



QUARTERLY REVIEW

ORGAN OF THE SOUTHERN EUROPEAN DIVISION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF S.D.A.

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Number 2

Visiting in the Southern European Division

G. M. Mathews

It was my privilege to accompany Elder Paul Steiner, Division educational secretary, to some of the churches and educational institutions of the Southern European Division from July 25 to October 14, 1963. Elder Steiner was a gracious host and guide as well as a faithful translator. I shall ever be indebted to him for all his kindnesses. I found happy, friendly, dedicated workers everywhere I visited, and all were most attentive to my needs and desires. I am convinced that God's great work in these many and diverse lands is in good hands—whom God is using, together with the laity, in promoting His work vigorously and effectively. Before I begin a more detailed account of my impressions of the churches and schools I visited I must say that the scenery in these many countries and islands is most beautiful, enchanting and inspiring. It is difficult to refrain from launching into a description of these lovely places but I shall confine my report to the Lord's work.

In Vienna we were heartened to see much interest in establishing a primary church school there for the

several Adventist churches in that beautiful city on the Danube. Many difficult problems lie in the way, but the brethren plan to appoint a committee to study these and lead the churches into establishing a school if possible. Our prayers will continue for them as they attempt to follow God's plan of education for their precious children. I was deeply impressed with the interest and determination of the Division officers and the Board of Bogenhofen Seminary to increase its facilities, personnel, and curriculum so that it will more adequately serve the German-speaking youth of the Division.

Those in charge of our work on the island of Mauritius have constructed a modest but attractive, efficient secondary school on this island with over 700,000 inhabitants. Our inspection of the school, called the Phoenix Adventist School, disclosed excellent progress in every way since the last visit of Elder Steiner, including well above average laboratory facilities for chemistry, a beginning for physics and a good start for a central library. This school with 500 students has an

enviable reputation in the island and must turn down many applications each year due to lack of classroom space. As Elders Lanarès, Steiner, and I laid upon the believers the necessity of sending their own children to this fine school in harmony with God's plan for the education of their children, we were pleased to note a renewed interest in increasing the number of Adventist pupils in the school. We were privileged to conduct a teachers' institute here which seemed to be deeply appreciated. Elder Hans Salzmänn is the new mission director as well as the temporary director of the school, assisted in the latter post by Brother Marc Michel.

Elder Salzmänn is a capable, experienced, energetic leader and we were most encouraged by the progress of our work here as well as the loyal, dedicated spirit of the teachers, pastors and evangelists.

Reunion Island had no Adventist school at the time of our visit, but the mission leaders plan to open a school in St. Denis as soon as a building can be constructed. Another school is scheduled for St. Pierre to serve the several churches in that part of this beautiful island with its majestic mountains. Brethren Quirici, Verfaillie, and the national ministers are pushing evangelism energetically. It was our privilege to assist in the ordination of the first national worker to be thus honored in Reunion—Brother Max Vitry. We were most pleased to find small groups of Adventist believers in many places



Teachers' Convention in Soamandrarinny (Madagascar) with G.M. Mathews, P. Lanarès, and P. Steiner

on the island, and we know God will use these faithful witnesses to share their faith with those about them. A new church at St. Benoit had just been organized about four months ago, which speaks well for the progress of God's work on this island of 350,000 inhabitants. Our church is the only Protestant church on the island, and the challenge is great, and the burdens resting on the few faithful missionaries are heavy indeed! Of the seven and one-half weeks we spent in the Indian Ocean Union Mission most of the time was scheduled for the large island of Madagascar, where we have many members, churches and schools. We assisted in a union youth camp ably led by Brother Quirici. He was supported by a number of ministers and teachers from various sections of the union. Elders Steiner, Lanarès and I conducted a teachers' convention at Tananarive for the teachers of the schools in Tananarive, Tamatave, Antsirabe, and Fianarantsoa missions, and one in the Ankazambo School near Befandriana for the teachers in the northern section of the republic. We had a brief meeting

with the ministers and teachers of Majunga. Several days were spent in studying the problems of the union training school at Tananarive. A series of recommendations were made as a result of this study, which the union administrators welcomed and plan to implement as rapidly as possible. This school is to be the exclusive training school for all evangelists and teachers of all the missions of the union, and these training courses are to be of post-secondary level and available only to bona fide graduates of standard secondary courses of study. This will upgrade considerably the educational level of the ministers and provide, for the first time, professional and technical training for the teachers.

