

WEST AFRICAN ADVENT

# MESSENGER

VOICE OF THE WEST AFRICAN UNION

MISSION OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

VOL. 10.

JUNE, 1956

No. 6

## LOVE, A SUPREME ATTRIBUTE

By R. R. FIGUHR

President, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

Into my office the other day walked a smiling, friendly, and vigorous retired worker. More than three quarters of a century had rolled over his head. About the time I started to school he began preaching this message. Though now retired, he has by no means ceased working for the Master, whom he has served so many years. He loves the service of his Lord too much to desert it now. No one who has given more than half a century of his life to this cause can be content with sitting idly by and looking to others to finish the work. So he continues active, visiting the sick, giving Bible studies, encouraging the discouraged. It may be that now he is doing his most effective work, now when he might sit with folded hands. But love urges him on and makes his work a pleasure. Love always constitutes the true measure of one's success.

In Christ's day Mary had no idea that she was performing an immortal deed when she gathered her meagre savings and bought precious ointment for her Lord, washing his dusty

feet and drying them with her beautiful hair. The only reason in the world she did it was because she loved her Lord. It was no sudden impulse that led her to this immortal deed. The action resulted from days and nights of contemplation on His goodness, of how He had sought her, how He had brought hope and courage to her when others cast her out. This deep, abiding and growing sense of gratitude led her to perform what we now look upon as one of the most beautiful displays of devotion in the Bible. Most fittingly the Master sums it all up with the words, "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much."

There are many who love the Lord much and whom He surely loves. The psychologists and the psychiatrists tell us that one of the basic needs of the human being is to be loved. We were made that way in the beginning. It would be expected that a God of love would create such beings. "One can't be his best if he is not loved and wanted. From earliest infancy to old age this feeling of being



Pastor R. R. Figuhr

deeply valued is an important precondition to meeting life's challenges, taking life in stride, and doing one's best without undue stress and strain."—Clyde M. Narramore in *Moody Monthly*, April, 1955, page 17.

Does love help people to live to a ripe old age? We may be sure it does. Not only does it lengthen one's days on earth, but it wondrously broadens and deepens living, resulting in the fullest and most useful life. The best medicine that countless ones in the world could take for their illness would be to assimilate into their system the spirit of 1 Corinthians 13. What great things love is described here as accomplishing for an individual!

"This love of which I speak is slow to lose patience—it looks for a way of being constructive. It is not possessive; it is neither anxious to impress nor does it cherish inflated ideas of its own importance.

"Love has good manners and does not pursue selfish advantages. It is not touchy. It does not compile statistics of evil or gloat over the wickedness of other people. On the contrary, it is glad with all good men when Truth prevails.

"Love knows no limit to its endurance, no end to its trust, no fading of its hope: it can outlast anything. It is, in fact, the one thing that still stands when all else has fallen."—*Letters to Young Churches*, a translation of the New Testament Epistles, by J. B. Phillips, page 60.

The chapter closes so fittingly by pointing out the qualities that are really lasting, the chief of which is love. "In this life we have three great lasting qualities—faith, hope and love. But the greatest of them is love."—*Ibid.*, page 61. Reprinted from *Review and Herald*, March 1, 1956.

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You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong.

You cannot help small men by tearing down the big men.

You cannot help the poor by destroying the rich.

You cannot lift the wage-earner by pulling down the wage-payer.

You cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they could and should do for themselves—*Sunshine Magazine*, February, 1956.

## The Challenge of Difficult Tasks

By Paul K. Freiwirth

If you had lived in England in the year 1900 you would have been more than startled one day to come across a newspaper advertisement reading something like this: "Men wanted for hazardous journey. Small wages, bitter cold, long months of complete darkness, constant danger, safe return doubtful. Honour and recognition in case of success. Ernest Shackleton."

Of course you know the rest of the triumphant tale of adventure. This insert by one of Britain's most famous explorers did not fail of a voluminous response. And why did such a seemingly uninviting challenge fascinate the British public half a century ago? Human nature supplies the answer: Men—normal men—innately crave the challenge of something difficult.

A professor of theology in a non-Adventist institution once startled his students by saying, "All life is constructed in reference to struggle." Yes, happiness and adjustment to life cannot be achieved without the recognition of this. However, life's unending struggles must not be regarded merely as a steppingstone to something more satisfying beyond. We must learn to find genuine joy in the struggle itself.

