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The Bush Church Aid Society for Australia and Tasmania

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Junior: Miss R. Campbell.

THE JUBILEE HOSTEL.



THE GIRLS ABOUT TO LEAVE FOR SCHOOL, PT. LINCOLN HOSTEL.

Across the Nullarbor Plains

Rev. J. R. GREENWOOD.

The name "Bush Church Aid Society" is apt to produce in the minds of many a picture of the broad expanse of sheep stations, or acres of wheat, or maybe dense bush, with an occasional lonely settler in his slab hut. There is, however, another picture which should not be allowed to fade out of sight. It brings a vision of a straight stretch of railway track rolling over our vast desert country. Along this track are scattered camps of varying size, but each containing men, women and children upon whose work depends the continuity of transport from both sides of the continent.

The Nullarbor Plain may only be a memory of school-day geography lessons, or it may bring to your mind the seemingly endless hours of dreary travel over a monotonous waste. Perhaps you were fortunate and viewed the plain after good rain had fallen and brought out a profusion of wild growth. No matter whether it is a name or a memory to you, to quite a few people it is the scene of their livelihood.

The Transcontinental Railway has achieved fame, as it includes the longest straight stretch of railway track

in the world. For 300 miles it crosses the Nullarbor Plain, with never a bend or a curve to relieve the monotony.

Can you imagine what it is like to live on that plain? You look out of your front door and there, a few chains away, is the ribbon of steel, and beyond that miles of plain stretching away to the far horizon; not a tree nor a bush to break the view. You turn to the back door and there, rolling away into the far distance, is that large expanse of plain. The view is the same no matter which way you look.

The grocer and the butcher call once a week; unfortunately, it may be any time of the day or night, so you just have to be ready when the "Tea and Sugar" train pulls in to your siding. But you must not forget that the store may be 300 to 400 miles from the camp. The city dweller finds it hard to purchase meat to last a week-end; what if the week's supply had to be procured on the one day?

When the dust blows—which is two or three times a week at least in the summer—it means the track a

short distance away is hidden from sight. In that inferno men have to work in order that train communication from East to West may be maintained.

The Far West Mission includes over 500 miles of the Transcontinental Railway and affords an opportunity of a three-monthly ministry to the scattered camps. This comprises home visiting, children's religious instruction, and Divine Services. The camps are visited per medium of goods train, water trains and the famous "Tea and Sugar."

Let me take you on a trip to this distant section of the mission.

It is nearly 290 miles from Ceduna to Cook by road. The improved highway for over 200 miles gives encouragement for the last 60 miles over the plain. The dusty road goes on mile after mile, with frequent stretches of corrugation to shake off the apathetic feeling as the day passes. Gradually the belts of scrub become thinner as the Nullarbor Plain is approached. Late in the afternoon the last stage of the journey is undertaken—60 miles north-west is Cook, and the highway is reluctantly left behind as the track across the plain meanders away into the distance.

As the setting sun sends its last rays over the plain the houses of Cook loom into sight. Within a few minutes the weary journey is forgotten amidst the tumultuous welcome of the hospital staff and their excited dogs. The hospital—a memorial to Bishop Kirkby—is the centre for the mission work to be undertaken during the next few days.

There are 36 families stationed at Cook, each of whom is visited and reminded of the services for the forthcoming Sunday. Under a new system recently inaugurated, the Missioner is at Cook each quarter and devotes nearly two weeks to visiting the camps along the railway track.

At the end of December, 1944, the first attempt to minister to all the people from Ooldea to Zanthus, a distance of 494 miles, was undertaken.

Ooldea, 86 miles East of Cook, is a small camp of four families and is also the nearest siding for the United Aborigines' Mission, whose station is four miles north-west of the siding.

It was a typical December day for these parts when I visited these people. The temperature had reached 110° and the wind was hurling a blanket of dust against the walls of the little cottages. Visibility was reduced to a few feet, rendering the railway track barely discernible. Enquiries were made about baptism of two children, and this was arranged for the next quarterly visit. The only service these people receive is through the ministry of B.C.A.

At Watson, 66 miles East of Cook, there are six families stationed. However, two of these were away, nevertheless six adults assembled in a cottage front room

to take part in the first service held at Watson for some time. At the service two children were baptised, and once again B.C.A. was instrumental in extending the hand of fellowship to the lonely outback people.

The next camp East of Cook is Fisher, 34 miles distant. The camp, at the time of visiting, comprised a number of single Italian internees, two Italian families and one Australian family. Have you ever known such loneliness? Only one Australian woman and a two-years-old son to face the long days until her husband returned from work on the track. Fortunately, her neighbours were sociable people, but with a very limited knowledge of the English language.

Up to this stage we have visited the camps close to Cook, but now we move to the western side of the Mission.

It means travelling all night to reach Zanthus, in W.A., which is 408 miles west of Cook. What a change it was to wake up early in the morning and see trees on either side of the track. The little camp of Zanthus was a welcome sight in its bush setting after the miles of dreary, dusty plain.

Headquarters were established in the roadmaster's hut, and then visiting commenced. There were four families of the usual eight away on holidays, but promises were made by the remainder to have representation at the Evening Service.

According to the evidence of one family who had been stationed in and around Zanthus for 13 years, no Church of England service had been held during that period. That night, in the quietness of the bush surroundings, 9 adults and 5 children assembled in the small schoolroom for Divine Service. It was a simple yet impressive occasion, as four of the children were baptised, and the congregation reminded of the solemn profession made. We had no ecclesiastical art nor soul-stirring music to fill us with inspiration, but the Spirit of God filled the room with His Majesty. Supper at a fettle's home after service proved a time of genial fellowship. The night was far spent when at last I retired for a few hours before undertaking the return trip.

It is during such times an opportunity is given of learning more of these people, as they live, year after year, so lonely and isolated a life. The houses in the smaller camps are simple weatherboard structures, with no claim to architectural beauty. Designed in the shape of a letter "T," they provide a very unimaginative shelter. In some cases tenants have been compelled by a growing family to add "sleep-outs" for additional accommodation.

As the "Tea and Sugar" Train left Zanthus at 6.30 a.m., it bore me on the first stages of my return to Cook. The "Tea and Sugar" Train is composed of miscellaneous freight cars, cattle trucks, butchers' and stores vans, and at the end of this string of mixed rolling stock, one passenger coach.

June in to --

5 M.U.

5 A.D.

5 P.I.

5 S.E.

on Sundays,
at 9 a.m.

The day soon showed itself to be a customary Central Australian summer day. The temperature rose throughout the morning until the century was reached, where it hovered until late in the afternoon.

The "Tea and Sugar" Train lumbered slowly on its way, with time seemingly no consideration. However, although a slow means of transport, it provides an excellent opportunity of paying visits to the little wayside fettlers' camps. There is usually a halt of $\frac{1}{2}$ -hour to $\frac{3}{4}$ -hour to allow shopping at the weekly mobile store. Here, then, is the opportunity of passing on Christian literature and showing these people that there is some interest taken in their life.

Gradually the scrub country was left behind and the rolling Nullarbor Plain stretched away to the distant horizon. One was left with but a memory of friendly, shady trees, their actual size magnified by the absence now of even stunted scrub.

A little after mid-day the train halted at Rawlinna, and as this is a large camp, the longer stay of two hours allowed me time to visit some of the homes. Enquiries brought forth the information that, although there is a school in the camp, no religious instruction is given to the children.

Arrangements were completed for service to be held on future visits and plans made for Sunday School lessons to be forwarded from the Cook Hospital, which is the centre of Mail-Bag Sunday School activities on the East-West Line.

On my return to the train, the thick ominous dust clouds rolling from the north had descended upon the siding and everything seemed to be caught up in a shrieking mass of red dust. To add to the general discomfort, a shower of rain fought for recognition. The result was that by the time the shelter of the train was reached it was hard to tell the original colour of my khaki shorts and shirt or of the visible portions of my skin.

It is not an easy task to bath in the hand basin of a moving train. However, this limb-twisting feat was accomplished to my bodily comfort.

Throughout the afternoon the train halted at small camps of 3 or 4 homes or at single men's camps for the weekly shopping to be completed. In each case a visit was made and reading matter left for later perusal.

About 5 p.m. a halt was made at Haig, and here, as at other larger camps, arrangements were made for future services and school instruction.

The weather by this time had changed and a cool breeze from the south brought pleasant relief. That night, at 10.15, we pulled into Loongana, a small camp 202 miles from Cook. This was a welcome place, as a halt was called for some hours. With much gratification I stretched out on the seat and rolled up in my rug for a sleep.

However, I was rudely awakened in the early light of dawn by being hurled to the floor as additional freight cars were shunted into position. Once again we lumbered into activity, but my journey by the "Tea and Sugar" was soon to be concluded.

It was a welcome sight at 7.30 a.m. to view Forrest on the horizon, for here was breakfast with a family visited on a previous trip.

A service was held that night in the dining-room of the neighbouring aerodrome hostel, at which a congregation of 20, comprising R.A.A.F. personnel, aerodrome hostel staff and railway employees, gathered.

The next service centre, Reid, was only 19 miles east, but the only train of the day left Forrest at 4.30 a.m. Accordingly, next morning a very heavy-eyed clergyman boarded the train. The warm hospitality at Reid, despite

the early hour, served to banish the weary feeling. A children's meeting that afternoon brought 18 young Australians together in the schoolroom to hear of the love of the Lord Jesus Christ. The lusty voices raised in singing the choruses soon showed youthful appreciation of the interest taken in them.

The schoolroom was once again requisitioned in the evening for service, at which 12 adults and 11 children were joined together in offering their worship.

The means of transport on this trip vary, and so it was that at 8 a.m. the next day I was seated in the guard's van of a water train bound for Cook. The sensation of riding at the end of a water train has to be experienced to be fully appreciated. As the train gathered speed, the guard's van bounded and swayed at the end of a string of water "gins" until everything that could possibly rattle or squeak raised a protest.

Here again opportunity was afforded to pass on Christian literature at the sidings. At last Cook was reached and soon the dust of travel was washed away under the refreshing shower at the B.C.A. Hospital.

Then came the return to Ceduna by car. It promised to be a good day for car travelling, as 107 points of rain had fallen at Cook to settle the dust. About 30 miles out there was evidence of a more abundant rain than at Cook. A few bog holes were safely overcome, but suddenly there appeared a small lake. A stop to reconnoitre the position revealed the fact that the retreads of the two rear wheels were splitting and considerable expanses of cord showing.

The best plan seemed to be to change the back wheels with the front, which showed no signs of splitting. This meant manouevring the car backwards and forwards to gain advantages of firmer places for the jack. This task completed, the lake was tackled, but with little success. There was no alternative but to get out and dig. Having extricated the car, a survey of the surrounding plain revealed a firmer track around this clay pan. With fear and trepidation the detour was commenced and slowly the original track came closer. Just a few yards and safety, but the plain was reluctant to give up its victim. The back wheels whirled, and the mud clung tenaciously. With a sudden sucking sound the victim was released and the detour completed. So on to Nullarbor homestead with a lighter feeling; what fond hopes man often cherishes!

Another string of lakes appeared across the track. To attempt a return to Cook meant reversing on a narrow track, with a possibility of bogging on the plain. There were also the other bog holes to overcome. It was 40 miles back to Cook and 45 miles ahead to Nullarbor homestead, but only 20 were on this track, the balance being along a good highway. The retreads were not only splitting but were now peeling away from the cords. It seemed best to press on to Nullarbor.

Slipping and skidding, detouring where obviously practicable, at last the highway was reached. At least the road was better, even if the tyres were in a precarious condition.

