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I. Letters
   1. Gerald M. Reynolds <gemreyn@sbcglobal.net>
   There was a nurse that left Hawthorne/Inglewood, Calif., in the early middle 1930's for Nuzvid, and the hospital there. Her name if I can recall it correctly was Gladys Hurd. Gladys was a well qualified registered nurse. I have every reason to think she served there for two six to seven year periods, but I hesitate to state that as a fact. She early chose to never marry, and so a single woman in those times in India from overseas, may have had some part in her return after a term or two. Have all of those "Old timers" who might recall her presence gone to their final earthly rest, or is there someone still living that might remember her? Or perhaps she served longer than the two terms of which I recall? She and my parents were very close friends. As for my father, Pr. Earl R. Reynolds, anyone who loved India was his dear friend. I am wondering if that hospital is still functioning, and if so to what extent.
   It has been and is interesting to read about the early work in Myanmar or how well the work is going in Sri Lanka or at Spicer College. All of that is good. However it would be nice to read about others in the many places in India where God has moved on people's hearts to accept this knowledge and truth about Him we all love so much. The difficulties overcome, the progress made under potential discouragement only to see God's "hand" at work in the progress made these past 80 to 90 years. I think of Pr. R. M Morris and the labors he and his wife gave. I think of Pr. Ollie and Zora Mattison, of Bela Ram, a national worker in the north, or Principals Blue and Garner at VHS. So many come to mind. True, we make our contributions and move on. Only in heaven will be able to recall all who having worked for God in India are present to give Him the praise for using poor human agencies to accomplish something for Him.
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II. Death of Robert R. Stahlnecker
   Kris Seerengan <krisseerengan@hotmail.com> June 23:
   It is with sadness and heaviness of heart, inform you of the passing of Dr. Robert R. Stahlnecker, former President of Lakpahana Adventist College and Seminary on June 19, 2013. Each of us not only grieves at the passing of a great leader in our denomination but also for the loss his family suffers.
   Many of you have met and worked with him with the different capacity in a different part of the world. He has been missionary in India and Sri Lanka for many years. I have known him for the last 36 years and worked with him with many capacities in our church. On Guam I went along with him to visit church members and admired him the way he uplifted the members at their homes. He would talk to them as Jesus would. I have gone with him to give communication service to those who were unable to come to church due to illness and very much blessed and impressed the way he conducted. His high light of the work in our church was the evangelist meeting he held in 1996 (Net 96). He showed Mark Finley messages via VHS tapes in our church, and was able to bring 65 brand new souls to our church. He did it all by himself. It was one of the successful meetings we ever had. Those members who came from the meetings are active members, including our current church pastor. God blessed his efforts because his sincerity, commitment and dedication to His work. He loved to visit people. When he was not allowed to drive, he found someone to take him to visit people.
Though he was not doing well health wise during last days he visited our church members until the day he moved to the Mainland. In his condition, he would want someone to visit him, instead he visited others. He loved the people of Guam. The people in our church and people of Guam will miss him.

We look forward to that day when we will see him strong. I look forward to walking beside him the way he used to walk. Our thoughts and prayers are with Dr. Ruby Stahlnecker (wife) Carol, Donna, Patti, (daughters) Lesley (son), many grandchildren and great grandchildren and many friends here on Guam. Mrs. Ruby's email address: kg6aso@gmail.com

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1. Remembering H. G. M. Fernando
    Sherman McCormick <icanoe2@live.com> June 19:

    It was with very pleasant, but sad memories that I read of the death of H. G. M. Fernando. Well do I remember him and his family at Lakpahana.
    Ranjan, I know that God will continue to support and uphold you.
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2. Remembering Mrs. Poddar
    Margaret Solomon <solomon.margaret7@gmail.com> June 19:

    My memories of Mrs. Poddar go back to Spicer years in the 60s. Mr. Poddar had gone to the U.S. while she lived in Spicer campus and served as the Cafeteria Manager. I worked in the Cafeteria during my first two years and she was our supervisor who also scheduled and assigned our work. She was kind and very helpful in accommodating to our needs. Susan was a little girl visiting her mother often. We used to carry her and play with her. Mrs. Poddar made sure things were in order and worked hard in keeping things moving. I can never think of her being mean or hard on us. Her kindness to the students stand out in my memory. Through the years I watched her grow in years with grace. It was a great delight for me to see her in the Church in New Delhi three years ago with Susan and her husband. We had a nice visit, she wanted to know what I was doing. We remembered the good old days in Spicer and chuckled. I pass on my sympathies to Susan, her husband, Sheema & other close family members.

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IV. Burma Vignettes-- Early Missionaries # 45

Mervin Myat Kyaw <mervinmk@yahoo.com.au> and his wife Nan are Karen Adventists who worked many years in Burma and Thailand and now live and work in Australia. He has written a manuscript covering Adventism in Burma from its very beginning to the present and of his work in Thailand. #45. A. J. Johanson 1939-42)

Pastor A. J. Johanson and wife arrived in Myanmar in 1939. He came from Sweden and his wife was English. He led out in literacy work in Myanmar. He used to carry two or three colporteurs in his Ford car canvassing along the Mandalay and Yangon highway. He worked until the beginning of World War II. He fled to India with other missionaries at the outbreak of the war.

Pastor Johanson was a good violinist. Young people liked him the way he spoke English with Swedish accent. He was able to work for the Lord in Myanmar for a few years.

