

of teenagers have volunteered to visit all the homes, taking a census and inviting to the mission. They will also prepare a series of Biblical plays. I will team up with the laymen for the preaching, and we will use the movies of Fr Peyton's Rosary Crusade to teach the life of Christ. We are anxious to have the mission since the area has been so abandoned and it is so far from the Parish.

This experiment in educating lay missionaries through a *Çursillo, Revision de Vida* and action, has revealed a dynamic source of apostolic energy which multiplies priestly effectiveness and Christian evangelization and has led me to form a plan with the novices of Immaculate Heart of Mary who have been the Parish catechists, a plan whereby the women of Catholic Action direct formative talks and discussions by the mothers of all children who receive their First Communion or Confirmation. It also leads me to speculate on what the Parish Liceo could be if

its education and activities would form apostles as well as good students.

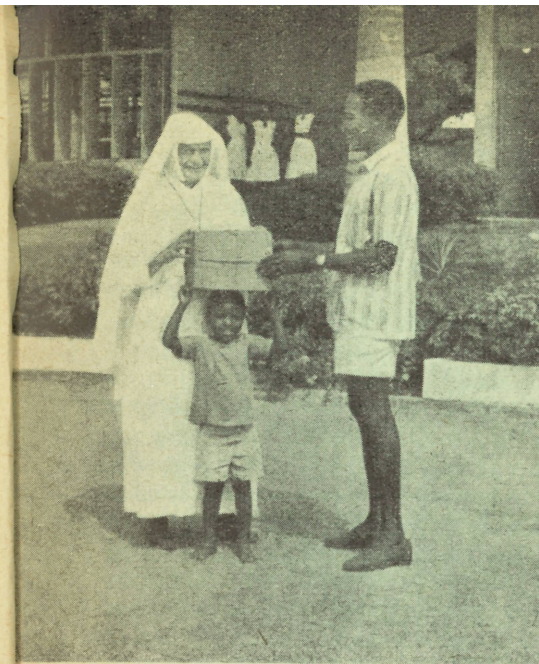
In Chile, and in Latin America, the parishes are large in population and in territory. Santa Rosa has about 25,000 people and covers some 60 miles. Practicing Catholics are a minority, about 3 per cent at most, although a census would show some 90% who call themselves Catholic. The vast majority are passive Catholics who express their faith in the reception of Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation, Matrimony, and are quite content with themselves. Many are suffering from social injustice produced by historical class differences. Priests are few, and many of them foreign.

The problem is how to present a progressive-minded, missionary oriented, evangelical-inspired Church that adequately reflects the mind of Christ in Chile today.

I believe that the formation of *lay missionaries* may be one possible solution.

Pylon Philatelic Association

Whenever your new PYLON arrives with Vatican stamps on the envelope do think: "**Save stamps, save souls**". It sounds a fantastic statement but it has innumerable chances of being **true**: No mission can survive without material support; all acts of saving *for* the Missions provide spiritual support because they are the kind of prayer-in-action which God cannot fail to answer. Just now, the P.P.A. sorting office is watching for the postman to bring parcels, small or big, containing USED STAMPS, all except the very commonest ones. I know a friend who stuck a PYLON cover on a chocolate box, cut a hole in it and lived happily ever after. She said the cover enlivened the room with its charm. So you see! **Organizer**: Mother Mary Edith, Convent H.C.J., 10 Holland Villas Rd., London W. 14.



'No, *Mutthuh*, it doesn't hurt at all!'

"The entire United States would fit onto the Sahara Desert, with a generous border of sand left over." This statement of the geography text is easy to believe as one watches the great sand dunes give way to burnt brush, then green tufts, and finally to endless stretches of dried basin. At long last, the heavily forested tropics are glimpsed.

"Please fasten your belts. We are now landing in Accra. We hope you have enjoyed your VC flight on BOAC." A swift landing dive, and we had left the luxurious airliner to face — Africa today. My eyes opened wide at the cloth draped gracefully over one shoulder of the African — cloth splashing patterns of red and blue and green and yellow, and at the women with heavy loads of wood or yam carried so effortlessly on their heads.