The sun was setting as Nullarbor homestead was reached and there I found the manager about to leave in his truck to search for me. Here was a cup of tea, fellowship and a good bed for the night. This was the first contact with civilisation as, once Cook was left behind, the next telephone was at Nullarbor, 85 miles South East.

It appeared I had been the subject of much telephone communication. As I had not arrived at Colona Sheepstation early in the afternoon, the manager had rung Nullarbor, 88 miles away, only to find I had not been seen. He then rang my wife at Ceduna—115 miles away—who could give no news of any changed plans. A telephone call to Cook brought the news that I had

left early that morning, but for the rest of the day my whereabouts were unknown. My arrival at Nullarbor again set the wires buzzing and the word was passed on as to where I was.

Early next morning the slow trip was resumed. The speed was of necessity reduced in view of the amount of rubber missing from the tyres. Unknown to me, the telephones were again busy as the manager of Colona Station rang Ceduna to secure spare tyres. Thus it was I arrived while 9 R.A.A.F. trainer planes were landing to refuel and with them came two old tyres to relieve the anxiety.

This co-operation is so typical of the bush people, and due to the modern means of communication, a traveller is followed on his way. What an experience of fellowship when telephone and aeroplane were linked to bring succour in time of necessity.

The sight of Ceduna with the inviting water of the bay lapping the shore was a welcome conclusion to an eventful trip. During the period I had covered 1200 miles by train and 600 by car.

The full value of such an itinerating ministry cannot be judged by material returns. However, despite the fact that school holidays had depleted the camps, 87 people had attended services. These, plus 48 children who had attended their own meetings, provided much good material for the proclamation of the Christian message.

The distribution of Christian literature and toys brings a message of fellowship to adult and child alike. Your interest and material help make this ministry possible to the people on the Nullarbor Plain.



A Service Centre in the Delegate Mission.

Dr. FRED A GIBSON.

The many friends of B.C.A. will rejoice to learn that Dr. Freda Gibson's outstanding work has been honoured by His Majesty the King. In the supplementary New Year's Honours List for South Australia, Dr. Freda's name appeared as recipient of the O.B.E.

During the difficult two and a half years of Dr. Roy Gibson's absence from Ceduna on military service, Dr. Freda carried on splendidly the huge work at Ceduna, Cook, Penong and Tarcoola.

So far as we know Doctor is the first Flying Doctor to be so honoured and we take pride in offering her our very sincere congratulations on her well-deserved honour.

The Wilcannia Hostel

Miss H. GURRIER-JONES.

The outback people have been through a particularly hard time, contending with a long drought and all that accompanies it. In many cases they have lost all their sheep, after many months of struggle to save them. Several families, whose children attended the Wilcannia Hostel, have had to leave their homes and move into Broken Hill, owing to water shortage and the loss of all their stock. Some, of course, will go back and start again. It is remarkable how some of these people just go on in spite of everything.

The children share these hardships. Even in normal times they are deprived of so much which the average child enjoys. The very fact of their being cut off from fellowship with other children makes it very hard for them in later life. Some of the parents realise this and speak very sadly of their own childhood and what they missed and are grateful to be able to send their kiddies into the B.C.A. Hostel. Some who come to us from very isolated parts are very dull at first and have no idea of playing ordinary games with other children. There are no kangaroos to chase, or rabbits to trap at the Hostel, so they don't know what to do out of school hours. The noisy games the others play only worry them, and they go away by themselves to make a farm out of sticks, stones and tins, or anything else they can find. This does not last very long, however, and, at the end of the first month, they are getting used to Hostel routine and are beginning to take an interest in the life around them. At the end of the second term you would find it hard to believe that they were the same children.

Two lads came into school at the beginning of last year, aged 9 and 7 respectively. Neil, the elder, a bright lad, but rather thin and small, and with stooped shoulders through early riding, and far too old for his years. He has been his father's right hand, and his mother's only help, since he could do anything. Up to this time their mother had struggled to give them school at home. And how splendidly she has done this in spite of all her other duties—always ready to help father, and all the work of the home, with the constant care of the babies.

I received a letter from this brave little mother, telling me of her need. She was to come into hospital and did not know what to do with the four children. Could I possibly take the two eldest, as she felt they must go to school? Even when she returned home with another young baby she was afraid she could not manage the schooling of the two elder boys. Besides this, she felt they were not getting a fair chance at home, they would be so much better at school. It took a long time to persuade father to part with his boys, but at last she had his consent, now she would wait for my reply. She did hope I would have room for them in the Hostel.

They were accommodated with some difficulty a few weeks later, and we were glad to be able to welcome Neil and Bill into our large family.

Near the end of the first term, Mother had to bring baby in to see the doctor, and, of course, was just longing to see her two boys at the Hostel. I will always remember that first visit, and the happy exclamations as the boys ran in to see their mother. "Neil, oh, hasn't he grown? Matron, don't they look wonderful? and Bill, I can't believe that is my Bill! Oh, their father will be pleased." And so he was, and sent a special message of thanks later in the day. It is a great joy and satisfac-

tion just to watch the physical improvement in these children who come from the outback parts, where vegetables, etc., are so hard to get.

There is no doubt that B.C.A. is meeting a great need in this part of the country. We are hoping it may soon be possible to have a new building in Wilcannia. The present one is very old and inconvenient, making the work much harder than it should be, and at times we get very tired.

Sister and I were glad to leave for the last vacation. We felt sure that before we returned the longed-for rain would have come, and the heat and dust, to a great extent, would be things of the past, for a time at least. But not so, we returned to the same bare, sandy, earth,

scorching sun, and blinding dust storms. On the day of our return, while busily engaged in different parts of the house with bucket, broom and dustpan, just shovelling out dust, we heard a familiar voice at the back door. "Are you two there? Well, you don't mean to say you've come back for another twelve months of this? Just how anyone could come back here, if they could get a crust anywhere else, beats me. I thought maybe you might be back and you wouldn't be bothering about much to eat in this heat, so I brought you a few tomatoes and a bit of butter off the ice, but you'd better eat it at once, or it will be oil?"

Well, all that is now some months past, the rain has come, and we have enjoyed some lovely cool days.

Eight Years of Service

Sister B. BOSSLEY.

On September 18th, 1945, the Bishop Kirkby Memorial Hospital celebrated its 8th Anniversary. I was here in charge temporarily then, on that first opening day—at least I should say, night—and what memories come rushing back, as one allows one's thoughts to dwell upon that time. First there was a month settling in, getting things unpacked, and in ship-shape order, and getting to know something of the people of Cook, who had helped and worked that this fine building may be erected here. Then at last came the long looked for day—September 18th, 1937.

The Organising Missioner, Dr. R. W. Gibson, Rev. H. Broadley and Sister Dowling arrived the evening before from Ceduna. Then round about afternoon tea time on the day itself came Rev. Eric and Mrs. Constable (then Rector of Penong) and Rev. and Mrs. Constable, Snr., of Melbourne, who were over on holidays. What a crowd for our little hospital!—but that was not all, for on the East-West Express, which arrived about 7 p.m., came the Archbishop of Sydney and Canon Robinson. A little later in the evening the whole population of Cook assembled in our hall and verandahs, and even outside the building, for the Official Opening and Dedication Service by Archbishop Mowll, and later in the Recreation Hall for supper, very ably supplied by the ladies of Cook.

The Constables and the Rev. H. Broadley set off about 11 p.m. for Nullarbor Station, where they were staying the night (at least what was left of it after they arrived). The rest of the party got off to bed as early as possible, as it meant an early start (5 a.m.) to be sure of getting through to Ceduna by 7 p.m. in time to take church there. I wonder does the Archbishop still remember that owing to the three-quarter hour difference in time between Cook and S.A. standard time he and others were called three-quarters of an hour too early? However, as it turned out, it was rather fortunate, for I heard they had seven punctures on the way home, and although I think the Archbishop arrived in time to take the evening service at Ceduna, he was unable to take the afternoon service at Penong, as planned.

Much has happened during those eight years, and a few additions, such as extra staff room, nursery and extension of dining-sitting room, have been made. Also many com-

forts, including fireplace, lounge suite and carpet and wireless, etc., have been given, while the theatre has been improved beyond recognition. A new modern operating table has been given, also two new instrument tables, and we have been able to purchase a shadowless theatre light from proceeds from a few games evenings held last year.

About three weeks ago Sister Hitchcock and I were endeavouring to get a couple of letters done, ready for the morning's mail, and then get off to bed for an early night—for we were both tired. The day before had been Doctor's visiting day—which is always busy, and this time Doctor had done three tonsillectomys on children, who didn't believe in sleeping or letting anyone else sleep, consequently we felt ready for bed. But this was not to be enjoyed that night—at least not by me. About 8.30 p.m. the porter from the railway came over, and said I was urgently wanted on the railway 'phone. When I arrived I found that the railways' doctor at Port Augusta, who had previously been in touch with some women at Reid, W.A., 120 miles distant from Cook, wished to speak to me regarding the treatment for a critically ill patient who was haemorrhaging severely. All arrangements had been made for the Studebaker, a car which has train wheels attached, and runs on the line, which is stationed here for use in emergency, but which I had never known to be called into operation before, to take me down as soon as possible to attend to the woman and bring her back. We had to await the arrival of the "Tea-and-Sugar" from the West before we could set out on our journey, as the East-West line is only a single track, and the train had already left the last stopping place. However, I was rather glad of the extra time, as I had several things to prepare for treatment, and also had to be prepared for any emergency. It also gave me time to drink a very welcome cup of tea. However, at 10 p.m. we set off. There were just three of us—myself, a driver, and a guard. When we left here, we were told the speed limit was 30 miles an hour. When we got to our "first port of call," about 25 miles away, and the guard rang through Control to Port Augusta, he came back and said we had timed it well. However, on reaching our next stopping place we found we had made up 20 minutes, but he said "he had fixed it," and if we

went a bit slower during the next section it would be all right. However, when he rang through next time, we were told to "step on it" as the woman's condition was critical, and we may not make it in time. Our driver attempted to speed up, but with the accelerator "flat out" we could only do 25 m.p.h. It was evident something was wrong. The lights began to fail, and the indicator showed that the battery was not charging at all. I know very little about cars, but I do know that the sound of the engine was not right—it was jerky and I am sure several times came near to stopping altogether. The men said something was "shorting" and they tried several switches, etc., to try and right things. All I could do was hopeless, so I prayed that the Lord would just help them to adjust things. With the woman's condition much worse, the last thing we wanted was to be stranded out in the middle of the plain, miles away from anywhere. I continued to pray and they kept on going while there was still a kick in the engine. Suddenly, just as the engine seemed to be on her last, the driver turned some switch, which I am sure he had turned twenty times before, and to everyone's great relief, the car leaped forward, the engine purred evenly, the light brightened up, and before we knew it, we were doing 60-70 m.p.h. and only a matter of half an hour or so and we were at Reid.

It was teeming rain when we arrived at 1.30 a.m., and although it was only a few yards to the house of the patient, we got wet and muddy reaching there, and it was bitterly cold. How anxiously that household, and three women from the "Camp" awaited our arrival. Fortunately, the patient was a little better when we arrived, as the haemorrhage had ceased about half an hour previously. However, there was much to be done in the way of treatment, and making the patient comfortable. It was decided to bring her in to hospital on the express, rather than the car, as she could be put on a stretcher, and not moved again, until reaching hospital. So at 5 a.m. the patient on stretcher, and I boarded the guard's

van of the express, and had an uneventful trip, reaching Cook at 8.15 a.m.