A go-getter once remarked to the late W. R. Hearst: "It would be thrilling to own a newspaper empire." Replied the magnate, "The thrill was in creating it!" The struggle, not the arrival, brought the greater satisfaction! Granted it is one of the most emotionally enervating experiences to keep on toiling day after day even though there is no definite promise of attaining a rewarding goal, yet the undeniable fact is that some of the greatest things in life have been accomplished under just such discipline—when men have worked for work's sake, and nought else.

One of the outstanding examples of this is an experience of Charles F. Kettering, whose name demands universal respect in the world of science. One of his major discoveries, no doubt, was that of tetraethyl lead, which took the knock out of gasoline. But it was not achieved until after fourteen years of hard discipline and the investment of large sums of money. Reminisced Mr. Kettering one day, "All research is 99.9 per cent failure, but if you succeed once, you're in. . . . The only time you mustn't fail is the last time you try."

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## Our Declaration of Faith in Christian Education

Pastor H. J. Welch

Union Educational Secretary

1. We believe in Seventh-day Adventist Education for all Adventist children and youth. We believe it because God has approved it. We believe it because of the results. Surveys show that 80 per cent of Adventist students trained in Adventist schools remain faithful to the church while only 20 per cent of those trained elsewhere remain true. Professor E. E. Cossentine points out in the August 4 number of the *Review and Herald* that, in the world field one of every six persons baptised is a student enrolled in an Adventist school. "Every year more than 1,200 young people leave the schools of the denomination to enter the organized work of the church."

2. We believe that the Word of God is the centre around which all true Christian education revolves and the acid test to apply to all teaching. The modernistic evolutionary atheism of our day makes it all the more essential that children and youth of the church receive a Bible centered education.

3. We believe in that education which develops in the child or youth respect for and efficiency in the practical duties of life. A truly educated man or woman does not look down upon manual labour. "The youth need to be taught that life means earnest work, responsibility, caretaking. They need a training that will make them practical—men and women who can cope with emergencies. . . . No man or woman is degraded by honest toil."—*Education*, page 215.

4. We believe that just as the church today is made up of those preparing for the near Advent of Christ just so should its children be trained in a special kind of school which makes the salvation of the soul its chief aim. Bible classes in which true doctrines are taught, Seventh-day Adventist teachers who exemplify the truth in their lives and the association with fellow Adventist students all combine to create an influence conducive to spiritual growth. Surrounded by this atmosphere our youth can grow in spiritual power.

5. We believe that workers for the church should be trained as far as is possible in the schools of the church. That has always been God's plan and is no less true today. Where else can they find a programme of studies

designed to fix in their hearts, love and enthusiasm for the message and train them in the skills necessary to impart it to others. Where else can they be trained in denominational principles, practices and policies, a knowledge of which is so essential to success as a leader in the church.

6. We believe it to be the duty of the church and all its departments to plan wisely for needed schools for its youth and to make every effort financially and otherwise to provide these educational facilities. To sacrifice for our youth is a duty; yes, even a blessed privilege.

7. We believe that every member of the church should believe in the "Doctrine of Christian Education" just as truly as he believes in the doctrine of the Sabbath or the Advent of Christ. That by his prayers, his financial contributions and his influence he should promote the development and establishment of genuine Seventh-day Adventist schools and the attendance in these schools of Adventist boys and girls.

### Back Tithes

"Friday morning I spoke on the subject of tithing. This subject has not been presented to the churches as it should have been, and the neglect, together with financial depression, has caused the marked falling off in the tithes the past year. At this Conference the subject has been carefully canvassed in meeting after meeting. . . .

"One brother a noble looking man, a delegate from Tasmania, came to me and said, 'I am glad I heard you speak today upon tithing. I did not know it was so important a matter. I dare not neglect it longer.' He is now figuring up the amount of his tithe for the last twenty years, and says he shall pay it as fast as he is able, for he cannot have robbery of God registered in the books of heaven meet him in the Judgment.

"One sister belonging to the Melbourne church, has brought in eleven pounds back tithe which she had not understood that it devolved on her to pay. As they have received the light, many have made confession in regard to their indebtedness to God, and expressed their determination to meet this debt and no longer rob God. I proposed that they place in the treasury their note promising to pay the full amount of an honest tithe as soon as they could obtain the money to do so.