It was an inspiring experience to meet with our workers and members in Fianarantsoa, Tuléar and Fort-Dauphin, the latter two churches considering the establishing of new schools in these important cities of the republic. I might add that traveling by automobile over these long distances with unimproved roads demands much physical endurance. We should be grateful to our Euro-

pean missionaries who spend much of their time on these roads and working in isolated, primitive areas.

But it is most heartening to discover many real jewels in each of our churches in these provinces. We met an ex-witch doctor in one village who promptly rang a bell outside a chapel he had constructed as part of his home, and soon a sizeable group of the villagers came to the chapel for a brief meeting. At several of the churches the workers pointed out young people who had lost an entire year's schooling because they refused to take their final examinations on the Sabbath. At the Ankazambo School I photographed a group of boys and girls who walk and carry their clothing to the school in the fall, and return to their homes in the spring in the same manner. The distance is over four hundred kilometers, and requires eight days of travel! I was impressed with the tremendous effort many of these youth are making to secure a Christian education. It sets a pattern of dedication that should challenge all of us in our work for the Lord.

The European and national workers in the local missions, schools, and the union are working hard and effectively to finish God's work in this great union mission. The challenges are legion and increasing. Elder Lanarès is surely the man for the hour in the Indian Ocean Union Mission. Brother Collin's long experience and his intimate knowledge of these areas make him a valued worker and counsellor indeed. We left this busy union with a feeling that the work of God is in capable, dedicated hands. Let us pray for our extensive work in this island union.

The last two weeks of my itinerary were spent in Italy, Switzerland, Spain and Portugal. Elder Steiner and I visited the union school at Florence, and found the school year about to begin with a slightly increased enrollment. The faculty and students were spending the very first week in the Ingathering work, and the enthusiastic efforts were being well rewarded.

We conducted a teachers' institute in Renens, Switzerland, for the teachers of the three schools in the Swiss Union: Zurich, La Chaux-de-Fonds and Renens. While in Switzerland we also visited these schools and

conducted a formal inspection of the Zurich Intermediate School.

We were most happy to find the Division Training College at Colonges brimful (and overflowing) of happy industrious students – including over forty from the United States. Our inspection revealed extensive improvements since the last official visit and definite plans for further expansion and improvements. A long-needed new dormitory will be started this spring. Dr. Zurcher and his well-trained, dedicated staff are continuing to make this fine college the training school for the conferences and missions of the Division territory both in Europe and overseas.

The Spanish Mission has a group of capable, dedicated, enthusiastic leaders and workers presided over by Elder Angel Codejon. They are operating two elementary schools – one in Madrid and one in Barcelona –

and are searching for a site for a secondary school. There is an elementary school for girls in Lisbon, Portugal, and a fine location with farm and buildings sufficient to begin a secondary school in Pero Negro, about thirty kilometers north of Lisbon. The brethren have been trying for several months to secure permission from the government to open this school. Let us join them in praying that this permission may soon be granted.

As I left Lisbon for my homeland, I thanked God for the leaders He has raised up in this large territory with its many millions of judgement-bound souls, and for the far-reaching plans that are being made to push the work of God vigorously in all of its phases to the intent that it may be soon finished in this interesting, challenging Division.