At 6.30, however, the guard went to 'phone through at one of the sidings, and came back and said he had been asked to advise me that a woman had given birth to a son at Watson, 60 miles east of Cook, at 6 a.m., and would I please ring through when I reached Cook. This I did, and was asked by the perturbed husband if I would come down on the express, and bring the patient and babe back to hospital in the afternoon military train. I found on enquiry that the mother and babe were very well, and, as our other patient's condition was still critical and may have necessitated Doctor coming over for medical treatment, we decided it was wiser for us both to remain at the hospital, and left the father to bring up the mother and babe.

Both our patients made a speedy recovery, and it was something to praise God for that before a fortnight had passed, both had returned home again, but not before the parents of the babe had presented him to God in Holy Baptism.

The Rev. P. Connell was here for his quarterly trip, and so before they left for home little Albert John was dedicated to the Lord.

Mr. Connell visited the camps and Sunday schools along the line, of which you have heard in previous issues of the "R.A." Some of the Sunday schools were very encouraging, but a couple have had a "break down," as is so often the case in these smaller places. Although two Sunday schools have ceased to function as such, there are still several families who wish to continue on with the Mail-Bag lessons for their children. We would value your prayers for these people, for theirs is not an easy life, and many have little Christian background, and find it difficult to teach their children. We would still appreciate material that is helpful in Sunday school work, text tickets, colouring in work, and lesson help, etc. We do thank all those who have sent material, and we ask you to continue sending, and to continue praying, for this is a most important work.

Beech Forest

As usual, in response to the O.M.'s quarterly request, the question arises, "What is there to write about that will be of interest?" Then follows much head-scratching and earnest deliberation—with nothing very startling as a result, it must be admitted. However, if we can convince our friends of B.C.A. that we are still on the map, then something has been achieved. To-day in Beech Forest—now this IS news—the sun is shining! One feels like saying "for the first time in living memory." We have been wondering for a very long time if we should enjoy its warmth again. The winter has been exceptionally long and dreary, and as we had no summer last season, it has seemed like a continuation of the previous winter. This is a freakish tract of country—50 miles to the north of us drought can be felt in its severest form—here we remain untouched by it. Last summer was the wettest ever recorded, yet outside of the Otways it was one of the driest. As a result of the continued wet weather, potato growers in the district have been hit hard; leaf-blight was widespread and

many growers have been unable to dig their full crop because of the inclement weather. However, despite the grumbling that ensues when we are treated to more rain than sunshine year after year, one notices that there is little inclination on the part of Otway residents to pack up and seek the drier districts. Better too much rain than too little rain evidently!

Two big difficulties yet remain to be overcome. As previously reported in these notes, it had been hoped to remove the Church at Beech Forest to the more sheltered and convenient vicarage site. Up to the present it has been found impossible to have this work done and the Church remains where it is—the continued assaults by the gales rendering its condition worse as time goes on. Further efforts are to be made to engage a contractor who will undertake this work and we still hope for success.

The second difficulty concerns the vicarage. The Bishop on his last visit to Beech Forest saw the urgent need for extensions in the shape of a new room and

verandah. The contract for this work was accepted by a Colac builder, measurements were taken six months ago and our patient waiting has not yet been rewarded. The builder has stated that he cannot obtain men to do the work because the uncertain weather compels them to lose too much time on the job. Local carpenters cannot do the work, as they are fully employed and likely to be for some years. Meanwhile, to provide extra sleeping space for a growing family, the study has had to be converted into a bedroom.

Carlisle River people have been greatly encouraged by the practical support they are receiving for their Church Building Fund from friends of B.C.A. and from the Diocese. This support is greatly appreciated and the fund has now reached the total of £520. At a meeting held after Evensong a few weeks ago it was decided that efforts should be redoubled and directed towards providing a brick church. This is a very wise decision. A brick church will be everlasting and safe from fire, also big problems of maintenance and repair, such as have to be faced in other parts of the district, will not be handed on to coming generations. The decision means that several more years of effort lie ahead of the people, but they are willing and anxious to do what in the end will prove to be really worthy of their good work.

At Lavers Hill Anglicans and Presbyterians have decided to combine and form a committee for the purpose of raising money to undertake the complete reconditioning of the building used for worship in that centre. The building is owned by the Presbyterians, but Anglicans have used it for many years, and, as neither congregation is large enough to find the amount of money necessary to repair and restore the building, it seemed only right and fair that we should share in that responsibility. It is hoped, in time, to make the building, at present in an extremely dilapidated condition, a fitting and attractive place of worship.

These notes comprise in the main material difficulties facing us here in the Otways, but I mention them because they are proof that Church people are alive to their problems and are facing them in the right spirit. Everywhere the desire is growing more strong to see the Church well and truly back on the map. Parents especially are being brought to realise the urgent necessity of bringing their children up within the shelter of the Church—it seems as if the lessons of the past few years are slowly being learned and we thank God for the change of heart in many places. The time when petrol and rubber restrictions are finally lifted is much looked forward to, when services can be restored to their proper pre-war number and the missionary can move about much more freely among the people.

The Organising Missioner's Letter

I must first apologise for the late appearance of this issue, but it has been quite unavoidable. The printers' strike, followed by the industrial upheaval in N.S.W., made publication impossible.

Since our last issue much has been planned for the future, and I am sure our friends will not only be interested to learn of it, but will resolutely continue their efforts so all may be brought to a successful conclusion.

The outstanding event has been the purchase of an improved aeroplane. The Government offered us the opportunity of acquiring a two-engined "Dragon" at a low price specially for Flying Doctor Service. We took advantage of the offer and the machine is now at Mascot. The necessary detailed organisation for its use has not yet been completed, but no doubt by the time of the next issue of the "R.A." I shall be able to tell you all about its location and service.

The acquisition of the new plane will make big demands upon our financial resources, for a new and larger hangar must be built, and running costs, annual overhaul and insurance will run into a considerable figure. Your help here will be appreciated.

Recently the Le Hunte District Council asked B.C.A. to take over their hospital at Wudinna, S.A., about 120 miles below Ceduna. It is a large modern hospital of fifteen beds and serves a large district. We have arranged to become responsible for this service, together with the Medical Practice as from March 1st. Sister L. Pritchard, who did so splendid a job at Cook, becomes matron at Wudinna, and Dr. Russell Roxburgh, of Burwood, N.S.W., becomes our medical officer at Wudinna. Dr.

Roxburgh was recently released from the R.A.A.F. for this service and is a qualified pilot. Within the next few months we hope to provide him with an aeroplane, thus adding a second Flying Doctor to our staff.

During the long vacation additions have been made at the Bowral Hostel, enabling another five girls to be taken into residence.

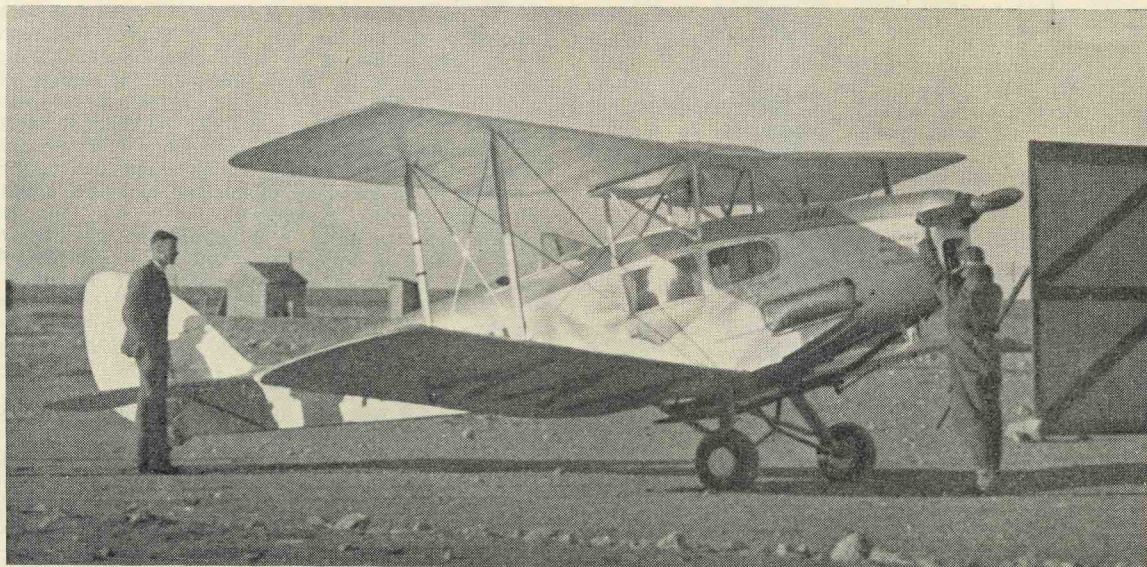
Requests have also come from Rawlinna, W.A., and Kingoonya, S.A., for the establishment of nursing centres at these points and we hope that they will be realised during 1946.

The provision of additional missioners is our most urgent need to-day. Quite a number of Bishops are looking to B.C.A. for help in this way. We do want to assist the Church to meet this great and important need. It cannot be done without men and women (as deaconesses) who will offer for this service. I appeal to any of the younger clergy and our deaconesses who may read this journal to seriously face up to this challenging work for God in the outback and country districts. Come in and talk it over or write for details. It is an urgent and imperative call to you to-day.

Now that the war is finished the calls upon our time and ability for the various additional services which were asked of us in war years will not be so heavy. But the war against paganism, ignorance and disease still goes on.

If true peace is to come on earth God's will must reign in men's hearts. Can we continue to give some of that time, effort and money, which we so cheerfully gave for our nation in the war years, for the purpose of winning men into the Kingdom of God?

THE FIRST B.C.A. MEDICAL 'PLANE.



VH. A.A.A. Inaugurated B.C.A. Flying Doctor Service, April, 1938.

The Bishop Goes to Prison

Rev. W. DUFFY.

The most important event since our last issue has been the annual visit of our Bishop.

We are always glad to see Bishop Johnson in our district and this visit we were doubly glad, as it was his first visit since his recent severe illness. The interest the Bishop takes in our B.C.A. district is shown quite clearly in the way he attempts to crowd in as many services as he can, during his week-end visit. He drove from Ballarat to Cobden, 80 miles after lunch on Saturday, and had to await the return of the Vicar. Unfortunately this particular Saturday afternoon was the occasion of the crowning of the Queen who was successful in the recent hospital effort. The Missioner, who has quite a loud voice, had been selected to act as Chancellor at the crowning ceremony, so therefore was away at the Lower Heytesbury Show grounds, 30 miles away. Returning at about 5 p.m. the Missioner found the Bishop waiting, and at 5.15 they set out for tea at the Coorimungle Prison Camp, 30 miles in the opposite direction. After tea at 7 p.m. we had arranged a service for the prisoners as usual. We were astonished, whilst having tea, to find that the Roman Catholic prisoners had asked to be allowed to attend the service. This was granted by the Bishop, and also by the warder in charge, so for the first time all denominations worshipped together. What a service it was, too! The men had chosen their own hymns as follows: "I need Thee every hour," "Abide with me," "Lead, Kindly Light," and "Pass me not, O Gentle Saviour." The Bishop was astonished at the volume of music that these men produced. Accompanied by the Methodist minister on the little harmonium, they fairly shook the building. The Bishop told me afterwards that he could see the veins in their

necks bulging as they let it go. What a pity we don't get that inspiring congregational singing in our churches.

The Bishop's address on "The light of the world" was certainly appropriate for these men, who try unsuccessfully to blunder through life without the Light of God to lighten their path. Many of the men came up and thanked the Bishop for his helpful address and also his interest in them, for they do feel that they are the outcasts of society. After supper with the officers we journeyed home another 30 miles, arriving about midnight, very tired but very thrilled. It was well worth while, because it showed two things. First, that the Church does mean something to these men, and they do love the services, and, secondly, that they love our Bishop. I would say that he is the most popular visitor to the prison camp.