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## Are All The Children In?

### PART I

By Pastor Jesse O. Gibson



The great love which the average African parents have for their children is very admirable. Many times, as I watch the loving attention paid to small children by parents, chiefs and other adults, I am made very happy because of these expressions of love and care. I am sure God is pleased with this attitude. But what

are we as parents doing to insure these lambs of the flock a home in that better land. Could not much more be done to bring them in from the world and prepare them for a place in that heavenly kingdom.

"If the lambs are lost  
What a terrible cost  
Some sheep will have to pay."

#### Family Religion Needed

Yes, parents, we need more religion right in our own homes. God's servant, Sister White says: "Home religion is fearfully neglected. . . . Home religion preceeds that in the church. In the home the foundation is laid for the prosperity of the church. . . . When we have good home religion, we will have excellent meeting religion. . . . If there were more genuine home religion, there would be more power in the church.

"It is a most greivous thing to let children grow up without the knowledge of God. . . . If you do not plant the precious seeds of truth, of love, of heavenly attributes, in the heart, Satan will sow the field of the heart with tares.

"Parents stand in the place of God to their children. . . . As soon as the little ones are intelligent to understand, parents should tell them the story of Jesus.

"When very young, children are susceptible to divine influences. . . . The father and the mother are responsible for the maintenance of religion in the home. . . . The father of the family should not leave to the mother all the care of imparting spiritual instruction."—*The Adventist Home*, page 318-321.

#### Parents to Set Example

Parents, God expects you to set a good example in the home. The Spirit of Prophecy

states: "Children look to parents for consistent life. . . . By leading a consistent life and exercising self-control, parents may mould the characters of their children."—*The Adventist Home*, page 322.

"In the home it is possible to have a little church which will honour and glorify the Redeemer. . . . Make the Christian life an attractive one. Speak of the country in which the followers of Christ are to make their home. . . . For Christ's sake do not neglect the religious training of yourself and your children."—*The Adventist Home*, page 322, 324.

"Not until parents themselves walk in the law of the Lord with perfect hearts, will they be prepared to command their children after them. . . . In too many households, prayer is neglected. Parents feel that they have no time for morning and evening worship."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 143.

"Like the patriarchs of old, those who profess to love God should erect an altar to the Lord wherever they pitch their tents. . . . Let the father, as priest of the household, lay upon the altar of God the morning and evening sacrifice, while the wife and children unite in prayer and praise. In such a household, Jesus will love to tarry."—*Ibid.*, page 144.

"Family religion consists in bringing up the children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. . . . When parents are diligent and vigilant in their instruction . . . they co-operate with God, and God co-operates with them in the saving of the souls of the children."—*The Adventist Home*, page 317.

God has a great work for each of us as parents. Are all the children in? If not—why not? Are we doing our part?

(Next month Part II will give more council on Family Worship. Church Leaders—why not put this material with your own and give a Sabbath sermon on ideal home life?—ED.)

## Try Singing . . . with the Understanding

By Kenneth H. Wood, Jnr.

In every congregation there are some people who more often than they care to admit, sing through an entire hymn without giving any thought to the meaning of the words being

used. This is unfortunate, since the lyrics of most religious songs are freighted with deep spiritual meaning. Hymns were written to express praise to God, the inner yearnings of the soul, and like aspects of spiritual experience; hence, when they are sung today their messages should live anew in our hearts and on our lips.

Can anyone imagine Miriam's singing without feeling or understanding as she led Israel's hosts in a song of deliverance after passing through the Red Sea (Exod. 15:21)? Can we conceive of Deborah and Barak singing with indifference after Jael had destroyed Sisera, the enemy of God's people (Judges 5)? Or, can we picture Paul and Silas in the Philippian prison cell chanting mere words without being keenly aware of what they were singing (Acts 16:25)?

True, in at least two of the instances just cited, songs of present experience were used, composed especially for the occasion. Because of this it might be argued that they were of more immediate interest, hence could be sung with greater feeling than many of our hymns today. This contention is hardly valid, however, for Christians should possess such a living, growing experience with God that on each succeeding Sabbath they can sing even the old songs with deeper understanding and ardour than ever before.

