



*The author addresses one of his many meetings with Church Leaders.*

AS our title implies, the B.B. is more and more establishing itself in the centre of the life of that fascinating part of the globe named after the great sea—1,800 miles across—which its chain of islands encircles. In my nine weeks tour, ten islands and one mainland territory were visited—all places where the B.B. is already established, with one exception.

The B.B. is also at work in seven more islands which could not be included. Everywhere generous hospitality was received, and friendly goodwill was extended by Governors, Bishops, Methodist District Chairmen and many other B.B. well-wishers, both ministers and laymen. For all this kindness and co-operation I am most grateful.

#### **Jamaica and the B.B.**

The Boys' Brigade in Jamaica was in good heart. With its more than 60 Companies it had found favour amongst the Boys of the island and its work was regarded with appreciation by the Churches, the Government, the Civic Authorities, the business and industrial interests, and by the general public. One and all they spoke in highest terms of the services of John Edbrooke and his wife during the past five years. Much had been achieved but more is still to be done. Many more Churches wish to form Companies and they have to be helped to find Officers and these have to be trained. A wider range of activities has to be developed in the programme of many Companies. The larger part of the movement is very new to the B.B. and consequently there is much to be learned. But there is in the B.B. in Jamaica a forward-looking spirit which regards the success already achieved as a challenge to build even better and bigger in the future. Energetic and able women Leaders, benefiting from the instruction and inspiration of Mrs. Edbrooke, have made good progress in The Life Boys and also gave excellent service in the Camp shops.

#### **The Caribbean International Camp**

The ambitious conception of the International Camp, spoke volumes for the enthusiasm and enterprise of the B.B. in Jamaica. This Camp undoubtedly did a great service to our movement throughout the West Indies and focused the attention of the public on it in a way never before achieved. The gathering together of Boys and men from the extremely isolated life of their widely separated islands opened up wider horizons for them all. For the Officers especially, the value of the experience gained at

## CARIBBEAN OUTLOOK

*Mr McVicker shares with Gazette readers impressions of his recent tour*

the Camp and at the Officers' Course, which was held in Jamaica before they dispersed, was already to be seen when I visited them a few weeks later. For all the visitors who came from across the sea, the mention of the word "Jamaica" will long conjure up wonderful memories of that hospitable and lovely island. Thank you, B.B. in Jamaica, for making all this possible and for the friendly leadership you are giving to the B.B. throughout the Caribbean.

#### **Trinidad Prospects**

Travelling south-eastwards some 1,200 miles by a Viscount of British West Indian Airways, I reached Trinidad, the second largest of the islands in the Federation of the West Indies and the present seat of its Government. Amongst some of the older inhabitants there were cordial memories of former B.B. Companies formed in the early days. However, of much greater importance I found promising plans for a fresh start in B.B. work. Several Churches in and near Port of Spain were anxious to form Companies and a group of keen young men, under the guidance of an Advisory Council, brought into being during a brief visit by John Edbrooke, were training themselves in preparation for making a beginning. During my stay useful talks took place with many interested people.

#### **On the South American Mainland**

British Guiana with its Dutch architecture and its sea-wall, on which its existence depends, was different in many aspects from the other places visited. Different too was the B.B. situation. Our movement had existed for many years but, due to lack of a proper understanding of basic principles and methods by both the Officers and the Churches, it had not flourished. Nevertheless everyone with whom I consulted, in Church, State and Industry was anxious to see the B.B. develop on right lines.

#### **A glimpse at Barbados**

In this very attractive and thickly populated island with its busy seaport capital of Bridgetown, there has been a B.B. Company for the past eight years. Its Captain, a hardworking and successful business man, who gives devoted service to the Methodist Church, has been extending B.B. interest. As a result I was present at a "flood-lit" rally, on the lawn of Epworth House, of some sixty prospective B.B. members from five Methodist and Moravian Churches.

#### **The Leeward Islands**

In this group of islands, each with its own characteristics, the B.B. has taken firm root. In Antigua where the movement is spreading amongst village Methodist Churches, it was impressive to realise the impact which a Company could have on a rural life, where community activities are so rare. In St. Kitts—Nevis—Anguilla—three islands linked together administratively—the B.B. was making good progress under able leadership, and new Companies will soon be ready for enrolment. The days spent in this part of the Caribbean were full of interest, though somewhat tantalising because of the unavoidable shortness of some of the visits.