The following day was very hot and muggy—one of those days when it is hard to feel really enthusiastic. After 8 a.m. Holy Communion at Cobden, we left for Peterborough, 32 miles away, for Holy Communion at 11 a.m. Back 18 miles to Timboon Public Hall for 2.30 p.m., and then back another 18 miles for Evensong at Cobden at 7.30 p.m. At this service six of our girls were received into full membership of the Church by Confirmation. A social hour afterwards concluded a crowded but happy day. At 9 a.m. next morning the Bishop returned to Ballart to attend a welcome to a Chaplain prisoner of war. It is interesting to note that the Chaplain was Rev. Aubrey Pain, who had for some years worked in the Beech Forest parish, one of our present B.C.A. areas. So ended our Bishop's annual visit—almost 300 miles for the week-end. Was it worth it? Ask the prisoners—ask the people—ask the Bishop.

“ *by any other name*”

Rev. K. LUDERS.

A traveller calling at the homesteads on the stations in the West, and learning the names of some, might be prone to think that the principle of selection observed by those responsible for choosing names was one of “inverse suitability.” Or perhaps those names breathing the atmosphere of sparkling rills and leafy glades were given as a reminder to those who should live there that, although in the glaring sun and drifting dust-haze things may be “not too good,” yet they “could be worse.” Here are some names: “Binerah Downs” (there are numerous “Downs”), “Moirá Plains,” “Garden Vale” (many “Vales,” too), “Glenwood,” “Nulga Park” (numerous “Parks”), “Viewmont” (not a hill in sight), “Morning Side” (and afternoon sizzle), “Rose Hill” (no roses), “Wilga,” “Oxford,” “Tasman,” “Heatherbloom,” and lots of others, besides many rippling aboriginal names that flow along the tongue. Once in ten years the “Plains” may look like plains on a picture postcard. The “Downs” can look “downish.” But never yet have I seen a “Dell,” “dellish.”

There comes to mind one “Dell” visited not so long ago. Here a youngish man has shouldered the burden of a property left in a far from prosperous and progressive state by his deceased father. With him, in a small cottage, live his “game” little wife and their two boys, aged 9 and 7. Knowing the family well and having their confidence, I was at liberty to make personal remarks and, noticing a large bottle of patent tonic on the dresser, I asked, “Who is taking the pick-me-up?” “We all have been taking some. M. . . . (his wife) and I have felt the need of it. It has been a rotten couple of years. We thought the tonic might help the boys, too, because for a long time it was so hard to get proper food. We did all we could to save the cow, but, of course, like all the others round the district, it “went”; “bonzer” little thing she was, too. We tried powdered milk, but could never get enough—the orderman at the store in used to say he forgot to put it in. Vegetables were almost as scarce as hen’s teeth. We kept a few veges. going by carting all the water for them—until the ground went sour; then we managed to get a few by rail—at a price. Even the goats cleared out and the only thing left to eat was tinned stuff. I can tell you we were sick of it. Looking the family over, I formed the opinion that they were nearer to being “truly sick of it” than they realised. They were positively “skinny” and altogether too careworn for their ages.

“And what did you do in the dry spell?”

“What could I do? I did my best for the stock—though I knew it would be a waste of time—and that takes the heart out of a man. Did a bit of ‘ditching.’ Kept the sand down from around the house, carted water and then, latterly, worked on the old place. Some days we could not go outside.”

Such a remark could not but provoke a fleeting covert grin, for you must know that this place where on occasions no one could stay out in the swirling, blinding dust, is named “. Dell.”

“Did the youngsters get in any schooling?”

“Oh, we managed along,” said Mrs. “That is, we fitted it in on good days, but on such days I had to do ‘double-shift’ on everything. There was nothing

for it but for B. to follow me as I worked and so try to do some schooling that way. Washing days were the worst. He would sit in the wash-house and do his writing while I was there to help. When I was outside at the line he would call out his problem, but, as often as not, if I didn’t have a mouthful of pegs, I didn’t hear him, and he would have to dash out to ask me how to spell a word or some such thing. It was a bit of a strain. What is worse is that he is not making the progress he should. That worries me. When things were so bad he got unsettled and was always hankering to go out and give Dad a hand.”

“Well, Mrs. there is only one solution to your problem and that is to send B. to the Hostel. He will be well fed and cared for and you yourself will be relieved of some strain.”

“That’s very nice. We have thought about it, but, apart from the cost (and we are having a dickens of a struggle just now), there is the matter of B.’s getting there. He has never been away from us and to get to Wilcannia means a trip of 50 miles in the train, a night in a strange place, and then over a hundred miles by mail truck.”

“Yes, the travelling is a difficulty, I know; but it can be done. You think about it some more.” These were my last spoken words to them. Since then I have written urging that B. be sent and the Hostel fees will be reduced. When he comes, what will he come to?

Judged by appearances, the Hostel (in spite of flattering photos: that gives only the very best aspect and cannot reveal the inconveniences suffered by the staff) is a “huddle of makeshifts.” Judged by results, it is an “academy of comportment.” Both these descriptions need explanation.

The “huddle of makeshifts” came into being through no one’s fault, but because the hostel “just grew.” In the first instance it was a private dwelling. Then, too small to meet an increased demand, it was “pushed out” here, “pulled about” there, and altered somewhere else. Still the demand grew. More sleeping space was “stuck on”; then another dormitory built, apart from the rest of the collection.

As for the other term, “Academy of comportment,” this is no exaggeration. Number of youngsters come into the Hostel from homes with no spiritual background. Some (mostly “only” children) have been “problem” children to their parents, and there are others, the shy bush type “too nervous to squeak.” With amazingly few exceptions they leave the Hostel as children that pleasantly surprised parents are more than glad to welcome home. The changes that occur never cease to be a cause of wonderment to me, who should be getting used to it now; and I really believe that Matron herself is surprised at times. It is a joy to watch them grow into young people with a deepening sense of responsibility to God and their fellows

It is a splendid sign and a good recommendation that the Hostel is becoming a “tradition.” Some of the recent and present inmates are “second generation” boarders and on their way are more whose fathers and mothers are more than ready to present their children for admission to the Hostel that did for them a service they appreciate more as they grow older.

Penong

Sister L. LOANE.

It is just twelve months since I came to Penong to take over the hospital from Sister Firmin, who had been here for three years and was returning to her home in Victoria. They have been twelve happy and varied months, mostly fairly busy and very different to those spent previously at Ceduna.

For some time now the future of the hospital has been very doubtful because it has been so difficult to obtain help. In August the O.M. visited us and met the Hospital Committee and then he said we would have to close down, as B.C.A. was unable to obtain the help necessary to keep it functioning, unless local help could be found. The Committee made the position known to the public that evening and appealed for help. Four, and later five, young ladies came forward and volunteered to come for a month at a time till permanent help could be found. The following week Mr. Jones again met the Committee and accepted the offer, and so the first helper began and we did not have to close down. All went well till September, when for one reason or another the system broke down and no one was able to come, and the hospital was left with two patients and a baby. This does not sound very much, but when it is left to one to do the nursing, cooking and housework, and all the different calls from out-patients, etc., it is found to be well-nigh impossible. If it were not for the fact that my mother was here then on a short visit and was able to do the greater part of the cooking, I do not know how I could have managed. The system is working again now, but we do need permanent help. Is there no one now who would be free to come out and help carry on the work here?

What would it mean if we did close down? It would mean that all cases from Penong and the "Top End" would have to go to Ceduna if they needed hospital treatment. Ceduna is 50 miles from Penong and the Top End patients have anything from 40 to 100 miles to come already. To have to add another 50 miles to this would be to add difficulties in every way. To quote one case only. The patient was brought down from Fowler's Bay, some 45 miles west of here, one afternoon. She arrived in a very serious condition and it was obvious that immediate surgical treatment was

necessary. Doctor and Sister Dowling were here a short time after being called and the operation was performed with the least possible delay. The next week the patient passed through stormy waters, but with the power of prayer and the aid of penicillin she pulled through. Had Penong Hospital been closed this patient would have had to go on to Ceduna, at least another hour's journey over country roads. It is not possible to say how it would have affected her condition, but it would not have improved it, and precious time would have been lost and a difficult recovery made less probable. This is just one case, but there are many others, and I think perhaps the need of the mothers and babies is amongst the most important. Apart from all this, is the fact that Ceduna Hospital is always very busy and for months now the staff has been taxed to its utmost limits to keep up with the work in hand. Surely the need of our inland or outback, or whatever it might be termed, is of major importance in the establishment of this post-war world, and is it not to the Christian people to whom we turn for help at this time of stress? Is there no one now who is free to come out and help in the work here?

The Penong Memorial Hospital was put up in 1927 with a promise that the debt on it would be paid off in a certain number of years. Yearly Hospital Days have been held and gradually the debt has been reduced till this year it stood at something over £400. So a special effort was made to clear it, and by the co-operation and enthusiasm of the people in the districts concerned £700 odd was raised. This is a record effort, in spite of one of the worst years ever experienced on the coast. Water is short, stock dying and feed failing, crops are very poor. The dust storms so far have equalled any we generally expect in the middle of summer and as I write there is a terrific wind and the whole atmosphere is hazy with clouds of dust.

So will you, our prayer partners, in the other States, remember Penong and its needs, and if there is anyone who feels led of the Spirit to lend a hand, don't delay. The message on the Calendar is "Occupy till I come." Pray that grace and perseverance may be given to do so.

DONATIONS.

27/3/45, Anonymous, Roseville, 13/-; 29/3/45, "Cotton," 2/6; 3/4/45, Anonymous, Hurstville, 2/-; 16/4/45, Anonymous, Kogarah, 2/-; 24/4/45, Anonymous, 10/-; 2/5/45, Anonymous, Chatswood, 5/-; 4/5/45, Anonymous, £1; 8/5/45, "A.Y.Z.," 10/-; 8/5/45, "A Friend," £5; 21/5/45, Mr. Morris, £1; 21/5/45, Anonymous, West Pennant Hills, 10/-; 13/6/45, Anonymous, 10/-; 19/7/45, Anonymous, Hurstville, 2/-; 31/7/45, "A Friend," Rydal, £1; 7/8/45, Anonymous, £1; 8/8/45, "A Busy Mother," 1/6; 19/9/45, Anonymous, J. R. Concord, £2; Rally, 20/9/45, Anonymous, 2/6; Rally, 24/9/45, "A Friend," £5; Rally, 26/9/45, Mrs. Coote, 10/-; Rally, 28/9/45, Mrs. Jones, £1; Rally, 2/10/45, Anonymous, £1; Rally, 8/10/45, "An Interested Listener," 10/-; 15/10/45, Anonymous, 7/-; Rally, 16/10/45, Anonymous, Eastwood, £1; Rally, 19/10/45, Miss K. Harper, 10/-; Rally, 19/10/45, Anonymous, 5/-; Rally, 30/10/45, Anonymous, 2/-; 2/11/45, Anonymous,

Roseville, 6/-; Rally, 19/11/45, Anonymous, 6/-; Xmas, 21/11/45, "A.Y.Z.," £4; Mrs. Ramshaw, 10/-; Xmas, 14/12/45, Anonymous, £1; Xmas, 17/12/45, Radio Listener, 5/-; Xmas, 21/12/45, Mrs. Lindsay, 5/-; Xmas, 31/12/45, Miss Cook, 10/-; Xmas, 31/12/45, Anonymous, 10/-; Xmas, 16/1/46, Anonymous, 5/-; Xmas, 16/1/46, Miss Bostock, £5/5/-; Xmas, 12/2/46, Anonymous, £1; 14/2/46, Anonymous, Roseville, 7/-, Xmas.

