

*Editor's Note: Diversity and Vigor*

By Darrell Dorr

This issue was originally intended to focus on frontier missions in the Hindu world. But recent changes within that world, plus the vicissitudes of our own production schedule, have delayed such an editorial focus until a future issue. Meanwhile, a stream of excellent articles on other topics has passed by my desk, and we've dipped into this stream in order to shape the issue you hold in your hands.

One of the most enjoyable parts of my role as managing editor is to read and re-read editorial contributions. As I do so, I'm increasingly impressed by the diversity and vigor of the burgeoning frontier missions movement. Men and women from many strata of the Church are grappling with the issues undergirding the vision of "A Church for Every People by the Year 2000!"

For example, in this issue David Hesselgrave reminds us that illiteracy among unreached peoples calls not only for translation and literacy efforts but also for recognition of the fact that "all peoples...have a tremendous ability to comprehend and retain orally-transmitted information." Vincent Donovan's *Christianity Rediscovered* corroborates Hesselgrave's thesis, and James Buswell's book review helps us to appreciate Donovan's sojourn among the Masai.

Two articles turn our attention to the local church. John Piper, a young pastor, cogently describes how frontier missions zeal in a congregation or denomination can often be perceived as an unseemly elitism, and he speaks with a pastor's heart as he shares insights that can minimize misunderstanding and promote fruitful ministry. Donald McGavran, well known for his vigorous advocacy of church growth, here proposes a "giant step" that builds on the Frontier Fellowship, namely, the establishment of a frontier missionary society within every North American congregation. Read carefully to see what McGavran means.

Two additional articles highlight the ministry of Theological Students For Frontier Missions (TSFM). TSFM, like the International Student Leaders Coalition for Frontier Missions, was born at the International Student Consultation on Frontier Missions of Edinburgh '80. The 1984 annual TSFM conference, held in April at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois, was the occasion at which this issue's articles by Michael Pocock and Wayne Detzler were first presented. Pocock delineates the effects that eschatological perspectives can have on missions understanding and activity, while focusing on the distinctives of a premillennial approach. Detzler's words are a bracing exhortation to alertness and consecration for the sake of world evangelization.

While reiterating the legitimacy and necessity of the mission agency as a "mobile" expression of the Church, Dan Greene speaks from his experience in Brazil as he urges us to safeguard the distinctive function of pioneer missionaries. Todd Johnson gives us an insider's view of the stops and starts within Youth With A Mission as YWAM retools its perspectives and structures to accommodate a growing vision for the frontiers within its ranks. In these days in which so much attention is focused on China, Ken Shay gives us a wonderfully helpful survey of resources on the history, politics, ethnic diversity, and religious life of mainland China and Taiwan. By contrast, Warren Chastain, reviewing William Miller's book, bids us to not forget the Baha'i, a religious movement long persecuted by Muslims and neglected by Christians.

I hope you enjoying reading this issue as much as I have. May what we read change the way we live.