Nevis visited by launch, had part of a day for visits to three Companies. Anguilla and St. Eustatius were reached by a local air service whose somewhat flexible timetable allowed just time to see in the former an excellent drill display by the two Companies, and at the latter only a brief airfield meeting. Short though these visits were they gave me a definite impression of the work being done in these isolated outposts and brought to the Boys and Officers their first direct link with Headquarters.

A delightful picnic with B.B. Officers and L.B. Leaders in an eerie ruined fortress on Brimstone Hill, a well-organised Commonwealth Youth Sunday open air parade and the warm commendation of the B.B.'s work by His Honour The Administrator, were amongst the many pleasant memories of my stay in St. Kitts.

**In the Republic of Haiti**

Two days were all too short to become acquainted with the French-speaking Negro Republic of Haiti, with its fascinating history of its peoples' struggle for freedom, and its strange mixture of politics, prosperity and poverty. Through the initiative of the "Eglise Methodiste" a very much alive minority Church in a predominantly Roman Catholic country—I found the B.B. now playing an important part. Recently formed, the 1st Haiti Company in Port-au-Prince was a thriving concern and discussions took place with representatives of other Protestant Churches which also wish to form Companies.

There is great scope for usefulness in this somewhat surprising B.B. off-shoot which is worthy of our support.



Some of the Bahamas Boys.

**Bahamas**

Bad rains—which can so easily dislocate life in the tropics—prevented me from meeting Companies in the out-island of Eleuthera, but the three Companies in the capital, Nassau, were visited and valuable contacts made with the Church Leaders and Government Officials. One of the most encouraging meetings of my whole tour was an excellent training class of senior N.C.O.s and potential Officers conducted by Mr. Bob Aitken. Since his arrival last December as part-time B.B. Organiser, Mr. Aitken has started to give invaluable help to those who have long worked indefatigably to build up the movement.

**International Outlook**

One of the strong impressions arising from the Caribbean International Camp and the experiences of my tour, including consultations in New York with officials of Missionary Boards, was that the B.B. is being called to assume perhaps a more definitely international character. Our movement must keep in step with the rapidly changing world of today. In this 75th Anniversary Year doors

**CALYPSO OF WELCOME TO MR. McVICKER**

This song of welcome is dedicated respectfully,  
To the Boys' Brigade Overseas Secretary.  
We can assure him we are proud and glad,  
To see him in the flesh in the Federal site  
of Trinidad.

He is here to discuss the organisation of a Boys'  
Brigade movement,  
To get him here seemed to be the work of  
the Omnipotent.  
We are openly expressing what is really true,  
A visitor of his description is certainly long  
overdue.

This song in his honour may spring some surprise,  
But we really could not have done otherwise.  
Since it is an established custom over here,  
To welcome who is who from anywhere.

A copy of this song we hand him to take away,  
That his colleagues may read what in song  
we say,  
Which will go to prove most conclusively,  
The estimate placed on him in this vicinity.

—Released at the Trinidad and Tobago  
Calysonian Centre.

**TO THE RECRUITS' PARENTS**

The following letter is given to each recruit in a certain London Company for the information and guidance of his parents. Thus at the outset of their son's B.B. career they know what is expected of him.

**TO PARENTS**

Please read this carefully

We are very glad to welcome your son into the .....Company of The Boys' Brigade and we shall do everything possible to make his time in it happy and useful. Will you please complete and sign the enclosed Enrolment Form.

*ATTENDANCE.* Regular and punctual attendance is of the greatest importance and you can help us very much by encouraging him in this. He will have to attend each week on—

- Wednesday—Drill, at 7.30 prompt.
- Thursday—Company Parade, at 7.15 p.m. prompt.
- Sunday—Bible Class, at 10.30 a.m. prompt.

*SUBSCRIPTIONS.* The entrance subscription is 5/- (which may be paid by instalments). Uniform will be provided, but in the event of a boy leaving, all the uniform (cap, belt and haversack) must be returned immediately, in addition to any other Company property which may have been issued to him.

A weekly subscription of 3d. for Boys under 15 (6d. for Boys over 15) is charged and this must be paid weekly. Recruits weekly subscriptions do not begin until after they have been enrolled.

If there is any other matter upon which you would like further information, I shall be very glad to call and see you.

Yours sincerely, . . . . . Captain

*Continued from foot of previous column*

are open for B.B. advance in the West Indies and many other parts of the world. Can we grasp these opportunities and accept the responsibility they involve?

W.H.McV.