On "loan" for a year from New Sharon where she is director of the Cornelia Connelly Guild, and from Rosemont College where she is in the Education Department, Mother M. Raymond is currently on the staff of Holy Child Teachers' Training College in Takoradi.

She has waited for years to 'go on the missions.' But now she can say —

Africa? I've Been There...

As we cleared Customs and Immigration, and walked free on African soil, my mind was filled with anticipation. Twenty years is a long time to wait to have a dream fulfilled! "But look, Harunah," I called to our driver, "look at that load of corn on that girl's head! Doesn't it hurt?"

Harunah smiled. "No, *Mutthuh*, it does not hurt. She's used to it. We all begin when we are about three years old — first with a piece of paper — then a pan — then with something heavier. I could walk six miles with that load of corn on my head, but I would be tired out in half a mile if I carried it in my arms!" Harunah tried to hide his amusement, but could not conceal his gently tolerant smile: "No, *Mutthuh*, it doesn't hurt at all!"

We had not gone far from the ultra modern airport when we came

upon a picturesque African village in the "bush" — little houses with thatched roofs; children running around and goats, cats, chickens and dogs running among the children; women pounding fufu (a choice dish of beaten grain); the village chief and his advisors sitting in council; and each one, in his own gentle, courteous way, calling, "Welcome!" There was no electricity, no TV, no corner drug store; but a spirit of joy, warm friendliness, and utter contentment. When, a few days later, we returned to the village, it was easy to understand why the Sisters were so well received. Each week M.M. Francesca carries her "portable dispensary" to Fijai, while men, women, and children of all ages line up or cluster around her. "Mother, please, medicine for my eyes!" — "Pills for my

head!" — "Ointment for the baby's sores!" If the donors from American Catholic Relief Service could see the gratitude and joy of these villagers as they receive their little treasures, they would know themselves repaid one hundredfold.

Settling down in Takoradi was no simple matter, since at every turn a new and amazing experience burst upon me. Fancy meeting Kellogg's corn flakes at the breakfast table — in Takoradi! Or looking out the window to see your own banana tree; if you preferred an orange, you could reach one without even stretching; but watch out for a falling pau pau. (Riddle: What is a fruit which grows on a tree, is the shape and size of an eggplant but with green skin; color of a ripe canteloupe within, and tastes like an avocado pear? Answer: paupau).

Men, women, and children line up when M. M. Francesca brings her 'portable dispensary' each week to Fijai village. Students from the College assist her.



That same window framed the unpredictable. One morning as I sat marking the student's exercise books, I glanced out to see Wahabu, our cook, beating what seemed to be a bicycle tire which, at each stroke, inflated and jumped, then sank to the ground. "Interesting," I thought, "local game. I wonder what the objective is." Then — Wahabu's shout of victory, and the erstwhile bicycle tire — a great six-foot cobra — began to writhe and coil. "The camera! Wahabu, wait till I get the camera!" and the monster was still coiling and recoiling as Wahabu obligingly took up his stick again to demonstrate how to kill a cobra. The snake had invaded the chicken house, and the frightened cries of the rooster-in-charge brought Wahabu to the rescue in a flash. Brother Jerome from nearby Holy Cross College was over in record time in response to our call. "I was sure you were holding the fierce reptile at bay until I arrived to rescue you from its poisoned fangs," he laughed, and picked up the creature by the end (does a snake have a tail? At any rate, he picked it up by the end opposite the head) — and carried it back for the Science Department of St. John's — to the immense relief of all the feminine dwellers of Holy Child College. Later that day I met the orphaned offspring on our porch. "No place for a baby cobra," I said, so reached for the broom to sweep him off. But he would have none of it! He wriggled, hissed, swelled in the middle, reared — and for a moment looked ten times his size. "How do you get



Wahabu with the skin of the cobra.

a baby cobra off the porch?" I called to M.M. Francesca. "Are you teasing?" she asked. But when SHE saw him, curled quietly but menacingly at the doorway, she said, "I'll get some rocks! You get him off the porch!" You yourself would have to try sweeping a ten-inch cobra off your own porch to understand the fuss he can make! When he did reach the veranda, he was felled by the first blow of a rock. The only thing missing was the camera.