Missionary Sailings 1963

January

Mr. and Mrs. H. Salzmann, and three children, of Switzerland to Mauritius (returning)

Mr. A. G. Roth, of Switzerland to Usumbura, Rwanda, South Africa

February

Mr. and Mrs. Pedro Brito Ribeiro, of Portugal to Mozambique

April

Miss Gertrude Obenaus, of Austria to Cameroun

June

Mr. and Mrs. P. Lanarès, and two children, of France to Madagascar

Mr. Rolf Laich, of Switzerland to Cameroun

July

Mr. and Mrs. Amilcar Lopes, and one child, of Portugal to Angola

Miss Esther Reynolds Duarte, of Portugal to Angola

Mr. Roland Buyck, of France to Madagascar

Mr. and Mrs. G. Poublan, and two children, of France to Cameroun

August

Mrs. Roland Buyck, and two children, of France to Madagascar

Mr. Daniel Salzmann, Jr., of Switzerland to Mauritius (returning)

Mr. and Mrs. José Pedro Sincer, and one child, of Portugal to Angola

September

Mr. and Mrs. Francis Augsburg, and three children, of Switzerland to Cameroun (returning)

Mr. and Mrs. K. Waber, and three children, of Switzerland to Cameroun (returning)

Mr. and Mrs. Antonio Narciso, of Portugal to Angola (returning)

Oktober

Mr. and Mrs. E. Villeneuve, and one child, of Switzerland to Madagascar (returning)

Miss Margrit Hugentobler, of Switzerland to Cameroun

Mrs. Rolf Laich, and two children, of Switzerland to Cameroun

Mr. and Mrs. Manuel Miguel, and one child, of Portugal to the Cape Verde Islands

Miss Leonilde Tavares, of Portugal to Angola

Mr. and Mrs. Orlando Costa, and two children, of Portugal to the Azores Islands

November

Mr. and Mrs. Filipe Esperancinha, of Portugal to the Azores Islands



Students from Befandriana walked 400 kilometers with their belongings on their heads to attend our school

The Italian Union Mission

«After Many Days...»

G. Cavalcante

For many years the number 3,000 has lingered in my mind like the refrain of a song. At times I looked at this number with a longing similar to that of a mountaineer who has to reach the almost unattainable summit.

To many this number 3,000 seems small, but when one realizes that the attainment of this goal has taken about 100 years plus the toil and prayers of a handful of consecrated workers and dedicated members, then the number does not seem so insignificant. Human labor alone has not worked this miracle. It could not have been accomplished but for the aid of the Holy Spirit and the hosts of heaven.

Three thousand is a Biblical number. Three thousand men fell in the desert in one day (Ex. 32:28); Solomon «spake three thousand proverbs» (1 Kings 4:32); and three thousand souls were added to the first Christian church in Jerusalem in one day (Acts 2:41). What a rich harvest in that city which had so shortly before witnessed the crucifixion of Christ!

And now I am happy to be able to write that the Italian Union Mission has reached the number 3,000! No, not in one day! It has taken almost one hundred years!

It was in the year 1864 that a Polish gentleman by the name of Czechowski appeared in the town of Torre Pellice. He rented a small storage room in a shop and hung on the walls some awe-inspiring pictures to explain Daniel and the Revelation. The people came to listen, not entering far into the room but gathering outside and peeping through the door. As the people listened in astonishment to his explanations, some laughed and others were moved with pity for the poor man who no doubt had lost his reason! But Czechowski went on speaking in his faulty French. This incident was reported in the *Bozzetti Evangelici* by a Waldensian preacher. Although the actions of this man seemed ridiculous to many, it bore fruit. «As a result of

his (Czechowski) explanations of the prophecies in Daniel and Revelation, several people accepted the Advent message. The first baptized Seventh-day Adventists in Europe were J. D. Geymet and Cathrine Revel» (R. Gerber, *Le Mouvement Adventiste*, p. 144).

In Naples, a city so fanatically religious and yet which played a leading role in the story of Protestantism in Italy, more believers were found.

In the year 1874 the General Conference sent J. N. Andrews to Europe, and during one of his visits to Naples a baptism was conducted in the harbor of Pozzuoli, the very place where the apostle Paul some 1800 years before had first set foot on European soil. Among the baptismal candidates was an English doctor, Dr. Riblon, his wife and daughter. They were on their way to Egypt where they were killed shortly after their arrival.

A few years later the first two churches were established in Italy: one in Torre Pellice with 14 members and the second in Naples with 25 members.