Perhaps a more common cause of failure to sing with sincerity is that our attention has been distracted by the garb of someone who shares our pew, or we may be concentrating more earnestly on the technique of producing a rounded tone than on the thought for which that tone is designed to be a vehicle. Again it may be that due to the Laodicean condition of our hearts, congregational singing has for us degenerated into a dull, routine exercise, tolerated only because it has such deep roots.

Whatever the cause, we venture to say that those saints who finally survive the mettle-testing tribulations that lie just ahead will sing the song of Moses and the Lamb with the full meaning of each syllable, for this will be a song of personal experience (Rev. 15:1-4). Until that time arrives, however, certainly congregational singing in every church would greatly improve if all would wholeheartedly adopt Paul's resolution, "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." (1 Cor. 14:15).—Reprinted from *Review and Herald*, February 9, 1956.

## Your Missionary Volunteer Society

By Pastor H. J. Welch

Union Missionary Volunteer Secretary.

Does your church have a live and active M.V. Society? If not, why not? The Missionary Volunteer Movement is a Youth for Christ Movement. Every church with more than six youth, either Juniors, ages 10 to 16 or Seniors ages 17 to 30 should have such an organization. Young people today in West Africa as elsewhere are doing things and making their influence felt. Long ago the Lord through His servant said, "Young men and young women, cannot you form companies and as soldiers of Christ enlist in the work, putting all your tact and skill and talent into the Master's service, that you may save souls from ruin? Let there be companies organized in every church to do this work."—*Signs of the Times*, May 29, 1893.

Youth of the Advent Church arise! Leaders of districts and churches wake up! Let us not neglect this opportunity for harnessing the drive and enthusiasm of our youth for Christ. Let us set our goal for the establishment of properly organised, active societies in every church with young people. These societies should have regular meetings every week on Friday night or Sabbath afternoon. The young people themselves should lead out in these meetings. Plans should be made for youth activities including Prayer bands, Missionary bands, Progressive class work, etc. Missionary Volunteer rallies should be held in every district and as far as possible Missionary Volunteer camps yearly in every field. We can begin the plan now to make the Missionary Volunteer Week in 1957, March 2 to 9, an outstanding soul winning occasion for our youth. If your church has no Missionary Volunteer society, plan now for its organization. Your Mission M.V. Secretary will be glad to help you and God will bless you as you go forward.

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### BACK TITHE

(Continued from page 3)

Many heads bowed assent, and I am confident that next year we shall not, as now, have an empty treasury."—Mrs. E. G. White, in *MS* written from Melbourne, Australia, Jan. 10, 1893. *MS-4-93*.

## Join The Colporteur's Follow-up Service

By I. K. Ampofo

Often when I stop to contemplate the efficacy of the colporteur ministry in bringing souls to the truth, my heart throbs. I can rightly picture the dormant condition of the seeds of truth sown in the hearts of men and women as a result of the colporteur ministry, but it is even painful to think that here in the Gold Coast we have no Bible instructors who could help these dormant seeds to germinate. In other words, I sense the need for Bible workers, who could study with our customers and bring them to a decision to accept Christ and His truth.

In British Togoland where I have canvassed for three years, I can say with complete assurance that many of my customers are at the verge of accepting the truth and are just ready to be ushered in.

In one little village with a population of about 500 I sold *God's Answers* in the Twi language to almost every adult citizen. Today, all the villagers call me by name and rejoice when I visit them. Many of them, including teachers, keep God's Holy Sabbath privately. I remember visiting one of the teachers with Brother Mawutor on a Sunday. This teacher did not go to church on that day, and when Brother Mawutor asked why he didn't, he simply said, "Well, I kept the Holy Sabbath yesterday. I am studying my *Hope of the Race* this day. That is what I usually do." In another village, a man who bought "*Bible Speaks*" began preaching about the Law and the Sabbath. He organised a group of Sabbath-keepers and they have invited me to help them with their studies.

Recently, I met a man who bought *Hope Of The Race* and *Steps to Christ* about a year ago. He has used these two books to organise a group of Sabbath-keepers. He asked me to direct him to my Pastor in order that he could arrange for a baptism for him and his company. According to him, all of them are ready for baptism. Pastor D. N. Agboka is arranging to have them examined.

