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# Our Work in the Ethiopian Union Mission

By Axel Varmer, *President*

THE ETHIOPIAN Empire in East Africa stretches from the Red Sea in the north to Kenya in the south. The country is 436,655 square miles, and is about the size of France, Italy, and West Germany combined. The highlands of Ethiopia which are mainly plateaux, are about 7,000 feet high and rising above these plateaux again are many irregular mountain ranges reaching 15,000 feet. The plateaux are intersected by precipitous gorges through which many rivers flow, a thousand feet or more below the level of the plateaux. Once we tried to cross the River Ome in order to reach some isolated members who had been waiting for a visit for more than three years, but completely exhausted, we had to give up.

The inhabitants of Ethiopia are made up of several racial elements including the Danakels and Somali of Hamitic stock. In the centuries before Christ, Arab tribes crossed the Red Sea and occupied the northern part of the highlands and gradually conquered the indigenous Hamitic population. The nucleus of the Ethiopian people is as the historians say, "predominantly Semitic in culture but predominantly Hamitic in blood." The population of the modern Ethiopia is around twenty million and the density only forty per square mile.

The Empire is divided into thirteen provinces, including the former Italian colony of Eritrea, which is in federation with Ethiopia. In four provinces we operate hospitals and clinics where thousands are treated every year. In five of the provinces our schools are attended by about 1,500 boys and girls. We have churchmembers in eleven of the provinces, so our message has penetrated far and wide among the people.

The baptized membership is at present about 1,800, and is growing steadily each year. In 1957, 400 new members were

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*Reports from local missions will appear in later issues.*

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added to the church, and in the first quarter of this year about 100 have been baptized. In May, baptisms were planned for in three places in the south, where about 200 were preparing themselves for fellowship with Christ and His Advent church.

Many of you, no doubt, have read about the awakening interest in our message in the South. This interest is in no way declining. Our native evangelists and laymen are faithfully witnessing for the truth, travelling from village to village over wide areas.

Pointing one day over the mountain range, one of our evangelists, with the significant name of Gebre Christos (Servant of Christ) said to me: "As far as your eyes can see over the sloping mountain sides, we have groups of believers worshipping God on His holy Sabbath day.

He gave me the names of twenty-five places where groups of from ten to 100 come together for Sabbath services. Altogether there are more than 1,000 wor-

shippers. In eleven places they have their own small hut churches.

As others will be writing more about "the work in the south" as we term it here, let me just draw your attention to my last visit to Dongora in the Sidamo district. We, Brother Hugo Palm, Miss Mary Magnusson, and I, reached this very attractive part of the country late one afternoon. Groups of believers including a number of candidates for baptism and our good and successful blind evangelist, Tekle Haimanot, had already arrived. In the evening over 100 were crowded together on the floor of a large hut when the meeting began with their characteristic antiphonal singing. Over and over again they repeat the same sentences, for example: "Christ is coming, Christ is coming, and when He comes, we go with Him home." Yes, they are looking forward to the fulfilment of the blessed Advent hope.

The following day we had meetings until noon and then all marched to the river bank. Here forty-six men and women were baptized after which we celebrated the Lord's Supper.

In closing, let me give a few statistical figures. The Ethiopian Union Mission employs thirty-nine overseas workers. Of these eight are ordained ministers, four school principals, six physicians, eleven nurses, six teachers, and other workers. Then we have twenty-one wives of workers who all take part in our missionary endeavours.

The Ethiopian working forces is naturally much larger and includes ordained ministers, evangelists, teachers, nurses, clerks, workers in the hospital and the press, altogether more than 175 workers. Our annual budget is about Eth. dollars 650,000 (260,000 American dollars.) The main portion of this amount comes to us from the Sabbath-school offerings,

(Continued on page 7.)



