

CORRESPONDENCE.

PAULPIETERSBURG, Natal, South Africa,
February 25th 1907.

Dear Highway,—We praise the Lord this morning for both physical and spiritual health. We find that in order to keep this health, we must live very close to the Master, talk much with Him and "take time to be holy." On this field where every moment is full and the days scarcely seem to have hours enough to accomplish the many duties, we have to plan the time for Bible study and prayer. Only in this way can we be strong in the Lord.

We are praying much for the workers in the home land these winter months that each church on every circuit may receive real showers of refreshing during the special meetings and many souls gathered into the fold.

We are encouraged from week to week in getting letters from the dear ones reminding us of their daily prayers for us and the work here.

We realize that anything we might accomplish would end in complete failure if the Holy Spirit did not have charge. So we praise Him for the gospel of Christ, for only this "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

Word came to us last Thursday of the illness of a child four months old whose master is a believer, who with her mother are visiting a kraal about four miles from here. They wished our prayers for this babe and as this would afford an opportunity of preaching to the people, meeting was appointed for the next morning, but early in the morning a girl came to say the child had died and they wanted a christian burial.

Mr. K. and myself attended this funeral. When we reached the kraal all was quiet, we were shown the right hut, which, when entering and getting accustomed to the darkness, we found the mother, grandmother and sympathizing friends weeping bitterly, for the mother heart is ever the same whether in Africa or in Christian lands.

We took a cloth with us to serve as a shroud, they were grateful for this especially when they found we would not take it back. We then went outside where the chief to whom the kraal belongs, together with a head man and several men and women awaited the service. After reading, prayer and singing we had the privilege of talking to these people about their souls and to point them to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world. They are always very reverent even though they may not believe what is being said. When this was over we started for the grave, the grandmother tenderly carrying the babe followed by the mother, then at some distance behind came the people. The grave was dug only a short distance from the kraal, all the belongings of the child were taken to put in the grave. We first made a soft bed of rags, Mr. K. laid the form on these after which we covered it with more rags. The service at the grave being ended we sat down with the people, then this old woman the grandmother of the child began filling in the grave using a tin pan, every little while getting in to tramp it down with her feet, before she was through she filled the pan and handed it to the mother to pour in, after she had carefully taken up every particle of dirt, even taking her hands to pick up dust among the grass she took up a large flat stone, gave to the mother also, this she laid on the grave and sat down. After a few moments the chief with two other old men piled the grave high with stones putting every one in place carefully, this was done without a word being spoken. We then spoke a few words of comfort to the mother while the crying and wailing for the dead began. This was all very interesting to me as it was the first Native funeral I have attended.

We noticed the absence of young people and find they are not accustomed to attend a burial as all girls are called babies until they are married and have two or three babies of their own, they think should these babies look upon the dead they will be very sorrowful, then should their tears fall upon the corpse they will become blind. It is also their custom for the eldest women (relative of the dead) to perform the duties of an undertaker. Should the dead be a man, his mother and two eldest wives carry him to the grave. After the burial these

who have touched the dead have to "eat medicine" lest they go insane. Also the reason this woman was so careful to gather up every particle of earth, they did not want to see anything around to remind them of the dead. And being the mother of the child it was her duty to place the first stone on the grave. These are among the many superstitions these people are addicted to.

As we looked upon the lifeless form of this babe we felt so thankful that she was gathered into the Father's fold as tenderly as those in Christian lands. Now I fear I have already made this too lengthy so will close for this time. Yours in Christian love for darkest Africa.

IDA M. KIERSTEAD.

PAULPIETERSBURG, Natal, Feb. 15, 1907.

Dear Highway,—There came to me the other morning a native with whom I am acquainted, "Mr. Rock," his name would be in English. But unlike the rock-disciple of Christ, Peter, this man is not willing to follow our Saviour. I suspected his reason and asked if he was hoping to get a third wife, "yes," he replied, "besides my two wives, I have two maidens." "But how can you pay for these since there are no cows in the district?" I asked. "I have sisters." But what about your unmarried brother, has he no maiden? "Yes he has two, but our sisters are many, and if there are no cattle we give them instead."