Several other customers of mine expressed their feelings freely to me. I could see their conviction. But they need encouragement and some coaching. I wish we could have some Bible Instructors to visit these people. I myself read the *Hope Of The Race* to accept the truth, but I remember how difficult

it was for me to take a stand for truth, until encouragement by a Pastor just blew me in like a calm wind. Truly our great need is an efficient follow-up service to gather the fruit, from the gospel seeds planted by our books in the hearts of our customers.

Since our Mission does not employ regular Bible workers as do conferences in other lands, we colporteurs are appealing to our pastors, evangelists, teachers, and soul-winning members to visit our customers and give them encouragement that will lead them to *accept* the Truth which they have already learned in the books they have bought.

Dear reader, if you want to help win souls, ask the colporteur in your church to give you, the name and address of one or more of his interested customers. Then visit them *frequently*; hold Bible studies with them; and gently but surely lead them into the fold of the *Great Gardener* who planted in their hearts His gospel seed through literature evangelism.

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## The Challenge of Difficult Tasks

(Continued from page 2)

Inspirational lecturers and writers, when discussing the know-how of happy living, constantly urge us to take our aim in life and then glory in our progress towards its realization. Admittedly there is much joy and satisfaction in such a programme.

This nemesis of men's souls, the necessity of having to engage in hard and even repulsive labour with no inviting emotional satisfaction ahead, is perhaps one of humanity's most cumbersome trials. If we may attempt naming it, we would come closest by naming it monotony.

God often tests His chosen tools in the fiery crucible of monotony. And why? Like every other test, this is lovingly designed to draw them closer to His side, but there is also the reason that such training will rescue one from one of the greatest snares of life—unbridled ambition.

Inability to face life's realities creatively is only one of the harmful results of excessive ambition. If freely gratified, this dangerous spirit conditions men to rely on popular adulation and constant success as much as their bodies depend on bread and butter. In extreme cases such behaviour patterns even hinder them from fulfilling the routine duties

of life unless constant doses of acclaim are forthcoming. No wonder some of the world's best thinkers have most vehemently condemned even the most casual approach to the altar of ambition:

"Ambition is like the sea wave, which the more you drink the more you thirst—yea—think too much as men have done on rafts of wreck—it drives you mad."—*Tennyson*.

"Most people would succeed in small things if they were not troubled with great ambition."—*Longfellow*.

Do you desire to keep free from the corruptive taint of slavish ambition? Then now, in the days of your youth, strive to increase not merely your capacity for hard work, but especially for those types of it that men call drudgery. For the type of patience born in drudgery, perhaps more than other virtue, is acquired more easily in youth and early adolescence than in later years, for then a restlessness peculiar to adulthood, and particularly unfavourable to the development of this fruit of the Spirit, seeks to permeate the life.

At one time the chief engineer of a steamer crossing the Mediterranean noted with what alacrity a newly hired hand was performing his monotonous duty. The officer asked the worker why he was so happy, and received this reply: "Ah's got a glory, boss, Ah's got a glory."

Your job may not be that of deck washing, yet you may consider it to be the most tiresome and thankless task in all the world. Do not rebel under its duress or try to evade it. Instead, accept it gratefully as Heaven's opportunity for you to share willingly and happily in the world's hard labour, and thus fulfill the aims of all followers of Christ expressed in the words, "I am among you as he that serveth."—Reprinted from *Review and Herald*, 2nd February, 1956.

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You cannot lead anyone else farther than you have gone yourself.

Build castles in the air; then put solid foundations under them.—*Sunshine Magazine*, February, 1956.

Some of the best preaching is done by holding your tongue.

You have your machinery in reverse when you try to raise yourself by lowering somebody else.—*Sunshine Magazine*, February, 1956.

## Minister's Refresher Course

By Pastor C. B. Mensah,  
Acting President, Gold Coast

God has many ways and means of revealing His will and truth to people. His ministers are always to be vigilant in seizing upon open doors to testify of Him.

A Refresher Course for Ministers of Religion was organised jointly by the Departments of Extra-Mural Studies and Divinity of the Gold Coast University. Three of our Pastors, J. K. Amoah, I. A. Benson and the writer were asked to attend the course from April 4 to 12.