*Pastor Hugo Palm, Miss Mary Magnusson and Pastor Axel Varmer, president of the Union Mission, camp by the wayside, always surrounded by an audience of onlookers.*

## Worship in Tithes and Offerings

By Finn H. Opsahl  
Union Secretary-Treasurer

THE Ethiopian people are grateful to the thousands of devoted churchmembers who give or collect from friends of the mission, hundreds of thousands of dollars every year, for the Ethiopian Union Mission is still far from being a self-supporting organization.

We will find, however, that when the true Gospel light touches the minds of truth-searching ones in this vast country, the worship of God includes more than appreciation, as we can see in the giving of themselves, and of the rather limited means available.

It is heart-warming to receive a letter containing the equivalent of more than two English pounds when you know that the letter comes from a newly baptized member out in the interior, where he works without any mutual association with other believers, and on a very meagre salary. His only desire is to spread the Gospel, to be a light-bearer in the place where he lives.

Unable to give much, others come with their few cents or quite often some produce which is eventually converted into cash, thus relieving the mission superintendents of at least some of the anxiety of watching a budget that might be very difficult indeed to balance.

Leaving out actual figures from these few lines, you might be interested to know that the tithe income, and church offerings in general, have been increasing for several years here in Ethiopia, even if we do experience ups and downs like other countries.

Striving toward a higher income within the local mission here in Ethiopia, we thank God for the churchmembers we already have to whom it would be unthinkable to rob God "in tithes and offerings" but faithfully bring "all the tithes into the storehouse" to prove God if He "will not open . . . the windows of heaven, and pour . . . out a blessing."



One of our faithful evangelists in the South  
and his wife.

## Evangelism in Addis Ababa

By Lester Rasmussen  
Union Evangelist

A GREAT new advance in soul-saving evangelism is planned for the 300,000 people living in Addis Ababa, the capital and largest city of Ethiopia. Never has a city-wide effort been conducted in Addis Ababa by any mission society, so we are venturing forth in faith on a pioneer programme which is bound to bear fruit to the glory of God. We claim the promise that:

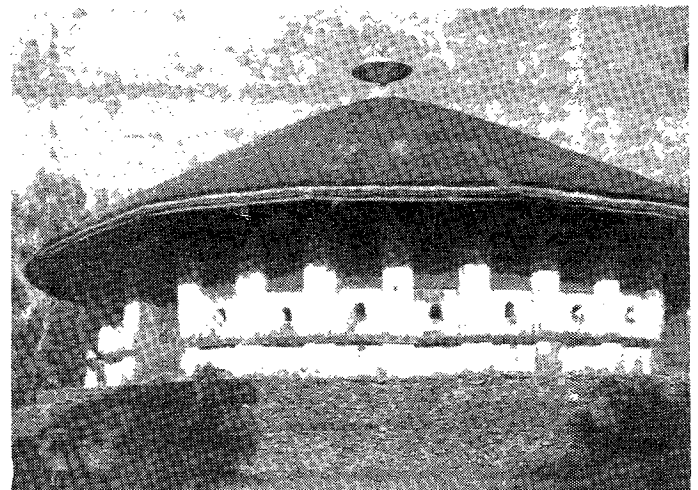
"If our people will go forth in faith, doing whatever they can to make a beginning, and labouring in Christ's lines, the way will be opened before them. If they will show the energy that is necessary in order to gain success, and the faith that goes forward unquestioningly in obedience to God's command, rich returns will be theirs."—*Evangelism*, pages 18, 19.

The doors are wide open in this great city. We have freedom to do public work. Intelligent young people are being educated by the thousands, but they have a great need of Christ's being introduced to them as their Redeemer and Friend. The time has come to take advantage of the years of seed-sowing and cultivation of the soil by our medical work, which is so well known and highly respected by the masses of this city. The providences of God indicate that great things are before us, and that He expects us to launch out on a strong evangelistic programme that will bring forth tangible results from all the earnest labour put forth in our schools and hospitals.