The case of this young Rock is only a sample. His sister often came here with wood, carrying it nine miles, and know considerable of the gospel plan. Their wily brothers, however, will see to it that these valuable chattels do not become entangled in a religion that requires marriage to be "only in the Lord."

Not long since, I tried to persuade a young man to permit his maiden to attend our meetings, as she has often told me of her desire "to believe," as they always express it. He was firm, however, saying, "I am willing for her to believe, even I, myself, desire to, but let her first be married to me, then she may go to church from my house. If I consent for her to go now, some other young man will make love to her and I will loose her after having paid all the ten cows."

Yesterday there were two young girls here, one from the home of the maiden just mentioned. About six months ago they returned from working for their white man. There they had heard some of the gospel story, decided to be Christians, and had even laid aside their heathen dress. As soon as they had reached home they told me of their purpose and one even came several times to meeting. Now they wear heathen dress and have submitted to the inevitable. To attend meetings would now mean to them severe beatings with a large cane, and even possible death.

But I need not write more. It is the same story you have heard over and over. The heathen custom of "lobola," paying cattle for the girls taken in marriage is the greatest hindrance we know of to mission work among this people.

A little girl, eight years old came today. "Do you not want to be a Christian?" I ask. "Yes, but I am forbidden." Is the answer. "What, have you a man?" I ask, cutting the question as they talk. "Yes." "Do you know where he lives?" "No." "Do you know him when you see him?" "Yes."

We are constantly meeting such cases. It is the rule and not the exception. It is the exception where one is permitted to believe. Our hearts bleed for these down trodden ones who desire, but in vain, to know Jesus as their Saviour.

Feb. 18th.

In spite of heavy rain showers yesterday, we had the meeting, as appointed, near the home of Aloni. This coming preacher is a good exhorter. I wish you could have heard him as he spoke so earnestly to the people of his home. "Rejoice ye my friends," he said, "the light has come to your homes. We all sat in great darkness, but God had mercy on us and sent the teacher from across the big river (the Atlantic Ocean) to enlighten us. You have heard his words today. He has explained to you the way of life and washed his hands of your blood. Our parents and grand parent died in their sins, but without the light that has today reached you. Their faults, therefore before God is small indeed compared with yours if you refuse to walk in this light. This world is a place of trouble. We see

sickness and death all about us. We work and work in our gardens and sweat, but in heaven all is different. No death there, no pain, no crying, no old men, no old women." And so he went on exhorting from the fullness of his heart.

Our David followed him with a few appropriate words. This boy is very promising. If all goes well you will hear from him in years to come. Their Filita arose and told them that, before the teacher came she too, had sat in darkness. But her cow-skin skirt together with her other finery she had laid aside and now wore clothing that covered and hid her body. But she had done this merely to honor the Lord. Faith, is a matter of the heart alone.

Jositina Aloni's wife came next saying, "Though this is the place of my home, yet I have not come just to see my friends. My baby I left at home sick and have come this long distance (nine miles) to help along the Lord's work." Elizabeth was the last of my five volunteers who had gone this nine miles for no compensations more than to please their Lord. They are a grand help, and I long to see them know more of God and His word. They are still so very ignorant. Our need of well trained native workers is a growing one. So many of our class members live at quite a distance and though glad to worship near their homes are not willing to come to our Central Station. We need qualified native workers to teach them the things of the Kingdom. Pray ye therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He will show how supply this need. Yours, to win some of these who sit in darkness.

H. C. SANDERS.

QUARTERLY MEETING.

The Reformed Baptist Quarterly Meeting of district No. 2, met with the Moncton church on Tuesday, March 12th. At the time of the convention, special services were being conducted in the church by the pastor, Rev. Z. B. Grass, assisted by Evangelist Cheney of Caribou, Maine. The special work was continued until the close of the quarterly meeting on Sunday evening, the 17th. The Spirit of God moved mightily on many souls. Some of them professed love for the cause of Christ for the first time; others showed a deeper earnestness to go through with God on bible lines than ever before, and many sinners were put under the deepest of conviction. Praise the Lord forever!