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V. Spicer Invites Articles for 2015 Morning Watch Book
    Rajendra Prasad <rajendraprasad2000@yahoo.com> June 6:

    Spicer College would like to invite all those who were inspired and "Led to God through Spicer", to write about their experiences in about 350 words and send these articles along with an apt title, memory verse, and prayer to Dr. Mohanraj Israel <mohanrajsisrael@yahoo.com>, Dean, School of Religion, Spicer Memorial College, as email attachment before December 31, 2013. These will be incorporated in the Morning Watch of 2015, the Centennial year of Spicer Memorial College.

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VI. Spicer College, Its Past & Future
    Boxtor Kharbteng <<khar_btg@yahoo.com>> June 13:

The future of Spicer College is, and should be, a significant topic of interest and discussion. Thousands of us are alumni of this revered institution. Spicer College is our academic mother. And I am one of its "children." I did two undergraduate degrees and one graduate degree in this venerable institution. Furthermore, from 1997- 2007, I served Spicer as a teacher, departmental head, and vice president for academic administration.
So you can say that I was one of those who had a complete experience of Spicer's life - its highs and lows, passions and challenges.

The ebb and flow of Spicer's enrolment, as well as the high rate of turnover of its faculty should be a matter of concern. These are not good signs for Spicer, or for any institution for that matter. It's like a person going through many weeks with a higher-than-normal body temperature. The question is how to solve these problems?

There is a suggestion from some quarters that we should go back to where we started: an institution with a lot of zeal and commitment but with no academic credibility or recognition beyond its walls. We went through that for a couple of decades, and ended up with graduates who got stuck with a bachelor's program that could not be used to pursue a Master's degree elsewhere within India. We ended up spawning an Adventist youth population importuning for jobs within the church structure because of the difficulty of finding work elsewhere due to their unrecognized certificates and diplomas. With already limited financial resources, the Indian Adventist church was pressured to provide employment beyond what it could afford. In order for everybody to survive, it was forced to divide and subdivide the pie pieces so that at the end of the day, everyone got to eat something. This "small pie" tradition, I believe, is partly responsible for the church's lack of will power and determination to work on a five or ten year plan to raise the salaries of its workers as well as stymie the unusually high turnover of Spicer's faculty. Ultimately, the church became worker-centered instead of lay-centered. There were more than enough workers to take care of the work. But later on we learned that such type of a church does not bode well for our future.

As the church's membership began to grow, we would expect that its financial resources would grow as well and thus enable the church to absorb more workers. However, this is not happening as most of the membership is from the low-income section of our society. Furthermore, with the exception of a few places, the tradition of giving of tithes and offerings within our Division is not that strong. So, instead of its members looking forward to contribute to the church financially, they turn around and look to the church for financial help.

The increasing number of youths looking for church employment led to frustration on their side as they had no other alternative. But then the church also had his own share of frustration because of its inability to absorb everybody asking for work. So we ended up having two frustrated groups sitting side-by-side. This led the church to seek recognition for Spicer with the hope that such a recognition would open doors of opportunities for its youth outside its own walls. Our young people would then be able to obtain recognized degrees, and compete for study and job opportunities outside of church structures, and these would in turn become a "leaven" in the society, "salt of the earth," "light of the world," and financial contributors to the church.

When we finally got Spicer recognized by Pune University, it seemed to me that Ellen G. White's vision that our educational system should be the head and not the tail is now having a fighting chance.

For the last few years, we have been doing all right. Our graduates are able to study in other universities of India for their Master's and post-Master's degrees. They are getting work in non-Adventist institutions, and tithes and offerings are increasing (e.g., Spicer College Church). The Adventist presence in such workplaces is also beginning to be felt.

Of late, however, Spicer was forced to withdraw from Pune University. Consequently, it lost its national recognition/accreditation. Andrews, "the mother of mothers" of Adventist higher learning, was called to fill this need created by Pune university. I hope this is really taking place for the undergraduate programmes. And I surely appreciate Andrews for its willingness to help out Spicer in this critical need of its history and life. These days, it is difficult to visualize running an institution with no accreditation. By all means, being the head and not the tail, would require that Spicer's degrees be recognized throughout India and the world. Just as you cannot get a visa without a passport, so also is the case with Spicer. Before its students are given a "visa" to enter non-Adventist universities for their post-bachelor studies, Spicer must first give them a "passport" in the form of a recognized degree.
As to the getting of Spicer's faculty members becoming researchers, writers and authors, not only is there a great need for this, but it must be one that the college should put all efforts to make it happen. This would require at least two things: research facilities and up-to-date and adequate materials/publications, etc., as well as time to do the research and writing. This would mean that Spicer would have to "copy" Pune University's workload for its teachers, without copying the heft of its remuneration. I wish we could do that as well! But Spicer does not get state money, so let's forget about this kind of money! We should also add one more: its teachers must be evaluated by students - at least once a year, and this evaluation must be taken with seriousness by the administration, and must be done so promptly. Students are often the best evaluators of who a good teacher is.

And good teachers must be recognized in a substantive manner. Why good teachers for Spicer? Good teachers are like good doctors for a hospital. The hospital can have all the state-of-the-art infrastructure, but it stands to lose if he does not have good doctors. Good teachers attract students, like honey attracting ants and bees.

Dr. Boxter Kharbteng, Professor

Systematic Theology

School of Theology and Religion

University of the Southern Caribbean

Trinidad

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