Several other groups were organized in Puglia, Bari, Gravina and

Bostella, but with the outbreak of World War I the work came to a standstill for some years.

In 1920 the Advent work was re-organized and new churches were established. The membership had now risen to about 150.

From then on the development was a little quicker. In 1935 our union had 1,000 members. It had taken 70 years to win these precious souls. Seventeen years later the number had doubled and now, after 11 years, we have reached the number 3,000. I believe we could have reached this number long before but for the fact that many of our members have emigrated to other countries.

However, we are not discouraged, and by God's help we hope that the work will advance quicker than ever before.

Under present-day circumstances our work methods have changed. We have now a good group of workers who are able to preach the gospel in our towns and villages with much more freedom than before. In Florence we have a good publishing house printing beautiful books which are scattered by our faithful colporteur-evangelists. Every year their sales total is over one million Lire. We also have a Bible Correspondence School with an ever growing enrollment of eager students. In Florence we have our mission school. The Italian Union Training School trains our youth to work in the churches and to enter the organized work.

Publishing House, Florence



We live in the time of Vatican Councils, and the language of the Catholic church has altered somewhat. One no longer talks despidingly of heretics and Protestants. No, more friendly descriptions are used to day. One says now that we are all baptized in Christ's name and therefore brothers, although divided brethren. Circumstances seem to be better, although most people are indifferent to religion. It seems to me that we stand before the prophetic pictures described in Revelation 13:11 and 12: «And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.»

Never before have the Holy Scriptures been more in the public eye in Italy. In council, in church, on the radio, people are urged to study the Scriptures. Beautifully illustrated Bibles and parts of the Scriptures are published and distributed by the million in our country. The time Jesus spoke about in Matthew 24:14 is here: «And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come».

But modern methods are no substitute for the personal participation of all members in the preaching of the Advent message: «There is a much greater work devolving upon the individual members of the church than they realize... Let all who believe the truth begin to work. Do the work that lies nearest you... If the lay members of the church will arouse to do the work that they can do, going on a warfare at their own charges, each seeing how much he can accomplish in winning souls to Jesus, we shall see many leaving the ranks of Satan to stand under the banner of Christ» *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 8, pp. 244-46.

I shall just mention one of the many lovely churches we have here in Italy, namely, Piazza Armerina in Sicily. This field is ripe and the members are good witnesses for Christ. The elder of the church has used a system of evangelism which he tries to improve every year. In



Italian Union Training School, Florence

spite of frail health he goes every Sabbath, and whenever he has the time, to the city park with a Sabbath school picture roll under his arm. There he hangs the roll up on a branch of a tree and starts to explain the pictures. Many people gather around him asking questions and receiving the answers and go away again with tracts that he has given them. Then our brother moves to another convenient place in the park or visits homes where dozens of interested people listen to his Bible studies.

What is the outcome of this work? Every week new people come to the church and regularly every quarter there is a baptism. In this small town with only 40,000 inhabitants it has been necessary to move to new premises three times during the past 15 years because of lack of space. Right now a new church is being built which will seat 300. There is no doubt that at the present time the future looks bright for the church in Italy. With God's help and sustained by the faithfulness of our members we shall look for great results.

Church group in Piazza Armerina, Sicily



A Visit to Greece and Yugoslavia

B. J. Kohler

It was my privilege in December 1963 to visit Greece and Yugoslavia with Brother O. A. Blake, undertreasurer of the General Conference. We had a most pleasant trip from Zurich to Greece, and approaching Athens we thought of the old legend which tells us that when God created the world He put the earth through a sieve, scattering the good soil here and there, and casting the stones over His shoulders. The spot where the stones fell, the Greeks say, was Greece. Certainly, seen from the air this old country seems to consist entirely of heaps of stones. The capital is Athens, once the world's chief center of learning and knowledge, civilization and art, and now a beautiful and busy modern city. Two million people live here, and in the afternoons it seems as if one half walk on one side of the main street, and the other half on the other side.