Meetings will begin in a good hall in the centre of the city on November 2nd, and as Christ is presented to the people of Addis Ababa, you can have a part by uniting with the believers of Ethiopia in prayer for the success of these meetings.

Even now, in the outskirts of Addis Ababa, where a 1,100-patient leprosarium is located, a number have completed the Voice of Prophecy lessons in Amharic. Because of their deep desire to know more about Christ, meetings were begun in January of this year in a small thatched-roofed house just outside the compound. The attendance has been good, and four from the leprosarium are planning to be baptized on April 19th. A number of others are attending baptismal classes and are planning to be ready for the next baptism.

A Coptic church in the  
Northwest.



# The Union Bible School

By Alula Wassie, Leader

THE VOICE of Prophecy Bible Correspondence School has proved to be a great soul-winning factor—the silent means of reaching many whom we could never otherwise reach to tell them of this timely Advent message. Neither distance nor prejudice is a hindrance any longer. People cannot resist its gradual but sure effect. It is available both for the educated and the uneducated.

Here in Addis Ababa in 1955 thousands of enrolment cards were distributed. As a result, hundreds of students from various walks of life enrolled. It has been extremely interesting to follow their progress, and see the love and respect they show the Word of God, their happiness over their first real experience with the Lord, and their genuine and strenuous struggle to break with traditional ties.

More than eighty per cent of our active students have already completed the Junior courses. They then take "The Faith" course in English. It is hoped that this second course will soon be translated into Amharic. We hope this will be available within a few months. It is the prayer of all that the new course will be a rich blessing to our field.

I think of those young men who, at some time or other, have taken our lessons. Oh, how their hearts readily responded to the call of the Holy Spirit

to repent and keep the commandments.

I think of those isolated souls at the Leprosy Hospital in the suburbs of the city. I saw how God lets them partake of His abundant blessings even though they are shunned by their fellow men. It was wonderful, or I should say, providential, the way the Voice of Prophecy reached them. I am confident that the deep interest shown by Pastor Rasmussen in their spiritual growth will be rewarded with a marvellous result. It is also encouraging to know that, as a direct result of the Bible school, six brave men in one of the difficult northern provinces stepped out courageously and were baptized. In spite of sacrifices and hardships which they confront, many more are preparing for baptism.

I believe the hearts of the people in Addis Ababa are now being prepared for the message which will be given during the coming city effort. The Bible school will be one of the instruments in winning souls for Christ.

If I could enter into detail, I could tell of many instances of the influence of the Bible school on lives and of the opening of the work in new places. There is no doubt in my mind as to the possibilities and scope of this work. The Bible school can be the most satisfactory soul-winning factor in Ethiopia.

for subsequent Annual Meetings. There seemed to be insurmountable obstacles to hinder us in getting the work started, but it was our firm conviction that God also wanted that phase of His work to prosper in Ethiopia, and at last in a small way the publishing work was started.

*The Bible Speaks* (our baptismal manual) was the first book printed in Am-

## Farewell!

WILKEN SVARRE JENSEN and family who have spent two terms or ten years in Ethiopia, are now leaving the field. For nine years Brother Jensen carried the responsibility of union secretary-treasurer, but besides he had a great burden for the literature work. He has been the prime mover in the development of the press and the literature work in the Ethiopian Union since the war.

Workers and members in the Ethiopian Union will miss the Jensen family greatly when they leave. We wish Brother Jensen God's richest blessing in his new responsibility as Manager of the Danish Publishing House.  
A. VARMER.

haric after the re-opening of our work, and it has been the means of bringing many souls to a knowledge of this truth. A little later the same book was produced in an abbreviated form in Tigrinia, for use in the northern territories; and that book, which ran into a second edition, has also proved to be a great blessing.

Soon the need was also felt to get the Voice of Prophecy lessons in Amharic and Tigrinia, so our next publishing project was to have the Junior lessons translated and printed. These lessons have been scattered throughout the twelve provinces, and a number of the baptized members we have today were first contacted by these means.