REAL AUSTRALIAN.

Miss Winton, Rev. Willcoxson, Mrs. R. West, Miss Lisom, Mrs. Bache, Rev. Livingstone, Miss Banks-Smith, Mrs. Stevenson, Mrs. Sneath, Miss Platt, Mr. Winton, Mr. Windle, Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Layton, Miss Armstrong, Mrs. Small, Miss Howard, Miss Lambert, Miss Charles, Mrs. Dykes, Mrs. Dann, Mrs. Luders, Mrs. Fischer, Mr. Seymour, Mrs. Simmonds, Miss Davis, Miss Smith, Mrs. Olds, Mrs. Hutchinson, Mrs. Tingle, Mrs. Heron, Mrs. Hood, Mrs. Chapman, Mrs. Platt.

THE NEW MEDICAL AEROPLANE.



Purchased from the Commonwealth Government, this "Dragon" will add greatly to the efficiency of our Flying Doctor Service.

Streaky Bay

Rev. D. LIVINGSTONE.

All our blessings seem to be coming at once and we are more than a little overwhelmed and thankful. For some time it has been evident that a considerable sum of money would have to be spent on various objects within the parish, a sum far above the capacity of the parishioners to provide. So some of us have been praying that the need would be provided, although we could not see how it would be done. But the other night an air letter from England was in the mail and there my amazed eyes read that a lady in England had read of the drought over here and had given £250 specially earmarked for Streaky Bay! Our heads bowed in humble thanksgiving to the gracious God Who always supplies the need of all His servants. If the donor who was the Lord's instrument of blessing reads this, we extend to you our sincere and heartfelt thanks for your gracious gift. It has been a tremendous uplift and encouragement to us all. It has also encouraged others to pray more and to trust more in the Heavenly Father, Who cares so well for His children.

We have been deeply touched, too, to think that this gift should come from England—England which has endured so much, England which has suffered and is suffering so much, England which has been, and under the good hand of God always will be, the hope and inspiration of the world.

It is our hope that one day we shall be able to express the gratitude we feel in a more adequate manner. In the meantime we are endeavouring to send some food parcels to needy persons over there.

Another blessing has been the longed-for rain. Of course it has come too late to save many crops or to provide sufficient feed, but has put new heart into everyone and seems to indicate that the drought might be broken. At the same time the district will feel the effects of the drought for several years to come. But once again we bow our heads in grateful thanks to Almighty God for all His goodness.

During this month we received from Miss Pearson and her friends in Melbourne a box of Christian literature to commence a Christian lending library. I am much impressed with the quality and standard of the books. They will fill a very real need and are an excellent medium for the spreading of the Gospel. Many thanks to those who have given them.

The greatest blessing of all is the spiritual uplift which comes from the knowledge that the Lord is caring for us so well. It is our hope that many others may be led so to trust Him that they, too, shall be able to testify to His abundant blessing upon them.

Sister Goes West

Sister was leaving Melbourne for Cook and in due time her turn came at the booking office window. A long and impatient queue straggled behind her and on the other side of the window a harassed booking clerk searched through his reference books for the necessary details to enable him to supply a ticket to Cook. He gave it up in despair and 'phoned through to somebody else, who supplied him with the details as to the whereabouts of this mysterious place and the price of a ticket for one who for some mysterious reason wanted to go to that place.

Somebody lined up in the queue voiced the question, "Where is Cook, anyway?" and evoked a reply from another with a little knowledge. "Oh, it's just a little siding on the line from Adelaide to Perth." Sister very nearly let herself go in a homily as to the value of these little sidings to passengers who travel west to Perth across the great dry and treeless plains in the comfort of a modern railway train.

All trains going west to Perth or east to Adelaide stop at Cook. The train staff is relieved, the engine refuelled or changed for another as required. From a railway viewpoint Cook is rather a busy little spot; many and different are the trains. A water train, a fast goods, a passenger train going east or west, a military train, and most important of all the "Tea and Sugar," as it is called. It comes in about midnight on Friday. She shunts and whistles and snorts all night long and seems to thoroughly enjoy the thought that if she has to be busy all night, the rest of the community might as well know all about it.

However, the locals must needs bear her no ill-feeling, for she is far too important a lady. The "Tea and Sugar" visits all the sidings between Port Augusta and Kalgoorlie and, of course, carries many things other than tea and sugar.

The butcher has a van on the train, painted white and complete with refrigerator and wire doors. There is room for only a very limited number inside the van and purchasing meat means much patient waiting, especially in the summer, when heat and flies are bad. Meat purchased must last a week, until the "Tea and Sugar" again visits the siding, so some careful buying is required by the customers.

Sister had always considered that milk from a tin was largely for emergency use, but after a few days at Cook considered it an every-day diet. Some of the folk keep goats, useful not only for fresh milk supply, but providing a welcome change in the meat ration.

Cook, being one of the larger of the sidings, has its own general store, otherwise all provisions would have to be purchased once per week from the train. Most things can be bought at the store, though fruit and vegetables are restricted to one day per week, for these come up on the "Tea and Sugar" and will not keep fresh very well.

Each time a passenger train stops at Cook, the store closes. This is a wise precaution, as otherwise the train passengers would buy the store out of supplies and the local people would be without. Sometimes passengers not stopping to think and coming themselves from a big town with its many shops, are quite indignant at

what they term the "ridiculous rule for closing the store."

Besides the job of keeping trains and engines in good condition, the railway folk on the line must needs keep daily check on rails and sleepers. This takes considerable manpower, though it is spread out over a long distance. Over 1000 miles separate Port Augusta from Kalgoorlie and at intervals of approximately 30 are to be found these little sidings, each with its gang of fettlers, their wives and kiddies. If you were to ask these folk where they would prefer to live, I should be surprised if more than a few chose a tiny siding on the Trans. line, with its lack of conveniences and climatic extremes. However, somebody has to live and work on the East-West Line, and for these folk the Bush Church Aid Hospital at Cook has proved an inestimable boon.

The nurses in this little six-bed hospital are able to give mothercraft advice and service, the specialised nursing necessary in confinement cases and all general nursing.

Once per month the doctor comes from Ceduna, 300 miles away, by aeroplane. On this day all who need service or advice from him attend the hospital and he spends a very busy day, returning to his base the following day. Doctor also goes to Cook at special times whenever the nurse has need of him. Approximately 30 visits a year are made by him to Cook by aeroplane and this, of course, is only one of many centres which have need of his services in his huge area.

There is no church or resident minister of religion at Cook. The sisters carry on the Sunday school week by week and take a church service each Sunday night in the little hospital. Once per week one of the Sisters goes along to the little State school, which Cook is fortunate to possess, to give religious instruction to the children. The B.C.A. padre from Penong in whose area Cook lies comes along once each quarter. He travels well over 1000 miles and journeys continuously up and down the line for three weeks, visiting each little siding east and west of Cook for many hundreds of miles.

If it were not for the presence of these B.C.A. padres and nurses those who live on the Nullarbor, looking after and maintaining our essential transport system, would be immeasurably poorer.

You have a part in these necessary and valuable services for our own people dwelling in some of the most difficult places in our Empire. It is a ministry given on your behalf. Your prayers, sympathy and practical help are needed to enable these ministries to be carried on day by day. We are grateful to those in England for help given through C.C. during past years.

TUNE-IN TO

3 DB

FRIDAYS AT

4.45 p.m.



STAFF MOVEMENTS.

Since our last issue Sisters R. Gillan, Thomas, A. Miller and J. Coleman have joined our South Australian staff and are at present located at Ceduna. We welcome them into the family circle and pray that they may enjoy a happy time of service with us.

Sister Branford (Mrs. Manning), with the return of her husband from the Services, has left Ceduna in order to set up housekeeping. We wish them much blessing and happiness together, though Mrs. Manning and baby Kathleen have left a big void at Ceduna.

Miss D. Dykes arrived in Sydney from Cook at the end of last year to enjoy her long leave.

Unfortunately she celebrated the event by an acute appendix, and for a time was in a serious condition at Katoomba Hospital. We are glad to report that Miss Dykes is now on the way to full health and will shortly return to B.C.A. service.

Sister M. Kay, who has been with us for 12 months at Ceduna, volunteered to replace Miss Dykes at Cook and she is now doing a good job in the hospital and amongst the children on the Nullarbor.

Miss M. Farr, who for some years has been one of our Mail Bag Sunday school teachers, is now assisting Mrs. Mann at the "Coorah" Hostel, Wentworth Falls. We were glad to receive her into this service and to know she is happy in it.

The Rev. C. Withington has been appointed to the charge of Cann River. This was one of the missions which during the war had to be absorbed by another, in this case, Delegate. It will make for a fuller and more efficient ministry to have them again separate and, while welcoming Mr. Withington, we would express our confidence that he will find there a satisfying ministry.

The Rev. K. Brodie has been appointed to the important parish of Bairnsdale, in the Diocese of Gippsland. We wish him much blessing in his new and important sphere.

The vacancy thus created at Delegate will, we expect, shortly be filled.

We offer our congratulations to the Revs. D. Livingstone and H. R. Broadley, who in the recent examination of the Australian College of Theology each gained another subject in Th. Schol.

Sister J. Lucas, through illness at home, resigned from B.C.A. and is now in Sydney. Sister, though with us for less than a year, did a splendid piece of work at Tarcoola and we are indeed sorry to lose her.

Sister P. Maddern has taken over the post at Tarcoola.

Yet again we must record our thanks to Mrs. Marshall and her good friends for the splendid sum of £18 and two War Savings Certificates from Miss H. Fisher. Mrs. Marshall has been collecting for the Society's fund almost from the inception of our work and, though age and sickness have taken toll of her strength, she still manages to keep the interest alive amongst her friends.

Sister Gwynne has returned to Cann River after completing her Mothercraft Training in Brisbane. We are grateful to Sister Firmin for carrying on at Cann River during Sister Gwynne's absence.

Since our last issue Sister Hitchcock has returned to duty. Sister is now in charge of the housekeeping at Ceduna.

Miss Joan Bradley, who helped us establish the hostel at Bowral, has commenced her training as a nurse. We wish her well in her new sphere and trust she will find many opportunities for witness.

Our many friends will rejoice to learn of the return to Australia of the Rev. W. I. Fleming. Mr. Fleming was a prisoner of war after the fall of Singapore. He will be remembered as B.C.A. Missioner at Croajingalong and Werrimull, and more recently as Victorian Secretary.

Recently the Rev. H. E. Felton accepted nomination to the Council of B.C.A. Mr. Felton was Missioner at Mungindi, N.S.W., and was largely instrumental in the establishment of our hostel there. We welcome him to the Council of the Society and feel sure that his first-hand knowledge of our work will be of great benefit.

The Rev. W. McLeod, late Missioner at Minnipa, S.A., and Delegate, N.S.W., has recently been discharged from the Army and is now Curate at St. Matthew's, Manly, N.S.W.

The Rev. P. Connell, of Penong, was recently married to Miss Gladys Sneath, of Rappville, N.S.W. Mr. and Mrs. Connell are now at Penong and we extend to them our good wishes for their future life together.

When Making your Will Remember the B.C.A.