More than 96 per cent of the inhabitants of this ancient land belong to the Greek Orthodox Church, which is the official religion of the country. At the airport we were well received by Nick Germanis, president of the Greek Mission, and as the next day was the Sabbath, we met with our believers in the three churches located in this large metropolis.

We could imagine that the apostle Paul felt quite lonely in this busy city among the cultured pagans. In 1 Thessalonians 3:1 he writes: I was «left at Athens alone» and in Acts 17:15 he pleads with Timothy to come to him «with all speed». While waiting he wandered lonely through that lovely city, admiring its glorious sights with the statues of gods in gold and silver, and he wished in his heart that he might be allowed to preach Christ, who was as yet unknown to them. Later on he got the opportunity to preach to them about

the resurrection and the second coming of Christ. Today, this same message is being preached to the noble Grecians by our faithful workers. The gospel is slowly being accepted in the land of Hellas, and while it is uphill work, yet souls are being won to the truth. The colporteur work has made splendid progress this last year or two. Brother Tallios, the colporteur leader, told us about the marvelous development this branch of our work has made, and they hope that the unique method used will help the workers to enter the homes and thus bring more souls to the knowledge of our Saviour.

From Athens we traveled by car with Brother Germanis to Thessalonica, the capital of Macedonia, where we have a fine church and plan to open an evangelistic center. We remembered while here, that it was to the Thessalonians that Paul wrote his first epistle.

Before leaving Greece we drove northeastward to the place where the apostle Paul and his fellow workers landed about 1900 years ago. Paul and Silas came here in answer to the Macedonian call Paul had received in a vision. When the missionaries arrived they tried to find a synagogue in which to worship on the Sabbath, but they found none. In their search they came to the river, and here they found a group of women worshipping. One of the them was Lydia, a seller of purple cloth. The Lord opened her heart as she listened to Paul speaking, and she was baptized as the first Christian in Europe. We read that shortly afterwards Paul drove out an evil spirit from a girl, and the wrath of her masters caused the magistrates and leaders of the town to lay hold of Paul and Silas. They were beaten and put into a dungeon. Elder Blake and I visited this prison. The sun was setting in the west as we stood with bowed heads inside the damp, dark,

Station in Skopje



loathsome place, and we rededicated our lives to the saving of souls for God's kingdom.

It was hard to imagine that the prisoners could sing songs of praise in this terrible place, but they did, and their deliverance was not long in coming. Towards morning came an earthquake, which shook the prison. The jailor rushed in and thinking his prisoners had escaped he wanted to commit suicide, but they were waiting for him. Very much impressed the officer asked: Gentlemen, what must I do to be saved? Is there any way in which I could be a man such as you? We all know the answer Paul and his companion gave: «Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house» (Acts 16:31). As we knew we were going to visit the city of Skopje in Southern Yugoslavia, so recently laid waste by an earthquake, we thought of this tremor many years ago in Philippi. The Lord had allowed this in order to help His servants, and it seemed to open the eyes of the jailor, and we may believe that perhaps many were led to a knowledge of Christ through this catastrophe.

The next afternoon we crossed the frontier into Yugoslavia, and late in the afternoon we arrived in the city that *was* Skopje. This once beautiful city is the capital of Southern Serbia, and it has a population of about 220,000. It is built on a fertile plain on both sides of the river Vadar, and in the distance one can see the snowcapped mountains. On arrival we drove straight to our church. To our pleasant surprise we found the chapel repaired and looking as good as new, even though we saw that only twelve meters away two houses had been completely demolished, and twelve people lost their lives.

With the help of our minister we found a room in the only hotel still in business, although it was badly damaged by the earthquake. We thought again of the terrible catastrophe which had taken place in the early morning of July 26, last year. A devastating earthquake reduced the charming city to ruins. Eighty per cent of the city's buildings have been destroyed or must be pulled down or are in need of repairs. It was an earthquake with the strength of 10 degrees, and it lasted about 20

seconds. A total of 82 earth tremors were recorded that day, and we were told that since this fateful day over 400 tremors have been recorded. The night we spent here a tremor was felt with the strength of 3 to 4 degrees.

