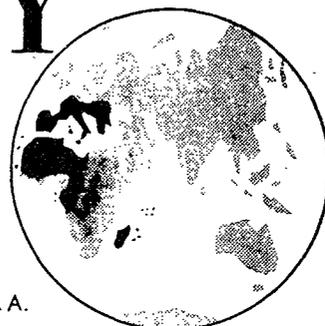


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Itinerating in the Indian Ocean Union

By W. R. Beach

President, Southern European Division

In his magnificent flight over the circle of earth, the third angel of Revelation 14 has not forgotten the many islands scattered across that vast expanse of water called the Indian Ocean. The two months I spent recently itinerating there gave me ample indication of this.

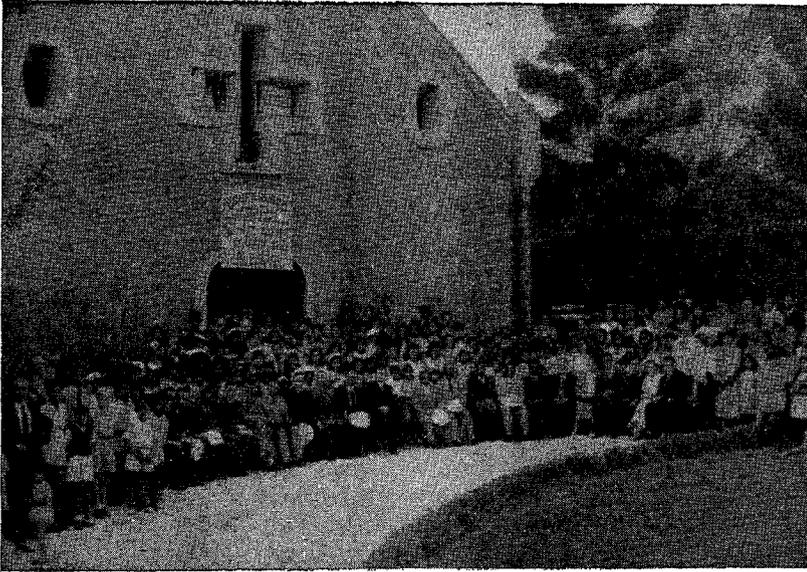
Eleven years had slipped by — years of war and isolation — since I last visited Madagascar, Réunion, and Mauritius. Our missionaries and native leaders have had to meet many perplexities during the years. But they did not take their hands from the plow. I rejoiced, in fact, to see the progress made, despite forbidding conditions, in building up church memberships and the small number of institutions that existed when the storm broke. Naturally, the close of war and the resumption of normal contacts with the home fields have dispelled the gloom of six fateful years and have brought a new surge of activity.

During the past two years a large number of missionaries have been sent out to the Indian Ocean fields. Today we have seventeen missionary families laboring in this group of islands that cluster about Madagascar. The home fields have had to agree to enormous sacrifices to make possible this increase in the European staff. H. Pichot, the union president, and his splendid group of coworkers are leading a rapidly increasing corps of locally trained workers, as aggressive plans are laid for an expanding program.

I shall start this report with a rapid glance at the union session, which took place in Mauritius, June 7 to 19. Delegates were in attendance from the Seychelles, Réunion, Madagascar, and Mau-

ritius. The session was organized and functioned on a constitutional basis. The work was accomplished in a wonderful spirit, though many races, tongues, and nationalities mingle in the Indian Ocean area. Missionaries, nationals, and laymen seemed to vie with each other in consecrating their all in planning for the triumph of the advent movement. About one thousand people were assembled at the Beau-Bassin church for the Sabbath morning service. I shall not soon forget this blessed meeting when so many gave their hearts to God and so much of their means to His cause. The amount pledged for the financial support of the work was almost unbelievable. The total stands at 35,000 rupees, or approximately \$ 11,000. In this total are included a very large sum for a dispensary in Mauritius and more than \$ 3,000 for a new mission station in Madagascar. I think this result is one of the most beautiful tributes I have ever seen in our mission fields to the spirit of devotion and sacrifice that have insured the expansion of the advent movement.

The work of the assembly dealt not only with elections but with planning for a better organization. The delegates all felt that the time had come to give greater consistency to the union organization and to arrange the work of the local missions in such a way as to provide for a more rational cooperation between missionaries and national workers. It was felt too, by the missionaries in particular, that our developing national workers should be associated more intimately with the administration of the local mission fields. This result was achieved by reducing, in some instances,



Indian Ocean Union Session at Beau-Bassin, Mauritius, June 7-19, 1949.

the scope and size of local mission organizations and by bringing national workers of experience into the local mission responsible committees. The administration of certain institutions of general interest remains in the hands of the union committee. Local funds and activities will be administered locally in the bounds of our denominational policies. We feel sure that this arrangement will lend strength to the work and bring prosperity in providing funds and workers for the development of the local fields.

The union session also showed that a larger number of national workers are now able to shoulder responsibilities. Three Malagasy workers, A. Rasamoelina, N. Rajaonizé, and Bernard, along with two Mauritian evangelists, D. Munroop and N. Seenyen, were ordained to the gospel ministry. We therefore now have eight ordained nationals in the Indian Ocean Union. At the same time three faithful missionaries were ordained to the ministry: H.L. Henriksen, J. Zurcher, and A. Lams. This further qualified group of workers has given assurance and impetus to the building up of the church.

Just a word before leaving Mauritius regarding the expansion of the work locally. The Phoenix academy has made a fine start. After four months of operation, the enrollment stands at nearly two hundred. The prospects are encouraging, so much so that the committee voted to build immediately four additional classrooms. This will make an enrollment of some three hundred possible and will give the school a solid financial basis. H. Evard is giving good leadership to the school, and the mission is cooperating nicely. Phoenix is a day school, but restricted facilities are being provided for a certain number of boarding students. The island is small, and most of the students can come in by public transportation. Boarding facilities are required especially for off-the-island students. We have great hopes that Phoenix will provide the needed workers for Mauritius and other islands adjacent and will give a good Christian education to our some five hundred Mauritian youth.

Charles Monnier, president of the mission, and Jean Belloy, who carries responsibility for the northern sector of the island and a number of departments, are sponsoring an aggressive program in all branches of church activity. Mauritius has several fine church edifices, and the first installment of a large construction at Port-Louis will be undertaken this year. Mauritius helps itself a great deal, for it is a strong financial base.