Animal life is an integral part of daily routine. Frogs have to be chased out of chapel; lizards scamper underfoot and overhead; Susie and Sandy, our dogs, constitute the Unwelcome-to-Invaders Committee; and Sally, our Siamese, is unper-

turbable queen of the compound. Sally took up her headquarters in a corner of our room. When the kittens demanded a more substantial diet than plain milk, she went out one night and brought a live, luscious, juicy mouse. "No, Sally," I decreed, "no mice in this room." So the next night I found a ten-inch lizard, headless, under the bed.

While one can never predict what the African day will hold, one can be sure it will be framed in a breathtaking setting, beginning with the first hint of dawn at 5:25 a.m. — a wide brush sweep of soft gray from east to west, and toward the south, a splash of deep rose yielding to orange. As you watch, the horizon of the ocean clears, and the soft violet melts into lavender and old rose on the water. Meanwhile, a merchant ship emerges from the mist and sails serenely toward the harbor, carrying...? Surely jewels and gold and rich velvets and exotic spices belong to a cargo in such a setting! "Oh, praise the Lord, all ye heavens; Praise Him, all ye great waters..."

The school day is not unlike that of any busy Teacher Education Institution, where the students are alert, perceptive, and interested. In one religion class, Rebecca stated, "But Mother, I am not satisfied with your explanation of heaven!" Dorothy interrupted, "Just where is purgatory?" "It seems to me," observed Elizabeth, "that the term 'heaven on earth' contradicts all the obvious suffering..." Rita's one concern in the methods classes is: How can I improve my teaching? While in psychology discussions, the students try to resolve the problem of reaching each individual child, of helping each one to fulfill his potential.

In this great land of contrasts, one meets front-running educational procedures along side of age-old social practices. A farmer hoped for more money to complete marriage arrangements for his daughter. "Mudder, please, my daughter. She be getting married. Father-in-law gives too small money for paying for her..." His daughter is just a year and a

In the nearby fishing village, M. M. Agatha and students bargain for Friday's dinner.

Examining cloth carried on the head of a vendor is a brand new experience for M. M. Raymond.



half old—eighteen months—and her "intended" is three years old.

A short distance from our compound lies a fishing village which might have been there at the time of the apostles. The fishermen go out each morning, and as they return toward shore with their catch, word spreads among the villagers who cluster around the boats to bargain for the fish. When the nets are spread out to dry and to be mended, one can picture Our Lord walking among them. "...and He saw fishermen mending their nets by the shore..."

Night comes very suddenly in the tropics. Towards the west the sky glows bright rose against a deep blue sky; a background of soft reds and amber-orange for an ever-changing cloud pattern; a breath, and a rich orange-red mists the horizon; another breath, and it is dark. Rigel, Betelgeuse, and Sirius

flash forth; but the North Star is not visible at five degrees North Latitude. "Oh, bless the Lord, all ye His heavens..." The symphony of night sounds in the tropics tunes up — the hum of mosquitoes, the distant drums, a dog's sharp warning, and then the stillness and blackness of bush until dawn.

On one exceptional night, the stillness was pierced at 2 A.M. by cries of: "Ole, ole! Thief, thief!" Night Watch had discovered a prowler creeping toward the veranda. In a flash, the students were shouting and dashing from their dormitories to rescue their clothes from the line. Since no sane thief would brave the wrath of 150 indignant students, the girls returned to their dormitories, and the full moon shadowed the nuns as they walked across the compound, back to the convent. Again quiet reigned; the quiet of African bush, and darkness.