Great was our joy when we could at last erect a little building beside our headquarters here in Kabana, Addis Ababa, solely for the publishing work. In the two years it has been operating the presses have been continually turning. *Stories of Jesus*, and *Steps to Christ*, given to us by God through His servant, have been translated and printed, and

## Progress of the Printed Page

By Wilken S. Jensen

BEFORE the Italian occupation of Ethiopia in 1936, a small mission press was operated in connection with our school in Addis Ababa, just outside Addis Ababa. This press was a great blessing to the growing work in Ethiopia.

In those days a small edition of *Steps to Christ* was printed in Amharic, and quickly scattered to all parts of the country, which was at that time by no means overloaded with literature. A small

hymnal and a number of tracts were also produced, and eagerly received by the people.

But suddenly the blow fell, and the press, together with the rest of our organized work in Ethiopia, was carried away by the invader.

When the work in the country was reopened after the war, we soon felt the great need to re-establish the literature ministry, and it was placed on the agenda

they have been favourably received by the people of the country. Thousands of tracts have been turned out, and at present they are distributed all over the country.

We are looking forward to a great harvest of souls through the ministry of the printed page.

We have great hopes for the future of the publishing work in Ethiopia, for the hunger for literature is great, and educational plans are increasing the literacy of the people in all areas. Therefore our

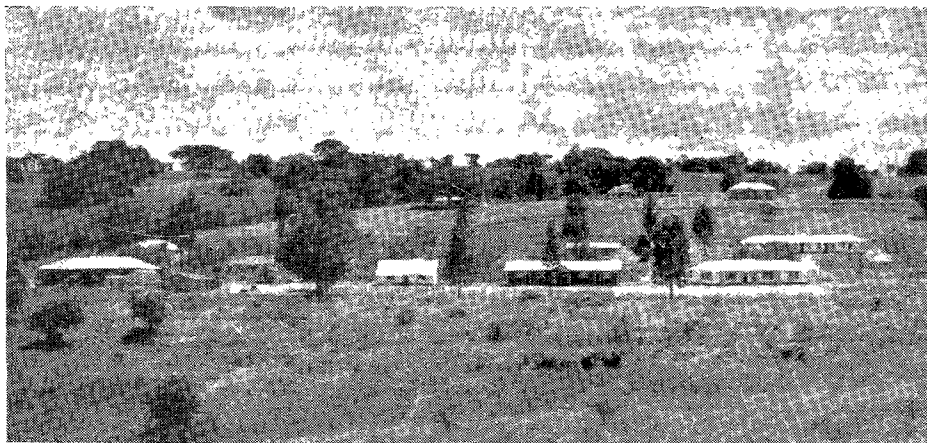
rejoicing was very great in the Ethiopian Union family when Brother Hugo Palm was appointed at the last Annual Meeting to take charge of the literature ministry in the union. He will be the first worker here who will be able to devote all his time to that line of work. Those of us who know his enthusiasm and zeal for the work of God are confident that the work will go forward, and make a great contribution to the finishing of the great commission in this field.

And who can forget the first chapel at Kuyera? That chapel has distracted more than one godly preacher and ever so many devoted students. Was it ever so humble!—it still had a ceiling; and this you didn't just behold—but literally felt! It was here that the preacher's thoughts lingered as he listened to the Principal announce the arrival of a visiting minister for the following Sabbath! As the impact of the announcement sank in, forty backs immediately straightened up an inch or two, and eighty eyes gazed fixedly toward the ceiling. What the lips didn't utter, the eyes concluded: "How tall is he? Will he make it?"