The work in Mauritius dates back to World War I, when Paul Badaut started what has become a magnificent church. Our activity on the sister island of Réunion is of much more recent date. Paul Girard, now president of the North African Union, began labor at Saint-Denis in April, 1936. Today we have two missionary families in Réunion: Sylvain Meyer, president of the mission, is located at Saint-Pierre in the southwest,

while Roland Vertallier has charge of the Saint-Denis-Le Port sector. Both these families are doing a good work and really have brought an era of advance which promises much for the future.

Plans were laid by the union committee to carry through a number of interesting projects in Réunion. Funds were made available for the construction of a chapel at Ravine des Cabris and Le Port. The « Dispensaire de l'Enfance » under the supervision of Sister Meyer, a trained nurse from La Lignière sanitarium on Lake Geneva, has plans for expansion. Sister Kone-Sone, one of the island's best midwives, is giving much time to this little medical unit. Plans are being laid to expand its facilities, for it unquestionably can play the role assigned to our medical work in this field where superstition and distress can be factors of spiritual blindness and fanaticism. The plan is to open an additional dispensary at Le Port in connection with the new church structure.

Perhaps the most urgent problem we had to consider in Réunion was that of lodgings for our missionaries and national workers. The present lodging facilities are not adequate. We must find means to provide mission-owned homes immediately, or our missionaries will not be able to remain for a full term of service. Just as soon as funds are available, a home must be built at Le Tampon for the southwest sector — that is, at about 450 meters altitude — and at La Montagne for the Saint-Denis sector, at about the same altitude. Better lodgings must be provided too for the two national workers. Apartments cannot be found that provide adequate sanitary living conditions at any price.

Madagascar, where we have the bulk of our mission work in the Indian Ocean, had the first visit of a Seventh-day Adventist missionary in 1926. Elder and Mrs. M. Raspal took up labor in the Ambohitovo and Manjakaray districts of Tananarive that year. We now have ten missionary families working in Madagascar. Our activities are grouped in five local mission fields. Two large schools are operated in the Tananarive

area : the Madagascar seminary and the Ankadifotsy mission school. The Malagasy publishing house will soon be installed in the new building which is being erected at the present time on our Soamanandrarinny property, about six kilometers from the center of Tananarive. H. L. Henriksen is the manager of the publishing house, while serving at the same time as secretary-treasurer of the union. René Villeneuve of the French Publishing House will be arriving in December to take charge of the print shop, which will be fully equipped with material sent out by the General Conference Publishing Department and paid for from Publishing Rehabilitation funds. This project will bring great strength to our work in Madagascar, for it is impossible to get material printed satisfactorily. Our colporteurs are working with two small books in Malagasy, *Steps to Christ* and *In Search of Truth*. With these added printing facilities, our brethren hope to do a great work through the printed page.

The Madagascar seminary has made splendid progress through the years. Jean Zurcher has been leading out since the war. He and his staff are building up a nice institution. The enrollment in all grades stands at nearly 250. Sister Zurcher has given much time to developing a manual arts department for the girls. The department has become an industry making it possible for girls to earn their way through school. They produce some of the finest embroidery work made on the island.

The great need of the seminary at present is for a church building. It is impossible to get all the students together at the same time, and still less possible to invite friends of the vicinity to evangelistic meetings. The union committee feels that one of the first projects on the list should be the erection of a chapel with a seating capacity of at least six hundred. Meanwhile, funds have been provided for the construction of several teachers' cottages and a barn for the growing herd of milch cows. The institution has many other needs. These can only be met as funds are provided.

The Ankadifotsy mission school, with an enrollment of 650 and about 25 teachers, has outgrown its rented quarters. Earlier this year a well-located piece of land was bought in Tananarive with a view toward the construction of a permanent school plant. A. Lams is building up an institution second to none in Madagascar. In fact, last year our school stood very high among the institutions that presented students for the state examinations. Children of some of the best Malagasy families attend Ankadifotsy. We are praying that funds will be granted some day for the construction of the school plant, which is destined to be one of our main evangelistic centers in the Malagasy capital.

In addition to these institutions, we have six nice church buildings in Tananarive, and in each case the mission school is well attended and a good

baptismal class has been formed. Thus, facilities exist in this island capital for a large expansion of our work. The two outstanding drawbacks to date have been a skeleton publishing house and the absence of union mission headquarters. The publishing need has been met, or will be in the next few months. We still have to provide a suitable headquarters from which the work in this vast island field can be efficiently operated. Our union men must carry on their office work from their private homes. This is not satisfactory, and the union committee has undertaken to provide union headquarters facilities. Thus some fifteen hectares of our Soamanandrarinny property has been reserved for the union mission compound and the Madagascar publishing house. The union and publishing house must work in close harmony, with in some cases the same personnel, which makes this close vicinity very practical. To begin with, three offices will be provided in the publishing house construction; later these will be used for the publishing house, and union offices will be built separately. The program also includes the construction of four mission homes. Funds have already been provided for one, which means that the Indian Ocean Union must still have substantial help to carry through this project.

Before leaving Tananarive for a rapid glance over the remaining portions of the Indian Ocean Union, I want to mention another development that has been very encouraging. This concerns our departmental activities. For many years our young people have not had the help they need to become a strength to the cause. The Home Missionary Department and the others languished to some extent because they were carried by men who were overloaded with other activities. Now D. Riemens, formerly of Tunisia, is leading out in the union departments. Enthusiasm and keen spiritual leadership are opening up new

(Please turn to page 11)



European Missionaries in Madagascar. Left to Right : Mr. and Mrs. J. Zurcher, Mr. and Mrs. E. Vervoort, Mr. and Mrs. A. Schnyder, Mrs. E. Fayard, E. Fayard, Mrs. A. Lams, A. Lams, Mrs. R. Jublin, R. Jublin, Mr. and Mrs. H.L. Henriksen, Mrs. H. Pichot, Mrs. D. Riemens, H. Pichot, D. Riemens, Mrs. E. Villeneuve, E. Villeneuve.

