital
Port-au-Prince, Haiti**



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CAICOS ISLANDS

PUERTO
RICO

VIRGIN
ISLANDS

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GRENADAS

TOBAGO

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HONDURAS

NICARAGUA

SALVADOR

COSTA RICA

PANAMA

VENEZUELA

SURINAM

GUYANA

FRENCH
GUIANA

COLOMBIA

MEXICO

PACIFIC OCEAN

Union	Population	Churches	Church Memb.	S.S. Memb.
Division		1	69	
Antillian	8,406,000	307	43,891	58,457
Caribbean	3,168,306	288	54,747	50,649
Central American	23,091,000	287	52,407	53,352
Colombia-Venezuela	37,123,492	237	60,999	64,365
Franco-Haitian	6,317,000	171	69,292	84,041
Mexican	62,000,000	297	86,749	121,224
West Indies	2,156,775	420	85,733	90,225
SDA Church in Cuba	8,300,000	109	9,126	8,890
DIVISION TOTALS	150,562,573	2,117	463,013	531,203

**New Men's Dormitory
Central American
Union College**



Figures as of June, 1976