What a difference! The spacious stone building used for chapel exercises today, the dormitories and the living quarters for the teachers, have all given Kuyera a new look. A clinic building with an infirmary will be ready in the near future, and provisions are being made to accommodate more teachers for the next year. On top of the hill overlooking the campus, a new administration building is almost ready to be put into use. As the morning hours roll by week by week, and the fog of stuffiness in our present cramped quarters paralyzes learners and learned alike, many a dream circles around a new classroom with big windows and enough air for everybody and some to spare!

For a couple of years A. G. Ellquist has been leading out in the secondary work. Brother Ellquist is anxiously waiting for the new water turbine to arrive which will give the school plant electricity all day, as well as power to run the machinery in the workshop.

*(Continued on page 7.)*



## Ethiopian Union Training School

By Irene Eide, Teacher

DURING the past eight years the enrolment of the Ethiopian Training School has risen from forty to 200, and the staff has increased each year. Ten buildings have been erected during this period, and four more are under construction. Last year, 88,000 pounds of grain were harvested at the farm, and this year the Principal plans to have 200 acres under cultivation, not counting the school gardens and the orchard.

The institution is carrying out a full elementary programme where Miss Martin has been supervising the institution for a number of years. In fact, Miss Martin is the only staff member who has been with the school since its start. The intermediate school is sending out its first high-school graduates this year. In the past, several training classes for teachers and evangelists have been conducted. The plan is to continue this specialized training on a collegiate level.

Surely, we have come a long way since 1950. Students were then put in the first and only building, each grade separated by a wooden partition half-way to the roof! No ceilings!

Remarked one boy as he recalled those days: "While we tried to concentrate in our own room, we were far more interested in what went on beyond the wall!" Cooking was done in the open, and the boys lived in thatched huts, four to five in each. The rains had a tendency of falling right at lunchtime, and at the first drops, everybody grabbed his plate and headed for his hut before the stew got too diluted!



*A group of new believers in Ethiopia.*



# SOUTH ETHIOPIA MISSION

## *The Work in the South*

By Wilken S. Jensen

*"Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God."*

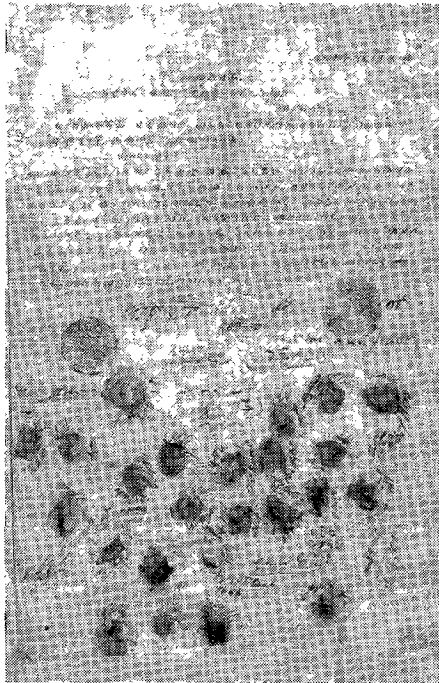
THIS prophecy of David has been repeated over and over again, but never before in the history of Ethiopia has it been so true as it is today. We have also often quoted: "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform," and that too has been proved true of our work here, particularly in the way the message has spread in the southern part of the country.

Recently the work in the Wollamo and Kambata provinces has been kept at the forefront of our interest, and we want to assure you that the work is continuing to move forward in that region, and more and more are requesting Bible studies and fellowship with us as churchmembers.

Earlier this year we explored new territory in the Tambara province, where people have been waiting for three years for us to come and visit them and preach the message of salvation.

Before we entered that province we were told by Government officials that it was impossible to reach Tambara by car; but God's message must go forward, and in a wonderful way He brought us safely through, over rivers, boulders, and mountains, and many other obstacles and hazards. When we finally reached our destination, the small capital of the Tambara district, the people there told us that they had not seen a single car in the last fifteen years.