The quarterly meeting opened on Tuesday evening with preaching by Brother Cheney. On Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, prayer and praise services were held at 10.30 a. m. and 2.30 p. m. They proved a blessing and stimulation to all who attended them. There was preaching service every evening through the week by the evangelist, with the exception of Thursday evening when Rev. M. S. Trafton preached from Heb. 11:24-25 a sermon which stirred his hearers and gave great encouragement to a stronger faith in God.

The business meeting was called to order on Friday afternoon. In the absence of the secretary, Miss Hattie Colwell, brother Ira DeWitt Long was chosen as secretary pro. tem.

Officers for the new quarter were elected as follows: Brother A. F. Tanner, president; Ira DeWitt Long, secretary; Deacon Jones, treasurer; Sister Harrop, Highway agent.

To the roll call of ministers four responded. They were, Revs. M. S. Trafton, Z. B. Grass, F. H. Grass, and A. F. Tanner.

It was moved and adopted that in future the names of all delegates to attend the quarterly meeting be forwarded to the secretary before the convention.

Moved and adopted that in future there be a roll call of delegates immediately after the roll call of ministers.

To the roll call of delegates the following responded: Sisters E. H. Colwell and M. S. Trafton from St. John church, Bro. Lockhart from Mercer Settlement, Bro. Ira DeWitt Long from Head of Millstream, Bro. Moses Somers and Deacon Good from Moncton, Sister Lock from Amherst, Jacob Maddison and Oliver Trites and wife from Lutz Mountain.

Six churches reported by letter. The letter from the St. John church was brief yet proof that God has blessed that little corner of His vineyard. During five weeks of special work there by the pastor many were reclaimed from their wanderings, some were sanctified, five new members were added to the church list, and all felt encouraged to aid their pastor in presenting the truth to hungry souls.

Mercer Settlement reports the spiritual standing of the church good. The prayer-meetings are times of refreshment. The

preaching services are well attended. The people greatly appreciate the efforts of their pastor, F. H. Grass to declare the whole council of God's Holy Word. They have a very successful Sabbath school with Brother Noah Hicks as superintendent, and Bro. Carson as leader of the Bible class. The average attendance is about forty which is exceptionally good for the winter quarter. A parsonage has been purchased in this vicinity for the pastor who thanks God continually for His remembrance of every need of His saints.

Head of Millstream—Since the last quarterly meeting three have been added to our ranks. The opposition is very strong against holiness. But we feel that God is with us and therefore we are in the majority. We praise the Lord for victory all the time. During the quarter death has broken our rank; Sister Mary E. Hayes has gone to be with Jesus, to see Him face to face. Being in poor health at the time we organized, she did not place her name on our church roll but she was with us in spirit, and her bright experience through all her sickness and suffering, the heavenly smile upon her face, and her willing resignation to the will of God, have left a lasting testimony with her friends, convincing them of the need of being wholly sanctified. Let us press on against the opposition, giving God all the glory.

Amherst.—Since the last quarterly meeting we have, in a measure, had victory over the enemy. Some of our members have removed from this place, but God's will be done. He has given us other precious souls. In our prayer meetings more than a dozen have come out and professed to love Jesus. Financially the work is up hill, and we are losing no ground of late, although we are still behind somewhat. We are trusting God for help along this line also.

New Tusket.—Being a newly organized church our membership is small, only ten as yet. Licentiate Walter Lester is our pastor. The Spirit of God is working here. Five have been to the altar for prayers during the present week. Arrangements are being made for the building of a church in the spring. We are trusting the dear Lord for help and victory and everything we need.

Westchester.—During the quarter we have had no new members and some of our old members have backslidden. We have had no preaching for three months. We still hold two prayer meetings each week, with Sunday school and prayer meeting again on Sunday and Sunday evening. The attendance is very small yet we are not discouraged. We are in debt financially, but are trusting God for aid in every way.

After the reading of this report at the quarterly meeting, Rev. M. S. Trafton stated that he would do all he could to help the church at Westchester as soon as possible.

Upper Springfield.—This church was recently organized by Rev's Z. B. Grass and F. H. Grass, in alliance with the two churches at Mercer Settlement and Upper Millstream. Bro. F. H. Grass was unanimously chosen to be their pastor. After an explanation by him as to the location and promise of this new church, it was recognized by the convention. The report states great appreciation of the work already done, with an unwavering confidence that God will keep the fire burning in that vicinity and reap a still greater harvest than has yet been witnessed. At present there are thirteen members. There is some fierce opposition to the teaching of holiness, but a large number attend the meetings and there is good promise of addition to the little rank of God's true followers banded together in this new field.