As President of the N.S.W. Ladies' Central Auxiliary since its inception, Mrs. D'Arcy Irvine has given outstanding help to B.C.A. She has always been keenly interested in the work and the workers and has always been ready to give practical assistance for any need of which she has been aware. Recently Mrs. D'Arcy Irvine felt it wise to relinquish the Presidency of the Auxiliary, though still retaining an active interest. We are grateful to her for all her help and friendliness and we are glad to know that she will attend the meetings of the Auxiliary as she is able.

Mrs. F. H. B. Dillon, who will be remembered as the Society's first Matron at Ceduna, has accepted the Presidency and we feel sure she will ably carry on its activities.

Our Christmas appeal for gifts to supply the needs of children in Missions, Hostels and Hospitals was an outstanding success. We are grateful to the many friends who sent us money or gifts towards the Appeal.

A NEW FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE.

As from March 1st, 1946, the B.C.A. assumes responsibility for the management of the Central Eyre Peninsular Hospital located at Wudinna, South Australia. This is a fifteen-bed hospital and has been managed by the Le Hunte District Council.

Recently the Society was asked to take over the management and to this we have agreed.

Dr. R. Roxburgh, of Burwood, N.S.W., takes up duty early in March as the B.C.A. Medical Officer at Wudinna. Within the next few months the Society will station an aeroplane at Wudinna for doctor's use.

Dr. Roxburgh was recently released from the R.A.A.F. for this work and will be his own pilot. It is an interesting coincidence that Doctor's wife is also a doctor.

Sister Pritchard, who did such an outstanding work at Cook for many years, is now at Wudinna and becomes Matron.

We ask all our friends to pray earnestly for this new and important venture and for blessing and guidance for those who are to represent B.C.A. at Wudinna.

aged lady who is very appreciative of Sister's good work and care for her. In the nature of a devotional is the reading of the Daily Light portion, to which she invariably adds the verse of an appropriate hymn, at which I marvel.

Even this routine has frequently been "hurried up" to admit of fresh calls, especially when there is a long trip in view. These have come in batches, and twice the 300-mile mark has been passed within 10 days. Any available means of transport will serve—cream 'bus, mail service car, luxury limousine, utility truck, as long as it gets one there. I don't think I would make much haste on horseback. A push bike is very handy and I have used mine a fair amount for the nearer trips.

One's house duties were suddenly brought to a stop one Monday morning by a 'phone call to Wangrabelle, which allowed three-quarters of an hour to sponge my patient and catch the Mallacoota 'bus. There is a passenger and mail service from Cann River in three directions, namely Orbost, Bombala and Mallacoota, the first being daily return and the others three times weekly. The B.C.A. Nursing Centre is required to operate in a large part of the district outlined.

Wangrabelle! Changing from the service car to another mail car at Genoa, I arrived there after a 17-miles journey and found it to be a scattered community consisting of a school and a few prosperous looking farms on the banks of the lovely Genoa River and quite characteristic of this country, where one may travel for miles through forest when suddenly a bend in the road brings a change of scene and one looks out over cleared and cultivated paddocks. The patient—an old man about 80—had been the mail man for 50 years and had been on his job as usual last mail day. Now he seemed to be in for pleurisy or pneumonia. I treated the symptoms with temporary relief to the patient, but had to return, so approved of the suggestion that he should be consulted about going to hospital, which they did next day and took him to Orbost.

The State school religious instruction classes at Cann River and Noorinbee schools have linked one up with the children, I hope to our mutual help and joy. They certainly give one some amazing answers sometimes, such as Isaac being the brother of Simon Peter. Though numbers can be misleading, more have been attending lately at Sunday school and eight is about the average.

The Bush Nurse

Sister E. FIRMIN.

It was not without a sense of insufficiency and—yes perhaps—of inefficiency that one took over the B.C.A. Dispensary at Cann River from Sister Gwynne for a period of six months, yet there was great comfort in the thought of that host of unwritten names who "out of weakness were made strong."

It was not long before I found that the duties for which Sister made herself responsible were legion and varied, and realised that Sister has indeed served here with true devotion and at much self-sacrifice often. There is always a degree of uncertainty about the day's programme. Regularly every morning and evening there has been a call to a dear suffering child of God—an

WILL YOU

REMEMBER

THIS GROWING

SERVICE

IN YOUR

LENTEN GIVING

?

On the Trans-line

Rev. P. CONNELL.

On Wednesday, I began making my final arrangements for the quarterly trip to visit and minister to the Transcontinental Line camps that come under my charge. By Wednesday night I had done all that was needed to make me ready for the trip. This included servicing the car. Quite an intensive job this. Besides seeing that the battery plates are covered with filtered water, the oil gauge must register the full amount of oil necessary, the petrol tank must have at least six gallons of fuel to take me to Colona Station, where I fill the petrol tank again, and also the two eight-gallon drums I carry with me—twenty-nine gallons altogether. This must take me to Cook and back to Colona again. To get back to my preparations for the trip. Another job is to see that each tyre has at least 35 lbs. pressure of air, and the car must be greased throughout—a very dirty, tiresome job this last one. Then Thursday morning dawned. I had an early breakfast and got away, while the school children were marching into school, nine o'clock. By midday I had reached Colona station, where I had dinner with Mr. and Mrs. Reid. They were full of anxiety and doubtful hope then about Frank, their only child, a prisoner in Borneo. At 12.30 I pushed on along the next stretch of 88 miles to Nullarbor Station, arriving without incident about 3.30 p.m. Mr. Attick, the manager of Nullarbor at present, was alone and we had a most welcome cup of tea and a chat together. Then I passed on to Wudgena Gate, 25 miles further. Here the Green family—Mr. Green, two daughters and a son—are living in a shed. They are trapping rabbits at present, which abound on the plain. I was anxious to move on, as I only had a few hours of daylight to take me on to Cook, 62 miles. But Mr. Green prevailed, and as a last push to his persuasions he added, "We've just shot a wild turkey, and he's in the pot stewing; how about it?" So I partook of wild turkey and tea. It is hard for these people out here on the plain. Especially is it hard on the children. The girls were very glad of the magazines and pictorials I gave them, and also for some sweets which I had bought for some of the kiddies along this track.

Then I set off for Cook, reaching it well after dark that night. The road on this stretch of the run is much inferior to the rest of the track from Penong to Cook.

As soon as I arrived Sister Bossley and Sister Hitchcock, relieving while Miss Dykes is holidaying, welcomed me to the inevitable cup of tea. As soon as this was over, I ran the car over into the aeroplane hangar, which was empty and makes a fine car shed.

On the following morning I went across to the station to make out my itinerary for the line work with the station master, Mr. Willows, who, of course, has all the train times at his fingers' ends.

On Saturday morning early I left for Ooldea, and arrived some two or three hours after leaving Cook. At the siding when I got out were many natives from the nearby mission, selling kangaroos made from wood of local trees, to passengers on the train. I met Mr. Green, of the U.A.M. (United Aborigines Mission) and it was good to meet such a cheerful Christian. I went next to Mrs. Dicks. Mr. Dicks is a fletcher on the line and their family is one of two stationed at the siding. After a talk I went across to the other family, the Ellis's.

Mrs. Ellis was the only one at home and she had had a fainting fit that morning. In fact, as Mrs. Dicks and I arrived, she was just recovering. She had been collecting wood and had dropped near the kitchen in the shade fortunately—and lay there for two hours. Her four-months-old baby, just recovered from a serious illness, lay in the front room quietly all that time. Poor little chap, the weakening effects of his illness are still on him, and he is quiet, not so much because he is good as because he is still so weak. This is her third baby, the other two died in infancy, as I found out later. She still keeps on and is a wonderful Christian character. At present she is quite alone, as Mr. and Mrs. Dicks and their daughter Beverley have gone for seven weeks' holiday. I'm sure Mrs. Ellis needs all our prayers, as, except for an occasional visitor from the Mission station, and an Italian worker on the Line, she is alone with her baby all day until Mr. Ellis gets home from work at night.

Returning from Ooldea, I got back to Cook at 4 a.m. As I walked across from the station to the hospital, I could see a light in my window. When I got into my room, fixed on the lamp was a notice from Sister telling that she had left some supper on the kitchen stove and that the little spirit stove was full of kerosene so that I could light it and warm the cocoa she had left ready. Then to bed.

On Sunday at 10 a.m. we had Holy Communion in the sitting room of the hospital and some ten to a dozen people came.

Then on Monday the 5 p.m. troop train took me along to Coonana, my furthest stop in a westerly direction and 106 miles from Kalgoorlie. I arrived here early one morning and went across to Mrs. Coad's for breakfast. After breakfast, a wash and a shave, I went visiting through the camp and then gave religious instruction at the State school. After tea that night we had a service of Evening Prayer and about 20 people out of a camp of about forty gathered for it. They sang the old hymns with great heartiness. By 7.20, when the service was ended, the lights of the "Tea and Sugar" train from Kalgoorlie were very close and I hurried up to pack hymn books and robes and get across to the line. My next stop was Zanthus. It is wonderful to see real timber at these two places, salmon or gimlet gum predominating. Another fifty miles east and the Nullarbor plain begins. Soon there is hardly a tree to be seen, and around one stretches the plain, so flat that it looks like being far out at sea with no land in sight.

At Rawlinna, I was met at the train by one of the residents of the camp, and we went straight over to Mrs. Henderson, who runs the Sunday school and very kindly provides hospitality to the visiting minister, whoever he may be. Rawlinna is one of the bigger camps, with probably fifty people altogether.

From Rawlinna I passed on to other places and back to Cook for the Sunday services. Then on Monday I again set out to visit Forrest and Reid, the last two camps on my itinerary. At each place people were glad to welcome me, and I visited every home, besides taking a service before leaving on the train.

At Forrest—a very misleading name if one expected to see many trees—I had service at the Aerodrome. My congregation consisted mainly of R.A.A.F. personnel,

THE PLACE OF PRAYER

A Prayer for Use with Our Prayer List.

O Lord God of our nation, Who has commanded men to subdue and replenish the earth: Look in Thy love upon all those who in the distant parts of our land are striving against many difficulties, and are deprived the access of the means of grace. Strengthen and guide the Bush Church Aid Society and its Clergy, Nurses, Doctors and Air Pilot, and Students. Cheer and comfort them in discouragements and loneliness, and bless their ministrations to the good of those they serve, and grant that the message of redeeming love may thus be rooted and grounded in our national life, to the glory of Thy Great Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SUNDAY.

MORNING.

The Far West Missions at Penong, Ceduna, Minnipa and Cummins; the Missioners H. Broadley, D. Pugh, J. Greenwood, and P. Connell.

EVENING.

The West Darling Missions at Wilcannia and Menindee; the N.W. Mallee, and the Missioner, K. Luders.

THURSDAY.

MORNING.

For the Mail-Bag Sunday School with its Gospel messages for the children. For the teachers and helpers, that they may find encouragement in their work.

EVENING.

For the Organising Missioner, that he may be strengthened and guided in all his endeavours for the good of the work and in his relationships with his fellow-workers.

MONDAY.

MORNING.

The Cann River Mission, the Bonang Mission, the Streaky Bay Missioner, Rev. D. Livingstone.

EVENING.

The Denmark Settlement, the Kirton Point Missions and Missioners, Rev. T. R. Fleming and Rev. R. T. Hallahan.

FRIDAY.

MORNING.

For the Bishop Kirkby Memorial Hospital and Sisters Bossley and McKay, as they minister to the people on the great Nullarbor Plain. For Sister Maddern and the Tarcoola Medical Hostel.

EVENING.

For students and all in training for this work of God. For Rev. W. Duffy and the Heytesbury Forest Mission. For Rev. T. H. Pickburn and the Otway Ranges Mission.

TUESDAY.

MORNING.

For Sisters Dowling, Miller, Gillan, Thomas Hitchcock, Holle and L. Loane.