The call that sounded in the ears of Paul has come many times to us, too; "Come over and help us!" Indeed when we saw the people of Tambara district we realized how much they really did need our help. Fortunately Dr. Kr. Hogganvik was a member of the exploring group, and the hundreds of suffering people who surrounded us were able to



IN THE month of February, Dr. and Mrs. Hogganvik, W. S. Jensen and I visited some isolated believers in the Kambata district in the Arussi province. Wherever we stopped, crowds of people thronged around us for treatment. We succeeded in reaching with our Land Rover a village where the people had not seen a car for fifteen years. From there we had to go on mules in order to reach the next place where a group of Sabbath-keepers had been waiting a long time for the first visit of white Adventist missionaries. In the first mentioned village, the Governor and his men pleaded with us for a clinic, and handed us a petition signed by the Governor and a number of his men. Most of them could not write their names so attached their fingerprints instead.

*The above is a photocopy of this peculiar and interesting document. We hope some day to fulfil their desire.* AXEL VARMER.

benefit from the relief he could give to their bodily afflictions.

It touched our hearts deeply to see a number of small children covered from head to foot with terrible sores caused by the ignorance and sin of their parents. How encouraging to find that even here were people who were hungering and thirsting after the message of God's Book.

In spite of the fact that we have never had any missionary working in this district we found several chapels where people came together to worship on God's holy Sabbath day. True, they did not know the full message; but, as we quoted before, "in mysterious ways" God has performed "His wonders" here.

When we questioned them: "Where did you hear about the Sabbath and the Advent message?" the answer was, "From the book."

"Which book?" we asked.

Then we found that several of them had somehow obtained copies of *The Bible Speaks* in Amharic (our baptismal manual), and this book is the treasured possession of many who study it over and over again. The Holy Spirit has indeed impressed the lessons on the hearts of these people.

I wish you could have met some of these happy believers. One of their respected elders living in a distant place had heard of our visit and hurried to meet us. He arrived with the perspiration streaming down his face and body, but his physical exertions were nothing to the happy look. His whole face was just one big smile, and he greeted us many, many times with the courtly bows and handclasps of his people. One day the officials representing the provincial Government came to us bearing a long petition, requesting us to establish work in that place, and witnessing their document with numerous signatures and thumbprints.

Still venturing into new territory we must enter the great Gemu Goffa province south of Wollamo, and here too we will find people who are longing to



*Tekla Heimanot, our blind evangelist, living at our Training School in Kuyera, but doing a very splendid work in the South preaching and preparing many for baptism.*

hear the message. A wonderful work has been started here by a blind evangelist. He loves the Advent message, and leads his people to worship on the Sabbath day, even though he has not yet been baptized into the church membership.

Just recently he came to tell me about the great interest which has arisen, and about the many who are already keeping the Sabbath, and he said: "Now that I have started the work, I give it all to you to continue it and to bring help and hope to these people."

When he returned home he took with him hundreds of tracts and small books, and we know that the message will go forward with haste among these people.

When we see all the outstretched hands in southern Ethiopia, then our great

prayer is that God will send us workers to labour in these fields that are "white already to harvest." The work is greater than we are able to handle with the present force, though their enthusiasm and courage is great, and we earnestly request the members of the Northern European Division family to unite with us as we pray for workers and means to meet the challenge.

### Ethiopian Union Training School

*(Continued from page 5.)*

Many ambassadors for Christ have gone out from Kuyera even before they have graduated. Secondary students serve as teachers in many of our elementary schools a year at a time. One of these student-teachers from the ninth grade made a two-hour walk every Sabbath morning last year to give Bible studies to people of a distant village. Then he returned to his regular church for the services there. In the afternoon he would hike the same distance in another direction to study with other groups.

Much inspiration came to us at the time of our term vacation a few months ago. Twenty students filled their pockets with tracts fresh from our printing press and set out to distribute them. They handed out about 5,000 tracts, enrolled at least fifty people in the Voice of Prophecy Bible School, and the first applicants for the next school year have contacted us as a result of these efforts. In a few weeks a similar campaign will be launched again. Why are they so eager to go? Because they have come to realize the main purpose of being in an Adventist school.