Lutz Mountain.—There was no written report from this church. Delegate Oliver Trites reported that the church is spiritually weak. A few are holding on to God by faith and praying for victory over the works of Satan, and for the winning of precious souls for God in the near future. Bro. Maddison spoke strongly in favor of holiness and showed his interest in the pressing forward of the truth. May God send aid to these faithful few.

Moncton.—No written report. Delegate Moses Somers reported that during the last quarter there have not been any new members added to the list, but some have turned from sin and professed to love Jesus. At present the outlook is

encouraging. The special work of late is bringing good results. The Sabbath school work proves a great blessing and uplift to truth seekers. The attendance is about fifty. Deacon Goode expressed his zeal for God, and his hope for earnest work to be done.

Rev. M. S. Trafton tried to impress upon the minds and hearts of all present the great necessity of deeper interest in the missionary work. There is needed at once an emergency fund of at least \$250.

The quarterly meeting closed on Sunday evening with preaching by Brother Cheney. Hearts were filled with gratitude to God for the manifestation of His love and power. Bless His name forever.

IRA DEWITT LONG,
Secretary.

Constitution and Bye Laws of the Praying Band of the Woodstock Reformed Baptist Church.

Article 1. Motto—"Holiness unto the Lord."

Article 2. Officers.—The officers of this Band shall be a President, Vice President and Secretary Treasurer; and shall be elected annually at the first regularly meeting in January.

Article 3. The President shall have the general oversight of the Band, and may call special meetings and appoint leaders for special services when necessary.

Article 4. The Vice President shall assist the President in the performance of his duties; and in the absence of the President shall take his place.

Article 5. The Secretary Treasurer shall keep the Records of all business meetings, and of other meetings when deemed necessary; give notice of all regular and special meetings of the Band; collect dues from members and apply them as directed by the Band.

Article 6. Meetings.—A regular meeting of the Band shall be held on the first Monday of each month at seven o'clock, p. m., and also on each Sunday at 6.15 p. m. Special meetings may be called at any time by the President, of which the Secretary shall give due notice to the members when necessary.

Article 7. Duty of members.—The members shall be punctual in attendance at all meetings as far as possible, and shall cheerfully conform to the will of the majority at all regular meetings called for business. They shall cheerfully respond when called upon to attend meetings of hold services, to visit the sick and help in defraying the necessary expenses of the Band.

Article 8. Balloting.—All voting for officers or reception of members shall be by written ballot at a regular business meeting of the Band. A unanimous vote shall be necessary to elect to membership. Officers shall be elected by a majority vote without nomination. If a vacancy should occur the President may call a special meeting to elect an officer to fill the position for the remainder of the term.

Article 9. Business.—All business shall be transacted at private meetings whether regular or special.

Article 10. Eligibility for membership.—Any male member of the Reformed Baptist Denomination, living a daily christian life, keeping up family and secret prayer and free from the bondage of appetite, or habit, such as the use of tobacco, indulgence in beer drinking, vulgar story telling, idle jesting or extravagant expressions at variance with facts—in short "who has denounced the hidden things of dishonesty," and is doing all the known will of God, shall be eligible for membership. Members of other Evangelical Churches, who meet the requirements of this article, may be received as associate members.

Article 11. Changes.—These Bye-Laws may be altered or amended at any business meeting of the Band, provided due notice has been previously given, of the proposed change.

Article 12. Obligation.—We, the members of the Praying Band of the Woodstock Reformed Baptist Church do hereby refrain from unprofitable arguments, also from introducing any theological questions likely to create disunion in the Band, either in private of public meetings, but will always endeavour to be fully united in the work of the Lord for the salvation of those around us. We also agree to totally abstain from the use or sale of tobacco in any form, and other narcotics, alcohol or malt liquors, and all kinds of small beers, wine and cider, and in a word "abstain from every appearance of evil", either in word or deed—to all of which we hereby subscribe our names, fully trusting in the Lord to keep us from the evil of the world.