“ *Sempre avanti !* ”

By A. Meyer

Field Secretary, Southern European Division

Sixty-five years ago, at a meeting of European Adventists held in Bienne, Switzerland, there was one delegate from the church at Naples. Since that faraway pioneer time, the work has seen varied days in Italy. This land so rich in historical associations, where the Church in its earthly splendor replaced the ancient power of the Caesars, offers to the observer a profusion of subjects for meditation.

The ruins of the Coliseum recall the Roman games and the martyrdom of the first Christians, who were pitilessly delivered to ferocious beasts. It was by the Appian Way that Saul of Tarsus, apostle to the Gentiles, entered the ancient capital of the world, after having landed at Pozzuoli, near Naples. There were at that time several Christian churches in Rome, meeting in private homes.

Since then, however, the dazzling luxury of the churches of Rome, the innumerable legends surrounding certain observances and so-called sacred places, measure the distance traversed since the days of primitive Christianity. A great mystery has developed, and Babylon sits as a queen over nations and peoples.

Under these conditions, it can easily be understood that God's work has encountered and must still reckon with a tenacious and powerful opposition. It is the perpetual combat between David and Goliath.

Nevertheless, the present situation of our work in Italy differs from that of several years ago. In addition to the fine mission seminary and the chapel at Florence, we now have chapels at Messina, Naples, Rome, Bologna, Milan, and Trieste. There is no question but that more are needed, at Genoa, Turin, Palermo, and elsewhere.

It was at Naples, May 25 to 29, that the annual meeting of the South Italian Mission — of which Sicily is a part — was held. M. Fridlin and F. Charpiot of the Division, as well as the writer, attended this session.

There are 672 members in the southern mission, and 23 churches, the largest of which is that of Palermo, Sicily, with more than 100 members. The missionary spirit is especially contagious among these good brethren and sisters. A modest and fervent Sicilian brother, a roving photographer, has won more than fifty souls to Christ by his example and by his missionary work. When asked to tell about his activities, he responded simply: « I cannot tell you exactly how many souls have been won to the Saviour. At the time of my baptism, there were six others, and since that time I have not kept count. God knows better than I. In doing my work, I cannot help speaking of the truth, and soon that becomes for me the essential thing. » Twenty persons were baptized recently in a Sicilian community; almost all of them had been won by lay members.

A young man, the mayor of a municipality, was going on a pilgrimage to Notre Dame de Loretta in order to cleanse himself of the Adventist influence

under which he had been placed by his brother. On the way, he became acquainted with some foreign priests and asked what they thought of Adventism. To his great surprise, they showed a great deal of respect for Adventists, expressing the wish that all Catholics were as fervent and sincere. The young mayor's eyes were opened, and he abandoned his pilgrimage in mid route. Today he is a zealous member of the church.

Other interesting testimonies were heard that beautiful Sabbath day, and eight persons were baptized.

The hearts of our Italian brethren and sisters vibrate and sing. Enthusiasm is as natural as sunshine in this delightful country. The cordiality of their welcome, their Christian joy expressed in songs and in prayers, captivate the visitor, and he quickly succumbs to this beneficent influence.

The second meeting took place at Florence, in the tranquil and beautiful setting of our mission school there. Like the first, it was followed by a lively and profitable workers' meeting. The quiet, shaded surroundings were conducive to meditation and prayer. The simple and plentiful food served by the seminary was much appreciated by all the participants. But, still better, the Bible studies, preaching services, prayer and testimony meetings, strengthened the faith and deepened the determination of our members to do increasingly effective missionary work.

The third meeting was held at Milan, in the new chapel at Piazza Mirabello. This evangelistic center is also the headquarters of the North Italian Mission and contains a number of spacious and attractive offices and other rooms; the impression made on the visitor is excellent, from the moment of entrance. The chapel itself accommodates from three to four hundred persons.

The membership of the mission was 457 at the end of 1948. Here, as throughout Italy, considerable progress is noted in the tithes and offerings. We were greatly impressed by the zeal and fervor of the brethren and sisters, by their attachment to present truth, their devotion to God's cause, and their eagerness to respond to the call of the Master. On the Sabbath, twenty-eight persons were baptized; this was the largest baptismal ceremony which has ever taken place in Italy.

The Italian Union has a fine group of active and consecrated workers. The words of the apostle Paul might today be applied to Italy: « A great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries. » But courage is high and victory is certain. « *Sempre avanti!* »

All the meetings, especially those held in the evening, were well attended, at Naples and Florence as well as at Milan.

The following week a meeting of all the workers of the Austrian Union was held at Fuschl, near Salzburg. It was an ideal choice of place for such a meeting, on the shore of a charming little lake sur-

rounded by magnificent scenery. The five days spent together in that atmosphere of Christian confidence did all of us good; many of the workers expressed their joy at recapturing the «real old-time Adventist spirit.»

True, many difficulties remain to be met in Austria as a result of the present situation. But the workers are going forward with courage, and the churches have the missionary spirit.

The testimony meeting on Sabbath afternoon was extremely interesting. The colporteur leader related how, in one village, the priest welcomed one of our colporteurs in a friendly way: «Work quickly,» he said, «go everywhere, and finish as rapidly as you can, for this afternoon at three o'clock there will be

a meeting at the church and it will be my duty to warm my parishioners against you. But until then, I wish you good success!»

The problems of evangelism were studied in their various aspects, and plans were adopted for a more vigorous effort, especially in the large centers of Austria, without however neglecting the rural regions.

The new mission school which opens this fall will help, we hope, in preparing new workers, a need which is keenly felt just now.

A spirit of unity was manifested in this workers' convention from beginning to end, and the blessing of God was felt. Heavenly influences set the seal on the brotherhood which marked the gathering. With God's help, the fruitage will be seen in practical results.

The Harvest is Ripe

By G. Cavalcante

President, South Italian Mission

The South Italian Mission comprises the region stretching from Sicily to a point about eighty kilometers south of Rome and to the Apennine mountain chain in the northeast. This area of about 150,000 square kilometers contains a population of sixteen million.

The region is characterized particularly by its shape, that of a foot bathed in the blue waters of the Mediterranean, and by its mild, springlike climate. The terrain is mountainous, and volcanoes are numerous. Among these we may note Mount Etna in Sicily, Stromboli in the Lipari Islands, and Vesuvius, near Naples.