*One of our good evangelistic workers from the South, Zumucha and his wife.*

### Our Work in the Ethiopian Union Mission

*(Continued from page 2.)*

Ingathering, and other mission offerings raised in the homeland by our faithful brethren and sisters who pray and give for the mission.

We are marching to Zion, and the army of our Lord is growing from day to day. The Advent message is reaching to the farthest corners of the earth, and also here in old Ethiopia a new day is dawning for our evangelistic work. Pray for your fellow believers in Ethiopia.

### Forgiveness

THE brave only know how to forgive; it is the most refined and generous pitch of human virtue nature can arrive at. Cowards have done good and kind actions—cowards have even fought, nay, sometimes even conquered; but a coward never forgave. It is not in his nature; the power of doing it flows only from a strength and greatness of soul, conscious of its own force and security, and above the little temptations of resenting every fruitless attempt to interrupt its happiness.

—*Laurence Sterne.*



*A group baptized by Pastor Hugo Palm in Kambata, March, 1958.*



W. S. Jensen and Dr. Kr. Hogganvik operating a clinic by the road-side.

## Experiences in Arussi and Sidamo

By Hugo Palm

District Leader, Arussi, and Teacher at Kuyera

TWO MONTHS ago a rich Mohammedan chief came to our church in Kuyera. After the meeting he said that he had come to talk to us about an important matter. He was invited to come into one of our homes and there present his matter. We sat down in the living room, but our Mohammedan friend did not want to sit down. He said that the matter he wanted to present was so important to him that he wished to stand while talking.

He then pleaded with us to bring to him and his family the light that we had. He pointed out how he and his people had lived in darkness for generations. He begged us to send him a teacher and finally he said: "I have now brought to you our need and now it is up to you to bring us the light."

This man has been to Mecca as a good Mohammedan pilgrim, and has been a firm Mohammedan all his life. He has come to us four times in one month to plead for a teacher, but we do not possess the necessary money to employ an extra teacher this year. All we can do is to visit this place, and hope and pray that

we will be able to send this man a teacher next year.

Recently we had a baptism south of Kuyera when forty-six souls were baptized. At this occasion an interesting family group was baptized. There was an eighty-two-year-old woman who in all her long life as a heathen had never tasted alcoholic drinks—a very unusual thing in this district. Now she was so happy that she could not stop praising God from the time she entered the water till she was baptized.

Her son, Ato Warera, about sixty years old, and his wife and their son, about twenty years of age, were all baptized at the same time.

Ato Warera was the first member of the family to hear about our truth. He met one of the school boys from our school in Kuyera. This boy had not enough money to pay his school fees for the full year, so had to leave the school after just two months of studying. This boy told Ato Warera about the Advent truth, and he became so interested that he walked for several hours to the place where one

of our evangelists lived. From him he heard more about the Sabbath, but did not fully believe when our evangelist read from the Bible, because he could not read himself.

He memorized the Bible references, then went home and asked his son to read them from the Bible. After hearing five scriptures he said: "This is enough for me; this is the truth." And after this he followed the truth.

Ato Warero was a church elder in a Protestant mission and now, as an Adventist he is building a church for the little group of new believers.

Also a great number of heathen are now accepting the Advent message in this district, and many say: "Since the Advent Mission came we can see that there is something good in Christianity."

Let us continue to pray for the Lord's work among these people, that means and workers may be provided in order to finish His work.

### A COMMON CAUSE OF PREJUDICE

"THERE are many in the same condition as was Nathanael. They are prejudiced and unbelieving because they have never come in contact with the special truths for these last days or with the people who hold them, and it will require but attendance upon a meeting full of the Spirit of Christ to sweep away their unbelief."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 6, page 38.

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