The atmosphere and fellowship exercised in the meetings was very congenial as 87 ministers of the Historical churches worshipped and studied together. The 15 Catholic priests attending had separate studies and meetings. In order to have smaller classes and to ensure efficient control, the number was divided into groups. Each group with one Divinity Lecturer at its head, studied one of the following: The Book of Romans; The Book of Galatians; Revelation; The Shepherd, His work and Duty and the Book of Genesis.

The lecturers were careful not to touch on points of controversy and discouraged questions that would have led to doctrinal discrepancies. The main theme for the evening lectures for the entire group was the Holy Spirit. In the discussion of this, the lecturers incorporated and fostered the idea of formulating a *union* of all the Churches in the Gold Coast.

The opportunity of witnessing and making our faith well known came when we were allowed to say something about the "pattern of worship in our Church." The writer was given about ten minutes to speak to the group. Vital points of our faith and belief were emphasised to the understanding of most of them. The next morning some of the other ministers, including one European lady Lecturer, expressed their interest and sympathy with our doctrines. Individual contacts were made which caused some to admit fallacies in their own teaching and one of them remarked, "It seems that we are groping in darkness. The question of the Sabbath needs real study."

Let us pray that the little effort made by our ministers who attended the course may lead to a major decision by those attending to stand for the truth and come out of Babylon and prepare to meet the Lord.

## NEWS NOTES

### GOLD COAST

✘ The District Leaders' in session resolved to put in action a strong evangelistic programme incorporating school teachers and laymembers.

✘ Definite plans have been made for the visit of Elder Oswald to promote the Home Missionary Department early in June.

✘ Brother Ackah our M. V. Secretary presented an excellent plan for a Youth Camp at Anomabu in August. Already a number have paid their fees.

✘ The tithe for the first three months is the highest on record. We praise God for this, and trust our members will continue to render to the Lord that which is His.

✘ A committee has been appointed to arrange for a new Twi Hymnal with music.

✘ The newly appointed President, Pastor W. J. Newman left for furlough early in April. Pastor C. B. Mensah will be acting President during the President's furlough.

✘ The Secretary-treasurer, Brother Rigby left for furlough at the end of April. Brother Harju and family from Finland are relieving him during his furlough.

✘ Brother Farrell will be acting headmaster of the Secondary School until the new headmaster arrives.

✘ The new Science building is now completed. We appreciate the help that has been given from the Union to erect this much needed addition.

### *The Advent Messenger*

Official Organ of the  
West African Union Mission of  
Seventh-Day Adventists.

P. O. Box 1016, Accra, Gold Coast.  
Editor J. O. GIBSON.

### IFE

✘ Each Sabbath afternoon the prisoners in the Ile-Ife Prison are visited by some of the members of the S.D.A. Church of Ife, Nigeria. A spiritual service is conducted and the precious truths of salvation are taught. It is our prayer that souls may be won to the Kingdom through this agency.

✘ A branch Sabbath School has been started at the town of Ipedimodu which is ten miles from Ife. The school has been very successful so far with usually about one hundred people in attendance. The Sabbath School was started after a very well attended evangelistic effort which was organized by Sisters E. M. Rose and Welke from the Hospital at Ile-Ife. Each Sunday night for three months meetings were conducted in which many of the students and staff members assisted. If every church sponsored such an effort, how soon this gospel of a crucified, risen, and soon coming Saviour would be carried to every town and village in West Africa.

✘ A spacious classroom block consisting of a chapel, library, science laboratory, and two classrooms is nearing completion at the S.D.A. Mission Hospital at Ile-Ife. This will greatly improve the teaching facilities which previously have been somewhat crowded. Many of our young people in West Africa have been given a wonderful opportunity to prepare themselves for a profession in which they can serve God and needy mankind. With more room for students the classes are now larger and even more of our youth are taking the nurses training.

### LIBERIA

✘ Liberia reported twenty one baptized and a new church organized at Saniquella. First tithe and offerings paid into treasury \$160. Members busy getting ready to build own church with mission help. Land given by the Liberian Government.

✘ Young Men of Monrovia are conducting an evangelistic effort for busy people. Hundreds attending. Lay young people doing the preaching and visiting the interested ones.

✘ Students at Konola Academy are raising funds to purchase a 16mm Sound Projector to be used at the school and in the Mission.