Agrigento, Selinunte, Segesta, Syracuse, Tarmina, Paestum, Pompeii, and many other less ancient cities are a silent testimony to the high level of civilization of this antique country and of the peoples who succeeded each other through the centuries. The Sicans and Sicels, the Phoenicians, the Greeks, the Carthaginians, the Romans, the Vandals, the Arabs, the Normans, the French, and the Spanish, one after another left their glorious imprint as well as a long list of mistakes.

A preeminently agricultural country, its principal products are grain, wine, olives, almonds, oranges, lemons, figs, etc.

The inhabitants, gifted with a precocious intelligence and a fertile imagination, are Catholic and very religious in a way which cannot be understood by by northern peoples. This religious spirit manifests itself through festivals, altars, statues, processions, music, fireworks, miracles, prodigies, singing, tradition, story-telling, and a host of other things which afford pleasure but which, alas, are all contrary to the sound doctrine of the gospel and to the spirit of Christ's teachings.

As related in Acts 28 : 11-15, our field once had the privilege of a visit by the great apostle to the Gentiles. While on his way to Rome to appear before Caesar, Paul stayed three days at Syracuse. His ship called at Reggio, and he landed at Pozzuoli, near Naples, where he spent a week with the first Christians at that place.

We are happy that today, in these places visited by the apostle, we have faithful Adventists who look forward to the glorious return of Christ.

Our field came in contact with the third angel's message some seventy years ago, by means of literature sent from the publishing house at Basel to Doctor Ribton, an Englishman living in Naples. In 1877, when J. N. Andrews made a trip through southern Italy, he found a group of Sabbathkeepers at Naples. As conditions were not too favorable for the development of public work, Elder Andrews thought it best to confine his work to visits and Bible studies in private homes. After a brief sojourn in Naples, he had the joy of baptizing Doctor Ribton as well as his wife and daughter in the gulf of Pozzuoli, probably near the spot where the apostle Paul had landed.

In 1885 the Adventist church at Naples was organized with some twenty members, an event reported by the *Signes des Temps* in October of that year. Meetings were held at that time in other places than Naples, but the interests which were aroused died out for lack of workers to follow up the efforts.

The years passed. Here and there a group would spring up as a result of the work of some brother returning from America. Two churches, Gravina and Bari, were organized in Apulia; then the first World War interrupted, to a great extent, the work which had been done with such sacrifice. At the close of the war, many Italian-American brethren felt called to return to their homeland and to bring the truth of the gospel to their parents and relatives, a noble desire which resulted in the organization of several companies in Calabria, Sicily, and Campania.

In 1928, on the occasion of the last assembly of the former Latin Union, the Italian Mission was made a union, and our South Italian Mission came into being. The 125 members of that period were scattered among half a dozen little churches and a number of even smaller companies.

The long period between the two wars, fraught with difficulties and restrictions, was a time of quiet seed-sowing and germination. The work progressed slowly. Even in the midst of the disastrous war,

sincere souls accepted Christ, and our heavenly Father watched tenderly over His trusting people.

As regards evangelism, the situation has completely changed in the postwar period. The disappointment of so many hopes and ambitions, as well as anxiety over an uncertain tomorrow, cause men to listen to the word of God and to find in it consolation, hope, and a sure anchor for their faith. And today we are able to preach the message freely.

The humanitarianism and the generosity of our brethren in America, including the Italian-Americans — most of whom are from southern Italy — have also helped to open new doors for the gospel. These brethren not only sent clothing, food, and other necessities, but they remembered to send the Bread of Life. Bibles and Testaments, books and periodicals, arrived by hundreds of thousands and found an eager welcome. « Cast thy bread upon the waters : for thou shalt find it after many days. »

A number of companies have been raised up by Italian brethren from America by means of correspondence. Brother Messino has for years been writing to relatives and friends in Calabria; and when, at his suggestion, we visited that community, we found a group of fourteen people who were studying the word of God.

A sister more than seventy years of age, living in Chicago, has done an outstanding work in behalf of her acquaintances in Sicily, her homeland. At the close of the war, she entered into correspondence with her relatives and old friends, sending them packages of clothing and food as well as our books and periodicals. The news spread, and many wrote to « Sister » Diminuco saying that they were interested in the truth or that they were Adventists. Hundreds of packages arrived; among the recipients were the postmaster, the mayor, and even the priest. Most of this good seed has fallen among persons who detest our doctrines, but a favorable atmosphere has been created throughout the region. Some have accepted the truth. Through a special gift from this same sister, we have been able to open a small chapel where today a few members and interested persons can meet to study the Scriptures.

Our devoted colporteurs have resolved to visit every village and every home throughout the field — an extremely difficult achievement and one which is requiring enormous physical, moral, and financial sacrifices. Their seed-sowing is being done at great cost — as the Scripture says, « with weeping. » Literature amounting to millions of lire has been distributed everywhere, and considerable interest has been aroused. If we could follow up this work, we could gather in many precious souls. However, in spite of our meager resources, we have been able to baptize a good number and to organize several churches and many companies.

Two of our brave colporteurs, working at the beginning of this year in a little village on the slope of Mount Vesuvius, encountered a wood carver. Having some acquaintance with the gospel already, he joyfully welcomed our colporteurs and immediately began to study the books and to attend our meetings, bringing with him eight other interested persons. When he learned of God's commandments, he immediately cleared out of his workshop all the statues

of saints and madonnas, throwing away merchandise worth more than 250,000 lire. He now makes furniture instead of images. He himself and some of his friends are keeping the Sabbath and are preparing for baptism.

Our lay members also do not wish to be left behind. They are working with all their heart and soul for the Master. One brother is a traveling salesman whose work takes him over a large part of Sicily. Besides his merchandise, he carries with him a good supply of literature which he distributes wherever he goes. Several souls have accepted the message in past years, but last April our joy was complete: In a notoriously Catholic city in Caltagirone, more than 150 persons were present Sabbath morning for a baptismal service. Twenty persons were baptized (a number undreamed of in the past) and a church was organized. In the afternoon a marriage ceremony was performed in the presence of more than three hundred people, in spite of the priest's threat to excommunicate anyone who should dare to attend a Protestant ceremony.