For the Bowral Hostel, Mrs. S. Hastie and Students.

EVENING.

For the Cann River Dispensary, and Sister Gwynne and Koonibba Mission Hospital, and Sister L. Pritchard and the Wudinna Staff.

SATURDAY.

MORNING.

For the President and Council of the Society, that they may be guided by His wisdom.

For the Home Base Staffs, Auxiliaries, and parochial workers.

EVENING.

For the "Coorah" Hostel and its workers, Mrs. Mann and Mrs. I. Mann, and Miss Farr.

For the Rappville Mission and the Missioner, the Rev. R. Meyer.

WEDNESDAY.

MORNING.

For the children in the Mungindi, Wilcannia and Port Lincoln Hostels, and for the workers, the Misses Cheers, the Misses Gurrier Jones and Sister Sowter.

EVENING.

For the Flying Medical Service, Mr. Chadwick, and Doctors R. and F. Gibson.

For the wives and families of the Missioners and Air Pilot.

Each day pray that the many needs of the work may be met.

Running expenses of £5 per hour to keep the Medical Plane in the air.

Consecrated clergy missionaries for urgent work in the field.

That our work may continue to progress despite the difficulties of wartime.

Give Thanks—

For the rich blessing and wonderful growth of the Society's work.

For all the kindly givers who have helped with their self-denials.

For the Flying Medical Service.

For the joy of service.

with one of the camp folk as well. It was an inspiring service for all of us, and I would like here to express my thanks to the hostess, Mrs. Clemm, for her generous hospitality. My stay among them, and the service at night are things that make me appreciate what outback hospitality is, and I look forward to going to them again.

Then home to Cook again, ready for the return to Penong. Beyond meeting those whom I mentioned as welcoming me coming up, I saw no one but some people who at present live sixty miles from a telephone, a man, his wife and four little children. They live off the main track to Cook and were on their way home from Fowler's Bay. When next I come this way, they will be having the children baptised, and it is a service I am looking forward to very eagerly.

Only a Dream?

Rev. K. LUDERS.

A Church building at Tibooburra!

Only a dream?—or will it become a reality?

If you ask, "Why shouldn't it become a reality?" it is because you do not know Tibooburra and district, nor the handicaps to progressive church life in the extreme north-west of New South Wales.

Tibooburra itself is a "two camel" village nowhere near the Darling River. As the crow flies (lucky bird) it is 30 miles south of the Queensland border, 60 miles east of the South Australian border and 180 miles north of Broken Hill. From this latter place all supplies are hauled by large transport trucks, over a lovely weather-beaten road having only a natural surface—and THAT doesn't wear very well. Transport charges are terrific. The township comprises twenty-odd houses, a store, post office, police station, school, hospital, two hotels (one an extension of the other), court house and public hall, but there is no church building of any description. Most of the buildings straggle along the sides of the single main street, which has a big kink in it. The hospital and a few dwellings are further away, and scattered about in what appears to be a very careless fashion. Apart from business people and a few public servants as more or less permanent residents, there live in the place, shearers, cooks and casual labourers. These come and go.

The built-on area is comparatively level, though there are small stone outcrops here and there. North and south, east and west, like barriers to the outside world, are high and upstanding jumbles of black granite rocks. Confronted by these hard, drab masses, it is borne in upon a visitor that anyone resident in Tibooburra must necessarily be tough in order to survive. Glaring, enervating, midsummer days in this spot are best not dwelt upon.

The village is the distribution point and the rendezvous for an area of some 7500 square miles of country. In such terms, that is an impressive statement; but—in all that area there are not more than 100 families, and only a percentage of these are Anglican.

Apart from the numerical weakness of the Church, there is another factor that warrants a claim upon the goodwill of such as have a Church "just around the corner." Because of the remoteness of its geographical situation, Tibooburra is poorly serviced by clergymen of any denomination. Records reveal these facts concerning C. of E. ministrations—and remember that we have an incomparably better record than any others.

The first clergyman to hold a service at this place was the Rev. J. H. Price. Date, 19th July, 1881. The next service was more than 12 months later September 24th, 1882. When Rev. W. K. Forbes put in an appearance, Rev. G. S. Oakes managed to call in 1884 and twice in 1886. Then came Rev. W. J. Ellis in '88, Rev. C. T. Sackville-West, three times in 1890. (This was a record for those horse-coach and horse-and-buggy days.) In the time of the Rectorship of H. Bradshaw, who went to Tibooburra four times between '91-'95, an E. C. Garby, who was resident there, carried on services. Apparently he was a layman.

Rev. J. Rawling pushed his bicycle thus far in 1898. Things went along in such fashion till 1913, when Rev. H. Linton (his fame still lives in the west) popped along on his motor-bike FOUR times in one year! It is noted that in August, 1914, an Archdeacon went along and "scooped the pool" for an Archdeaconry Fund. He netted 18/6 from the Milparinka service (and that place has since faded completely from the map) and £3/16/6 from Tibooburra. Many entries lend themselves to comment, but all may be summed up thus:—Counting Bishops, Archdeacons, Priests, Deacons, Deaconesses and Layreaders, the visitors to Tibooburra have been 107 in 64 years. On an average, a little more than one and a half visits per year. Not very encouraging for the Tibooburra people, is it?

A Church building at Tibooburra!

Some may question the wisdom of erecting a building. Is it really a wise expenditure? If you lived in Tibooburra district, you would undoubtedly think so.

Have you ever had to worship in a jazzily decorated public hall used for dancing the previous night? Try to imagine worshipping in a place such as the one in mind. Sagging and broken streamers overhead. Backless forms for the worshippers. On the floor, streaks of sawdust that have escaped the broom. Under the side seats, broken matches, sweet papers, cigarette butts, a lost "hankie" and such-like odds and ends. Staring you in the face and beyond the crude improvised Holy Table, the encumbrances and litter (tables, boxes, cartons, plates, dishes, etc.) that seem inseparable from such halls. Hopes are to erect a durable "utility" building, with a sanctuary incorporated, which can be screened off. A generous donor has set things moving with the gift of a block of land—a very good block splendidly situated. For 64 years, these people have been unable to supply their own need. Now they have made a start on a job too big for them to complete within another 64 years unless outside help is given. May we look to you? Donations may be sent direct to: Rev. K. Luders, St. James' Rectory, Wilcannia, N.S.W., or to either of the State B.C.A. offices. Perhaps some Churches may choose to help. Why not? Ought not the strong to help the weak?

SYDNEY JAMES COOK



Sydney is now living with Mr. and Mrs. C. Duguid, of Adelaide, and attends King's College.

The Mail Bag Sunday School

Miss E. HUNTLEY.

One of the greatest joys to our Mail-Bag teachers and helpers is what might be called the "passing on of the torch" aspect of our work, when those who have been Mail-Bag scholars in their turn pass on to the younger ones what they themselves have learnt. There are those who supervise the Sunday school work of, say, their small sisters and brothers; or nephews and nieces; or perhaps a few neighbours' children. There are those who take charge of a class in a Sunday school in their district; and there are those who, because of the work of the Holy Spirit in their hearts, as they have come to know the reality of Christ in their lives through their Sunday school learning, have felt the urge to make it possible for others to gain the same knowledge, and so have started a Sunday school in their district.

One such case has been under our notice for the past few months. No Sunday school had been in existence in the district for ten years. Now, after having been a Mail-Bag pupil for about twelve years, enrolling in the Kindergarten before she could sign her own name—she conducts a Sunday school in the supper room of the local hall of that little town. There are now in attendance 36 children, ranging from 3 to 14, with an older woman and two other teen-age girls besides herself teaching them. This young girl herself travels seven miles and one of the other children six miles to Sunday school. There are evidences of enthusiasm and appreciation amongst the children and parents. With very little equipment other than forms and chairs, at present, they are hopeful of securing more. In the meantime, the Mail-Bag Sunday school lesson papers are being used

with good results, and at the Confirmation held recently by the Bishop of Armidale six of the pupils were confirmed. Some weeks ago the teachers ran a jumble stall in the township, and from the funds thus raised prizes have now been bought and sent up from Sydney.

This is one case; there are many more. One mother, whose family had been receiving our Sunday school lessons for some years, but from whom we had not heard for some considerable time, wrote expressing great appreciation of what the lessons had meant to her children, one or two of the boys of which—if I remember rightly—were in the Army, and the elder girl had been for some time teaching a class in the Sunday school in the town.

These small Sunday schools that have grown out of the Mail-Bag Sunday school are serving a splendid purpose in planting the seed of the Word in the hearts of the young, and in providing those doing the "planting" with an opportunity for service in the work of God's Kingdom.

MISSIONARY BAND.

There has come to the Mail-Bag Office an anonymous gift of some seventy beautiful knitted squares for rugs. In a little note with the parcel the donor asks about the size required. Originally we used to stipulate about nine inches square, but on account of the difficulty of obtaining wool in any quantity we are glad to receive them in any size. The squares in the parcel will make up very nicely, and we are indeed grateful to the one who so kindly made and sent them.

The Bush School

Rev. H. BROADLEY.

The other day I set off for Smoky Bay to visit the school and to look up a few families. It is a 26-mile run; the first 14 are on the level, but the next 12 are over a regular switch-back. The road is along the telegraph line, which runs down to Streaky Bay, where Mr. Livingstone is stationed. Wheat and sheep farms are continuous on either side. This year, instead of waving paddocks of tall oats and wheat, there are paddocks of stunted, patchy, thin and yellowing crops. The few sheep occasionally seen, pitiful scarecrows of their kind, wander about in a forlorn attempt to grow fat on the wisps of dry grass, which look all right at a distance but not when you approach. Where the land rises to the top of the rounded ridges, the wind has swept the crops away. The bare sandy-looking area creeps farther down the slopes as each wind blows. The fences catch some of the drift, which forms a ridge under the wires. Between the fence and road in many places sandhills have formed, complete with ripples.

After running S.E. for 20 odd miles, a sharp turn north-west is taken and a mile or so along is the school. It is a tiny stone building on the extreme corner of a farm, with a few trees specially planted round the edge

of its playground. This school was closed two or three years ago as there were not enough children to keep it open. To-day it is open as a result of the determined efforts of local parents. I believe an allowance is made to the teacher, amounting to £10 a year for each child. At present there are five children on the roll. The rest of the teacher's income must be made up by the parents. This is "free education" with a vengeance. As I pulled up outside the fence, the children were playing with a Rugby ball case. One was absent through illness. The four children were trying to play football. I suggested it might be better if some paper was put inside so that at least it would roll about. However, in a few moments we went in for Religious Instruction. The young teacher and her four scholars were quite interested listeners, the children putting in a spoke here and there. The lesson on the feeding of the 5000 had close relations with their daily life, but it isn't always that farm children see the action of God in the everyday life about them. They are not the only ones.

After school was over, I went on a mile or two to visit a mother not long home from hospital. On going through the front gate, which is at least half a mile

from the house, I saw that several tracks swung off the main direct road to the house. The side tracks didn't seem so inviting, so I stayed on the main track until over a rise it was easy to see why side tracks were in use. The wind had swept the top soil right across the main track, burying it up to two feet in places. The Bedford is not a camel, so I swung off and with one or two doubtful moments arrived at another gate about 50 yards from the house. One look decided me to walk that 50 yards. Sand-swept dreariness, branches, boxes or anything on the ground was half covered with sand, which came to within a few yards of the back verandah. At home was mother with her little girl (to go to Smoky Bay school next year) and the new baby. A cheerful welcome received, we talked over matters of interest to them. I had brought a few picture folders, i.e., those with a Bible picture on the front and the story inside, which had been sent from a lady in Parramatta. They were handed over to help teach the little girl, who is not up to too much reading at present.