The town still looked a scene of horror and wreckage. Many buildings were demolished, and others were covered with cracks, twisted girders, hanging floors and ceilings. The whole scene made a great impression upon us. We were very thankful to learn that none of our members lost their lives during those few terrible seconds. After the disaster the whole world came to the aid of Skopje.

Our church contributed money, goods, houses, food, clothing, equipment and labor to relieve the great suffering. We saw the prefabricated houses our compassionate Scandinavian members had sent to house those members who were in need. We visited the homes and talked with the members, who all expressed their deep gratitude for the help they had received.

Our membership is 200, and a good number of them lost their homes and needed a place to live. These wooden houses looked comfortable, and were well equipped. Our members were grateful that their lives had been spared, and they even now had warm houses to live in. There are thousands who still live in tents and improved buildings. It was a sad picture to see the cemetery where the victims of Skopje had been buried. It is situated on a hillside, and from a wide distance one can see the graves marked with large red crosses, rows and rows of them.

I shall never forget this city with its rubble and ruins. We wondered whether this great earthquake might help open the eyes of the people, as it did in Philippi in ancient times, that they might see their need for preparation to meet their God. We certainly were very solemn at the thought, and decided to do more to help open the eyes of the world to see the signs of His coming, and be prepared to meet Him.

The prison of Paul and Silas in Philippi - N. Germanis, B. J. Kohler



News Items

B. J. Kohler, treasurer of the Division, spent the best part of two months on an itinerary to the Indian Ocean Union Mission, attending committees in Madagascar and visiting the islands of Mauritius and Réunion. On the way home he spent three days in Lourenço Marques, the capital of Mozambique, in conference with the workers there, and also made a brief visit to the Trans-Africa Division office in Salisbury.

*

A Division Home Missionary Convention was conducted in Paris from April 2 to 8 under the leadership of L. Belloy. Elder J. Ernest Edwards, Home Missionary Secretary of the General Conference, was present as well as a good selection of home missionary secretaries from the continental European section of our division. L. Belloy will write a report later on this convention and his itinerary in Europe and North Africa with J. Ernest Edwards.

*

During the latter part of July and early part of August a Division Publishing Department Convention will be conducted in Florence, Italy. W. A. Higgins from the General Conference Publishing Department will be in attendance, and many of the publishing secretaries will be gathered in this historical city to study better sales methods.

*

B. E. Seton, the Sabbath School secretary of the Division, spent five weeks during the months of February and March visiting Spain and Portugal as well as the interesting island of Madeira, promoting the Sabbath School work.

A. Cosendai, president of the Equatorial African Union Mission, and for many years a worker in this field, returned on April 15 to Yaoundé from his furlough spent in France and Switzerland.

*

In Yaoundé, the capital of the Federal Republic of Cameroun, the doors are now opened wide for our message to be proclaimed over the radio. The government has invited our union there to provide religious and educational programs to be released over the national broadcasting system.

*

Although G. M. Mathews, associate secretary of the Educational Department of the General Conference, visited our Division last year, we thought his account of this visit so interesting that we have included it in the present number of *QUARTERLY REVIEW*, pages 1-3.

*

Since April 5 the Southern European Division has been broadcasting the religious program of *la Voix de l'Espérance* over Radio Europe I, on Sundays from 6:15 to 6:30 a. m.

*

P. Lanarès, president of the Indian Ocean Union Mission, writes the following: „This morning I obtained permission from the national broadcasting system here on Madagascar to broadcast a short daily program. It will be some kind of morning devotional for the public, lasting one minute, during which I shall quote Bible texts and pas-

sages from the Spirit of prophecy. The program will be called „The Thought for Today by Pierre Lanarès“. It will run every day except Sunday, when we have our usual educational program lasting five minutes, and they will help in a wonderful way to prepare the ground for my future public meetings, and also boost the sales of *Who Will Dominate the World?* (*Qui dominera le Monde?*)“.

*

We have just received the news from the Azores Islands Mission that 21 people were baptized during the first three months of this year. Furthermore, a baptismal class with fourteen members is being held right now.

*

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