A few days later, in the same place, a great festival in honor of the Madonna was held, attended by the Bishop and other speakers. All the Catholics were exhorted to confess their sins and to pray to the Madonna for pardon and for the conversion of the Protestants in that place.

Public meetings are being held with good attendance in several cities, but in only two cities do we have chapels adequate for effective work. At Naples and Messina, at the beginning of this year, dedication services were held for two fine chapels, with offices for the mission and apartments for workers.

In spite of the scarcity of buildings and the prejudice against Adventists, we have been able to rent several halls in suitable locations in which our churches can meet. However, they are inadequate to the needs of our constantly growing membership. In a warm climate such as ours, we need more space.

At our annual meeting, which took place at the end of May and which for the first time we were able to hold in our own chapel in Naples, the number of delegates from the churches gave us some idea of the development of God's work in our field. M. Fridlin with his warm and stirring words, A. Meyer, always serene and far-sighted, F. Charpiot with his characteristic smile and inspiring talks, as well as the brethren of the Italian Union, succeeded in kindling a new flame in the hearts of those present. The delegates have returned to their churches and have set to work with renewed zeal to seek out their brothers who are lost in error and in sin.

We have reached the concluding phase of the advent movement in our field. The harvest is ripe. Seventy-five persons were baptized during the first six months of this year, and a good number are preparing for baptism during the next few months. The Bible Correspondence Course, the new means given us by Providence, is daily bringing us in contact with new souls who hunger and thirst after truth.

Our 700 members in the 23 churches and various companies, our 1,000 Sabbath school members, and the 300 Missionary Volunteers, are all uniting with our twenty valiant colporteurs and the dozen workers in gathering in the glorious harvest for the granary above.

Two Months in the Cameroun Bush — Concluded

By M. Fridlin

Secretary, Southern European Division

Our preparation for the long trip into the northern part of the country brought the whole Nanga-Eboko mission station into a feverish state of activity. It was in reality an expedition which was setting out, for the two heavily loaded cars would cover a distance of 2,500 kilometers. Gasoline, camp cots, provisions, drinking water, cooking utensils, and all the other necessary items were ready for loading. We retired to snatch a few short hours of rest before rising at two o'clock. At three o'clock we were off.

After a drive of about four hours, we made our first stop in Ndoumbi, one of our large mission stations in the Cameroun, and there we ate breakfast. Ndoumbi is a very interesting station, situated in the clearing of a large forest near a native village, which is peopled by a branch of the Maka tribe. The construction of this mission station was completed in 1936 and 1937, but the mission work itself for this tribe was begun a few years earlier. Today in the Ndoumbi station and the twenty outstations connected with it we have a large number of members and many pupils. The main station includes the large mission house and a smaller building for guests traveling through, a school building with 120 students, a dormitory for students, homes for native workers, and a simple but beautiful chapel seating six hundred persons which was built from money saved up during the war. A few months after the end of the war, the missionary and his family had to leave this station for a much-needed furlough. Sad to say, the mission house has been empty since that time, but fortunately a capable, consecrated native evangelist, Salomon Olinga, has taken up the responsibility of supervising the station with its chain of outstations and has been carrying on satisfactorily. It would nevertheless be well if this station could again be manned by a missionary family in order that the work might be further developed in this important district.

The Maka tribe is primitive and needy. There are all kinds of diseases, from goiter to numerous kinds of skin disease. Child mortality is from 60 to 70 per cent in the villages. It would be well if, in the near future, medical missionary work could be undertaken for these unfortunate peoples.

After a short rest at the Ndoumbi station, we continued our journey, passing through Bertoua, Betare-Oya, which is in the center of the gold-mining district, and on to Meiganga. Here the missionaries of the Protestant Sudan Inland Mission welcomed us as their guests.

At the first rays of dawn, we again set out on our journey, this time through Ngaoundere, the last administrative and industrial city of the plateau. An hour later we reached the steep mountainside commonly known as the « Falaise, » where our road suddenly began to twist into a zigzag course down to the Benue plains below. This Falaise cuts the Cameroun into two totally different territories. The

difference between south and north is as great as between day and night, and during the dry season the contrast is almost overwhelming. It is an entirely different world. The temperature is much higher, and the air is intemperately dry and hot. Under this intense heat of the burning tropical sun, the sky loses its blueness and gives off only a blinding brightness.

The plant life likewise suddenly presents another picture. In place of the fertile soil and the heavy forests of the south, one finds dwarfed trees and bushes growing out of a poor, sandy soil. The population too is different. As one enters this area, the heat becomes intense, and thirst begins to torture European and native alike.

Two hours after sunset we drove into Garoua, the main city of the Benue plains, and there we spent the night. We had covered a distance of 800 kilometers, and even when we lay down to sleep we could not help thinking of the numerous large villages we had passed through whose people do not yet know about the advent message. What an overwhelming task confronts the missionaries in the Cameroun!

After a refreshing sleep, we again set out on our journey, coming ever nearer to our destination. During the afternoon we reached Maroua, an administrative town for the northern point of the Cameroun. This small city is surrounded by rocky cliffs and hills and is beat upon unmercifully by the tropical sun. In spite of the indescribable heat, this village is very lively, because we are now in the center of a heavily populated area.

Another twenty-five kilometers and we finally reached Dogba, where at the foot of rocky mountains in which many of the natives have their homes, we find an attractive mission station which bears witness to the power of the advent message. This small station stands out like a light in that dark heathen land. Brother and Sister A. Nion, a French missionary couple, with their three children (two others had to be left behind in Europe because of their education) gave us a hearty welcome.

The Dogba station was erected by Brother and Sister Bergstrom in 1931. These missionaries proved themselves true pioneers in this difficult province. Mission work in the northern Cameroun is much more difficult than in the south. In spite of the fact that Brother Bergstrom was confronted with discouragement on every hand, and that he had to live in a mud house, he courageously took up the work and, together with his faithful wife, labored for sixteen years in that station. Finally, about two years ago, funds could be provided to build him a house of brick and cement. But as the house was finished, this faithful pioneer never planned for a moment to live in the house himself. He requested that a younger missionary family come and take up the work in the Dogba station, while he himself started a new work some

ninety kilometers farther on among the people of a new tribe. His request was granted.