From there I called at a few other homes, in each making use of our Parish Library, which now numbers nearly 50 books. And so on home.

I would again thank those who have sent periodicals and books, which are proving their value. As one young mother said, the books in the Parish Library are the kind which they would never see in any other way. Incidentally, whoever is the giver of several books from Violet Town, Victoria, please accept our "Thank You."



Sister Dowling and Sister Lucas at Tarcoola, S.A.

Rappville

Rev. R. S. MEYER.

It was 10 a.m. on a Sunday. I had travelled 25 miles from the centre where I had held my last service and I was well ahead of time. I brought the old Ford to a standstill by the side of the road, halfway up the Range. A boiling radiator suggested that a spell would help and nothing is a greater delight than a pause in the bush for a "quiet time."

Again I brought the services and the contacts of the day to the throne of grace. How easy it is, even in the bush, to allow the edge of our keenness for souls to be dulled by the monotony of routine. It was refreshing, that ten minutes with Him. I had scarcely noticed that big black snake slither across the track quite near the car. But the distant noise of an engine broke through the timber. Around a bend an old utility truck came in sight and, with a hurried call of "Sorry, we've been called urgently to go down to Leeville," it passed with its five occupants out of view down the winding mountain track.

As I pushed on over the last six miles or so to my destination—Hogarth Range—I rejoiced to think that the people up there were so appreciative of the B.C.A. ministry that the absence of five members of the usual congregation would not be such a serious loss as it is in other bush centres. The least that can be said for these great-hearted bush folk is that they love to meet together for worship. There are only fifteen families settled on the Range, but the congregation is usually over thirty, the best attended service in the Rappville Mission, with the exception of Rappville itself.

Hogarth Range is unfortunate. Most of these folk are share-farmers and do not own the farms. It is quite beyond their means to afford a church building. Services were held in a small public hall, the only public building, except the school. A bad grass fire deprived us of this place for worship. The school weathershed was then used, until a similar fire consumed it. Latterly an empty farm-house (all too common in this part of the North Coast) had been used. There were 35 at our last service in it. Seating consisted of boxes, boards, stools and seats from cars. But now this has been re-occupied. Fortunately the little school has been reopened and a new weathershed built. So on the day in question, 28 folk assembled here, an extra stool and a three-legged table arrived in a utility truck, and thus provided with a communion table, we participated in the Lord's Supper. This particular Sunday happened to be one when every centre had its regular communion service.

I cannot but feel that these devoted people deserve something better. For years they have met together in goodly numbers and have cheerfully overcome every obstacle. The sum of £300 would secure them a homely bush church in which they could feel a pride of ownership and a new joy in worship. It would be, too, a place where their children could come for Sunday school. They have great hearts, willing hands and tremendous courage, these folk. They are worth everything we as Christians can give them. They have toiled long years to win a living from this ungenerous soil. If they are ever to enjoy a quiet retreat on the Lord's Day that is their very own, then others must help them.

After service all joined in a basket-lunch by the roadside in the shade of a venerable and expansive gum.

Then at 1 p.m. I sped down the Range towards Mongogarie, 15 miles away. The old Ford, unaware of the limits of its capacity and despite its chronic old age, picked up eight folk who had no conveyance to get them to service and just before 2 p.m. arrived at Upper Mongogarie Hall.

Ever since I arrived here in June last I have been making Mongogarie a special matter of prayer. Attendances had been poor for a long time and to make matters worse two church families numbering about 20 in all had moved away. I felt that the Lord began the answer that day. Thirty-six people came in all, a record. Some had not been for years, some had never been at all, one was a Roman Catholic joining in Protestant worship for the first time.

Mongogarie Public Hall, as usual, was dark and very dirty. Halls in the bush are built for only one purpose, dancing. The inevitable signs of strong drink remain and are no help for the atmosphere of worship. These halls are the last places I would use if there were anything else, but there is usually no alternative.

Opposite the hall is a small one-roomed cottage, only built two years ago and in quite good order. Some of the men and I inspected it after our communion service and we estimated that it would seat 50 people and if lined and suitably furnished with simple church furniture, it would be admirable as a bush church. So here we have the beginnings of a church for Mongogarie and I know that we can purchase land and building for £25. This is an opportunity I feel we should not miss. We are praying that, by God's enabling, a centre of virile Christian witness may be built up in this place.

Rev. R. M. FULFORD.

The death of the Rev. Reg Fulford leaves a very big gap in B.C.A. ranks. Mr. Fulford was Rector of Holy Trinity, Adelaide, and also S.A. Secretary for B.C.A.

The Society owes a great deal for his ready assistance freely given whenever needed. He did a great deal to help our cause in South Australia and our South Australian workers learned to lean on him for help and advice.

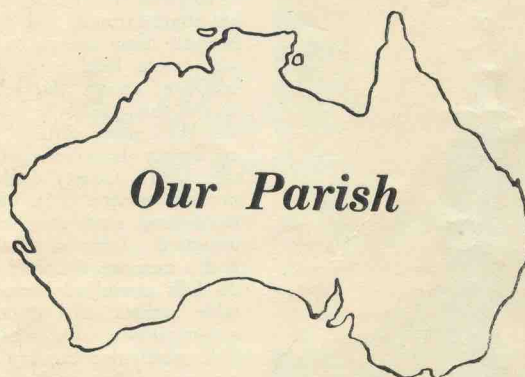
He was one of the busiest men in Adelaide, yet he always found time to attend to any B.C.A. business referred to him. In the early days he was associated with B.C.A. during his ministry at Broken Hill, where the Society helped financially. Reg always felt he owed much to B.C.A. and more particularly to its first O.M., the late Bishop Kirkby. We who knew Reg later came to the opinion that his splendid services had long ago tipped the scales to his own favour.

We shall miss him as many others are doing, but we shall always be grateful for having known him and received his friendship. He was indeed "a man of God."

To Mrs. Fulford we extend our deep sympathy and pray that she may be fully guided in the days ahead.

Help Australia

by
purchasing
Savings
Certificates.



Certificates can be purchased for:
16s. for each £1 Certificate.
£4 for each £5 Certificate.
£8 for each £10 Certificate.

Help B.C.A.

by donating
Savings
Certificates
to the Society.

Buying them helps Australia in the World War. Donating them to B.C.A. helps the Kingdom of God in the fight against the evils which cause all wars.

What is the B.C.A.

What is this B.C.A.? It is an organisation of the Church of England which works entirely for the benefit of the bush and outback people of Australia, irrespective of creed. After twenty-seven years of service, it is now responsible for fourteen extensive missions in the Australian bush and outback. Four first-class hospitals and two nursing homes are staffed and maintained by this Society. Five Children's Hostels and a Mail Bag Sunday School of some 6,000 scholars are provided for the children of our pioneers. A medical air-service of pilot, machine, ground organisation and medical staff is managed, and wholly financed, by this Society and its friends.

This, I think you will agree, is a work and organisation of considerable extent and great value in our national life.

When we remember that it has all been built up in the short space of twenty-seven years, we feel thankful to Almighty God for His great blessings upon our efforts.

But what is this Bush Church Aid Society to the people outback who benefit by its services?

First and foremost, it is the constant and continual witness to them of the things of God. Do not mistake me, for I do not want you to think that all the people in the bush and plain are simply overwhelming in their desire for God and His religion. Many of our missionaries could tell you of long, weary miles travelled to take a service, to find only two or three persons present at the end of it. But the fact remains that in many places the B.C.A. missionary is the only representative of the Church in a huge district. His very presence is a continual witness to the things of God.

In times of sickness, accident and childbirth, the hospitals of B.C.A. are places in which the ministry of "Him Who went about doing good" is continued. To the folk of the areas in which the hospitals are situated B.C.A. means just that difference between living in the outback in the sure and certain knowledge of the presence of this comforting ministry and the haunting fear as to what may always happen in places where they do not exist.

To the parents of children in our hostels, B.C.A. means the provision of an organisation which permits them to send their children to receive some schooling. They feel that they can board their children far from home and parental supervision without worry and anxiety. They know that their sons and daughters will be cared for as they themselves desire. Above all else, they know that the atmosphere of a B.C.A. Hostel is such as will help their children to clean and healthy manhood or womanhood.

To those who have children on the Mail Bag Sunday School roll B.C.A. means the provision of facilities by which their children may learn regularly, and under proper supervision, the elements of Christian teaching, for the outback parent differs in no wise from the city parent in desiring for his or her child the best things of life.

Now what does the B.C.A. mean to you? Is it just another charity begging for your money? If you feel that way toward it, please don't send B.C.A. a penny. No; it is better than that—much better. B.C.A. is an avenue of Christian service enabling you to serve God and your

fellows in places to which you can never go, and in ways you were never trained for.

If you are a nurse, you can offer for service in one of our hospitals and give fine service for God. But you may say, "I am not a nurse. I am a mother with children, living in some ordinary suburb somewhere or other, doing the ordinary things of life." Well, that may be so; but you can still nurse in the outback, preach to lonely settlers, or pilot an aeroplane, by using somebody else's hands.

You may be caught with the spirit of adventure; you, too, would like to go to far places and minister in God's Name, but He has given you other responsibilities.

If we in B.C.A. had, as we believe we have, the finest hostels, hospitals, aeroplane, missionaries, nurses and doctors without the ministry of our friends at home, we could do nothing. So you will remember B.C.A. is not just a begging machine. It is an avenue of Christian service open to you to use.

I wonder what B.C.A. means to Almighty God! Surely to Him it represents the continuance of the ministry of His Son, Who "healed the sick, made the blind to see and preached the Gospel of the Kingdom of God."

So we must go on day by day, keeping this service alive and vital. You may get quite a thrill from time to time as I tell you of a life saved here, or pain eased there, of children given fuller opportunities for living by our hostels and their staffs. You may sympathise with missionaries travelling long and arduous miles to tiny meeting places. You may appreciate the value of the work of our voluntary workers in the Mail Bag Sunday School. But will you remember that without you—your prayers and gifts, it would all be hopeless and impossible.

There is a great appeal in roaming the outback, in ministering in lonely places. Just to be able to give a few shillings to pay the bills seems very ordinary—but it is necessary.

We are helping to build up a Christian nation—to implant the spirit of Christian living in the hearts of our people. When a big and beautiful building is erected we admire its beauty and praise its architect—and we know little, if anything, about the men who did the humdrum jobs. Somebody had to dig out the dirt to make room for the foundations, others made the mortar and carried the bricks.

Maybe in this work you cannot go out into the bush and help design and organise the work—but you can carry the bricks, perhaps.

—T.J.

WOMEN'S AUXILIARY ANNUAL MEETING.

Friday, April 12th, 2.30, Bible House.

Musical Items—and probably a Speaker from the Field.

BRING A FRIEND.

MAINTENANCE

The Annual Cost of maintenance of all the varied activities of the Bush Church Aid Society is £18,000 The Whole income is derived from the free gifts of Christian people.



You can help by:

- A donation to our Funds.
- Keeping a B.C.A. collecting box in your home.
- Subscribing to our Quarterly paper, "The Real Australian".
- Donating a Saving Certificate.
- Daily remembrance in your prayers of the work and workers.
- Including the Society when making your will.

Our Address is:

BUSH CHURCH AID SOCIETY, Church House, George Street, Sydney, N.S.W. Or
Bible House, Flinders Lane, Melbourne, Vic.

Our Telephone Numbers are:—Victoria, FJ 5675. N.S.W., M 3164.

We will be happy to supply any other information you require.