Before we speak further about the work in this difficult part of the Cameroun, we should direct our attention toward the population of this area. Along the coast, with the virgin forest areas of the south and the bordering districts, one finds numerous large and small animist heathen tribes, while in the northern part of the country one sees the Fulbe, an Islamic shepherd people who entered this area during the first half of the past century. These Fulbe hordes, well armed and mounted on horses, came with irresistible force and drove the weaker native tribes before them. The Bantu tribes were driven south and west into the rocky mountain regions of the northern Cameroun, where we find the Kirdi today, a name given them by the Fulbe which means « heathen. » These Kirdi, of which there are a few hundred thousand, are made up of a number of tribes and sometimes reach a density of population of about 300 people per square kilometer.

While the Fulbe have taken over the open pasture land and have established centers there, the Kirdi eke out a miserable subsistence from the rocky mountain slopes. The skin of the Fulbe tribe is dark, and they have fine, symmetrical features. These tall, slender people are intelligent and teachable and earn their livelihood by cattle breeding and trading. But, as has already been mentioned, they are strongly Islamic and are therefore not susceptible to the gospel.

The Kirdi, on the other hand, are Sudan negroes and somewhat larger than the people of the Bantutribe. They are composed of various tribes and speak a number of dialects. They often wage war with one another or with their conquerors. This people is strong and is increasing quite rapidly. They raise goats and chickens and often resort to open stealing. On the narrow strips of land on the rocky mountain sides, they plant peanuts and millet, and these form their main items of diet. Even today the Kirdi refuse to have any contact with civilization, and every time a European comes near their mountains, they disappear into the caves in the mountains where they cannot be found.

Nevertheless, Brother Bergstrom has succeeded, with the help of God and of the gospel, in making an entrance into this tribe; and in so doing, he has earned the admiration of the colonial administration. As already stated, the work is difficult, but Brother Bergstrom, together with Brother Nion, is working unceasingly to proclaim the advent message to these peoples.

We visited Brother and Sister Bergstrom in their second temporary mud house which they have now erected in Koza, between Mora and Mokolo. Their goal is to spread the gospel among the people of the Matakam tribe, and we are sure that, with the help of God, they will succeed.

This understanding missionary couple possess only the bare essentials in their simple mud house. We asked Brother Bergstrom if he were happy amid these primitive surroundings. He smiled and said, « Why shouldn't I be happy? I have the most modern comforts in my home—American furniture! » However, this « American furniture » is nothing more than gasoline

crates piled one on the other which serve this family as cabinet, bookcase, etc. Such is the true missionary spirit which we were privileged to notice repeatedly in this home.

We spent the Sabbath with the Bergstroms and the Nions in their nice little chapel on the Dogba station. About 250 of the natives were present. On Sunday we had a workers' meeting in which some twelve national workers participated. Hundreds of natives are studying the truth in the baptismal classes. Our work has gained a foothold in this area, and in the near future we can count on even greater results in this difficult field.

Our medical missionary work plays a prominent role among these people. Daily our missionaries in the northern Cameroun spend many hours caring for the physical needs of these unfortunate natives. Plans have been laid to build a mission house on this new station, and some of the funds have already been provided for this purpose. A school building is also being built here.

It was a very pleasant experience for us, together with the two missionaries in the northern Cameroun, to visit our various outstations, including some of the colonies of the Kirdi tribe in the rocky mountain regions where the glad news of a soon-coming Saviour is being proclaimed.

Convinced that God, who has begun His work in the northern Cameroun under difficult circumstances, will also continue to bless it, we set out on our return trip, and in two and a half days we arrived at Batouri, one of our main mission stations in the southeastern part of the country, near the Ubangi-Shari border. Here we spent the week end. R. Hirschy and his family, a Swiss missionary family, work in this area. The national workers on this station, along with the two hundred students, cordially greeted us with songs and speeches. From eight to nine hundred people attended the Sabbath service, and Sabbath afternoon there was a baptism of fourteen native converts.

About twenty-five outstations are connected with the Batouri station but unfortunately, as is usually the case in this field, there are not enough national workers to man all the stations. The two great needs of our mission work in the Cameroun are a mission seminary where national workers can be educated as ministers and the strengthening of our medical missionary work all along the line.

When we returned to Nanga-Eboko we attended a session of the newly-formed union committee and then set out on our trip home.

For us it was a great inspiration to spend this two months among our members and missionaries in the Cameroun. The experiences of the past ten years, during which our message has gained a firm foothold in the Cameroun, proves not only that this is a fruitful field but also that we have bright prospects before our missionaries. May the Lord of the harvest endow them with the necessary grace and power to measure up to these possibilities. But may God also make many of His children in other lands willing to go out and serve among these tribes of the far-flung Cameroun field, in order that the gospel may become a transforming power among these peoples.

RECAPITULATION

Name of Conference or Mission	Number of Churches	Previous Membership	Baptism	Vote	Letter	Total Gains	Apostasy	Death	Letter	Total Losses	Net Gain	Present Membership	Ord. Ministers	Lic. Ministers	Credentialed Missionaries	Licensed Missionaries	Bible Instr.	Elem. School Teachers	Canvassers	Total Laborers	Number of Sab. Schools	Sab. School Membership	Average Attendance	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
1. SOUTHERN EUROPEAN DIV. ...														15	2	6	23	—	—	—	46			
2. Austrian Union Conference	35	2401	96	5	16	117	15	8	26	49	68	2469	19	1	3	5	2	—	18	48	34	2478	190	
3. Czechoslovakian » »	114	5021				NO REPORT						5021	33	3	2	3	19	—	8	68	160	5445	520	
4. Franco-Belgian » »	70	3337	44	3	5	52	7	4	11	22	30	3367	32	18	3	27	8	2	144	234	58	1894	150	
5. Hungarian » »	154	5682	317	26	26	369	41	15	31	87	282	5964	26	11	4	15	34	—	82	172	154	6234	499	
6. Jugoslavian » »	157	5729				NO REPORT						5729	12	5	—	13	—	—	—	30	177	6000	400	
7. Rumanian » »	551	25000				NO REPORT						25000	78	11	—	47	—	—	—	136	560	27720	2500	
8. Swiss » »	56	3029	60	5	28	93	31	16	23	70	23	3052	23	5	3	9	6	3	48	97	55	2285	160	
9. French West and Eq. Afr. U. M.	8	1463				NO REPORT						1463	5	6	—	19	72	30	—	132	101	6113	560	
10. Indian Ocean Union Mission ..	49	1686	21		33	54	19	6	33	58	-4	1682	13	7	1	32	—	5	8	66	52	2737	220	
11. Italian » »	44	1513	124	4	21	149	3	1	35	39	110	1623	18	3	7	14	3	—	50	95	59	2031	180	
12. North African » »	17	583	10	—	9	19	2	1	8	11	8	591	8	2	—	10	—	—	34	54	17	531	40	
13. Portuguese » »	24	1298	74	4	5	83	3	5	5	13	70	1368	8	8	2	3	1	4	8	34	27	1397	120	
14. Bulgarian Conference	39	1751				NO REPORT						1751	9	4	—	10	—	—	—	23	29	901	70	
15. Grecian Mission	5	158	2		3	5		1	—	1	4	162	2	1	1	—	1	—	1	6	5	155	10	
16. Spanish Mission	10	618	19		10	29		2	10	12	17	635	4	1	2	7	1	1	21	37	12	656	60	
TOTALS FOR 2nd QUARTER 1949 :	1333	59269	767	47	156	970	121	59	182	362	608	59877	305	88	34	237	147	45	422	1278	1500	66577	5700	
TOTALS FOR 2nd QUARTER 1948 :	1295	51554	5399	69	332	5800	792	355	300	1447	4353	55907	285	100	31	231	66	27	277	1017	1379	60127	5030	

A Trip in Oran

By P. Girard

President, North African Union Mission

Here I am at the Mostaganem railway station, after a day spent on the train. J. Reynaud is on the spot to welcome me in his winning and courteous way. In spite of more than twenty years of faithful service in the Master's cause, Elder Reynaud is still the same, smiling and gracious. One falls immediately under the spell of his brotherly affection.

Together we take up the various problems of his immense «parish.» The district in which he is responsible for the giving of the third angel's message consists of at least 40,000 square kilometers, and his problems — like those of North Africa as a whole — are in proportion to the size of the territory.

Our attention is occupied principally with ethnological questions. We must reach an audience of many different races, religions, and customs. Islam writes its huge question mark across the whole picture. Elder Reynaud has risen to the challenge, with the help of the Lord, and among the persons baptized last year was a brother of European origin but who had accepted Mohammedanism. This brother, now firmly convinced of the truth and overflowing with ardent zeal, is working for his former coreligionists. Already the faith of several has been strongly shaken, and although they have not yet accepted our message, they have come to realize that salvation is to be found only in Jesus Christ.

The Sabbath spent with the Mostaganem church is a refreshing pause in the pilgrimage to the Holy City. What a wonderful fellowship among this group which is determined to arise and conquer in Christ and for Christ! One brother more than seventy years

of age, silverhaired but stouthearted, tells of how the Lord blessed him during the Big Week. He might also speak of his Ingathering experiences, for in spite of his age he is among the most courageous. It is thrilling to see how the children of the church, following the example of the «grandfather,» go from village to village distributing truth-filled literature.

The meeting ends with the ordination of Fr. Fernandez as elder of the church. Elder Reynaud, often occupied with the companies at Bouguirat, Relizane, Bellevue, Orléansville and vicinity, and even Tiaret, needs to feel himself supported. Brother Fernandez, deeply moved by the confidence which the church has reposed in him, as well as by the Heaven-accorded privilege, asks for our prayers that he may faithfully carry the responsibility placed upon him by this ordination. All the members take this occasion to reconsecrate themselves to the Master's service.

During the few days which follow, we accompany Elder Reynaud on a visit to several companies in the Mostaganem district. At Relizane we find the earliest church members in North Africa, for it was here that the light of the message shone for the first time in this field.

My trip takes me next to the city of Oran, where I have the pleasure of meeting J. Colomar, the active and devoted shepherd of the church. With R. Esposito, young and exuberant, whom I am to meet at Sidel-Abbès, Brother Colomar has charge of a territory at least as large as that of Elder Reynaud, and with problems no less perplexing.

Just now their activities are centered particularly

in the region of Sidi-bel-Abbès and Tèlagh. Some dozens of persons are interested, and Brother Esposito writes:

«At Tèlagh the battle has entered a new phase. The priest has been denouncing us from the pulpit, threatening to excommunicate anyone who might come to the meeting or receive us in his home. Brother Colomar and I called on him and took up the matter with him in a Christian way. We prayed together, and he seemed deeply moved. We also exchanged books and periodicals.

«This week I went to Tèlagh again to continue my visits. As if by a miracle, the doors were more open than usual. Almost all our listeners had provided themselves with Bibles, and the work is beginning under favorable auspices.

«At Bel-Abbès, several are preparing for baptism.»

At Tèlagh and at Rochambeau I find the Pellicer family. With such a cordial welcome, one forgets his fatigue and his worries and finds refreshment in the truly Christian atmosphere. These are the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of those who, having discovered the truth for themselves through studying the Bible, were the first in North Africa to get in contact with the Adventists in Switzerland.

During the hours spent at Rochambeau, we study the great problem of evangelizing the Arabs. The Arabic language and customs hold no secrets for our brethren and sisters. We are therefore trying to lay the foundation for an evangelistic effort in behalf of the Mohammedans. With the help of the Division, we are considering the possibility of an Arabic program to be broadcast over the radio in the not too distant future. A Bible Correspondence Course adapted to Arabic beliefs and customs is also under preparation.

But the time passes quickly, and other questions demand my return to Algiers. I must leave this beautiful Oran, where such a great work remains to be done. But how can I leave without falling on my knees before the Lord of the harvest to entreat Him to direct and bless the plans which we are making to finish the immense task? May He strengthen, encourage, and bless His humble instruments, the workers and church members, for the greater glory of His name.

Itinerating in the Indian Ocean Union

Continued from page 3

vistas. The advantages of this increased departmental activity are being felt in all the fields I visited. Our young people in particular are developing into an aggressive evangelistic agency. Certainly we must support Elder Riemens and follow him with our prayers as he pushes forward.

The various local missions in Madagascar are developing nicely. Special emphasis is being placed upon work in the villages. Antsirabé, Tamatave, Diego, and Majunga, in addition to Tananarive, are becoming centers where workers can be trained and sent out to the far corners of each field. The Antsirabé and

Majunga fields are the best developed. E. Fayard is having unprecedented success in his field as regards the number of baptisms. Two new bush stations are being organized. In the Majunga field, Edgar Ville-neuve is very happy with his growing working force. A new work is being developed at Port-Bergé, and several other outstations are being opened in the Marovoay district. A nice mission home has just been finished at Majunga, and small quarters have been provided for a mission training school.

Brother and Sister A. Schnyder at Diego and Brother and Sister R. Jublin at Tamatave are faced with the perplexities of fields which are still in the beginning stage. Many hundreds of thousands of natives live in these two areas and must receive the message quickly. We pray the Lord to send funds and workers into these needy fields. We must stand by these young missionaries out on the rim of Madagascar, beset with difficulties, but determined to unfurl the flag of Prince Emmanuel.

There remains one field to be mentioned, the Seychelles Islands. This is a very isolated field. No Division or General Conference representative has visited it. During the war K. Sturzenegger and his family spent ten years of isolation in these beautiful islands. Brother Sturzenegger did a good work, and now Elder and Mrs. H. Salzmänn are in charge. They have the help of two nationals and are working hard to establish churches in other islands than Mahé. Elder Salzmänn was at the union session in Mauritius, and how happy he was to be able to meet with the other missionaries! He was more happy, however, when he could again set his face toward the Seychelles. He and his wife are typical of our sturdy advent youth, well trained for service and ready to labor under all circumstances so that the cross of Christ can be uplifted.

Elder Salzmänn spoke of the need in his field of a mission yacht. Shall we not find a way to provide this necessary means of transportation in the islands? Two small chapels will have to be provided, too, if we expect the work to develop on the outlying islands.

After two months of itinerating, my heart was aglow as I turned homeward to Europe. I shall never forget these days of association with one of the finest groups of missionaries I have met anywhere. May the Lord bless them each and every one and give them the 250 souls they are asking for their hire in 1949. May He also keep them in good health. And let us not forget the part that God has assigned to us in upholding the hands of these His faithful servants.

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* * *
HERE AND THERE
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A. V. Olson, former president of our Division and now a general vice-president of the General Conference, was able to spend two weeks in our field before returning to Washington, D. C., following his visit to the Northern European Division. Elder Olson attended the annual meeting of the North France Conference at Paris as well as that of the Belgian Conference at Brussels. It was a real treat for our people to hear Elder Olson's Bible studies, sermons, and inspiring reports from the world field. W. E. Read, field secretary of the General Conference, accompanied by Mrs. Read, also attended the Paris annual meeting and contributed by his counsel and his studies to the success of this meeting.

*

W. R. Beach has returned from his two-month trip to the Indian Ocean Union Mission. His fine and enthusiastic report will be found on the first page of this issue.

*

We are sad to report the death of one of our good workers in the French Publishing House, H. Hecketsweiler, who was for a number of years the superintendent of the bindery. Brother Hecketsweiler passed away on July 26 after a long and serious illness. To the bereaved family, and especially to Sister Hecketsweiler and their son, J. J. Hecketsweiler, who is in mission service in French Marocco, we extend our heartfelt Christian sympathy.

*

The Northern European Division, in cooperation with our Radio Department, is preparing a Dutch program to be broadcast over Radio Luxembourg. Axel Varmer, radio secretary of the Northern European Division, hopes that preparations will soon be complete so that he and his production staff may come to Paris to make the recordings in our Paris studio. This Dutch program will reach not only the population of Holland but also the four million Flemish people in our Belgian Conference.

*

P. Bénézéch, who has been serving as superintendent of the South Cameroun Mission, recently arrived in France for a well-earned furlough. His wife preceded him a few weeks ago with their youngest daughter. They are spending most of their furlough period of the Collonges seminary, where two and one half years ago they left their two older children. Elder Bénézéch reports that 83 persons were recently baptized among the various tribes of the southern Cameroun. We wish the Bénézéch family a pleasant furlough in their homeland.

*

The press work continues to make progress in our Division. A number of newspapers in various parts of our territory are heralding the work of Seventh-day Adventists. During the annual session of the Belgian Conference, held in Brussels July 12-17, A. De Ligne was appointed press secretary of that conference. We hope that in the near future all our local conferences and mission fields, recognizing the importance of this work, will encourage some of our members to qualify themselves for work with the press.

*

During the Sabbath service at the annual meeting of the Alpine Conference in Solzburg, Austria, July 20-24, two workers, M. Drechsler and O. Lenzi, were ordained to the gospel ministry. An ordination service was also held at North France Conference session for P. Hoigneré. We wish these workers the Lord's richest blessings in their ministry.

*

Erratum: It was stated on this page in our last issue that Claude Mæder was to work in the West African Union Mission in the territory of the Southern African Division. This was an error; the West African Union Mission is an unattached union, not belonging to any division. We like to be accurate in our reporting and are happy to make this correction.

*

On July 2 the new church building in Valence, France, was dedicated. M. Fridlin presided at the dedication ceremony. The main hall, which seats about 250, was filled to capacity, and even the mayor of the city was present for the occasion. P. Lanarès, president of the South France Conference, had arranged a photographic exposition showing the various phases of the work throughout the world which evoked a great deal of interest on the part of those in attendance. In the evening the « Voix de l'Espérance » quartet from the Paris studio gave a concert of sacred music. This Valence building is unquestionably the best we have in southern France and will contribute to the rapid expansion of evangelistic work in this part of the field.

*

We were happy to have with us during the last two months H. G. Stæhr who came over from the United States to prepare the second series of German radio programs. Elder Stæhr was accompanied by his wife, and during his stay he also visited a number of churches and attended annual meetings in various parts of our field. We are sure that this second series of German programs will be appreciated by the many listeners to this broadcast. H. Erzberger, pastor of the Berne church, served as announcer, and music was furnished by the Buser trio from the Basel church.

*

W. R. Beach presided at the dedication service of the Trieste chapel in Italy on July 30. The Trieste church is one of the largest in the Italian Union, and the building is also one of the best in that field.

*

A new soul-winning record has been made in the Italian Union. During the second quarter of this year our workers there had the joy of baptizing 124 new members. This quarter was the best in the history of the advent movement in Italy.

*