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## Missionary Correspondence.

(By Rev. H. C. Sanders, M. D.)

### CHAPTER II.

#### *My Conversion.*

"And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart."

In the spring of 1884 under the labors of the pastor, Rev. Aaron Kinney, God graciously revived His work among the Free Baptists of Port Maitland and Beaver River. Whole families turned to God and scores were brought into the fold of Christ. This was surely a favorable time for me and the thing I had been hoping for. Ah, but I had changed and was no longer a child but a boy of fifteen with my face away from God. Some years earlier it would have been easy to give up sin, forsake all and follow Jesus, but not so now.

What would my companions think? Suppose I should not hold out? Then, too, I probably would have no more good times if I became a Christian. This last argument appealed to me very strongly, so I waited a while and watched the others. Many were being saved, even some younger than myself. As they seemed happy I began to think it might be a mistake to suppose that conversion put an end to the pleasures of life. Finally I confided in my "chum," Edwin Hammond, whose mother I knew to be a Christian. He was to ask her if converted people enjoyed life, but not to tell her who had sent him. Her answer was, "Christians are the happiest people in the world." Before this I had been only almost persuaded. I was proud, held by what people might think; mean and selfish, unwilling to sacrifice pleasure for One who had given even life for me; cowardly, afraid of being laughed at by the boys at school.

Edwin's answer was the deciding item in the scales and indecision gave place to full purpose to seek the Lord. Satan was on hand to advise and suggested that now, since I was soon to make a public profession of religion, it would be wise to wait a couple of weeks until I had lived a while like a Christian. Otherwise the boys at school might laugh and say, "One day wicked and the next a Christian, speaking in meeting." Needless to say there was miserable failure. It was then I began to seek the Saviour, just as I was, a sinner, helpless and undone.

Most of the young converts had found the Lord in a short time, and I expected it would be thus with myself. I forsook my sins, was willing to do anything I thought God required, but no peace came. It was very hard but I stood to the tests, went to the altar, prayed and even publicly asked for prayer.

For more than a week I had been seeking, when one night as I lay in my bed thinking the matter over, God showed me that it was unbelief alone that kept me from the blessing I sought and that I was but to reach up and take it by faith.

Some contend that faith and reason are opposed; that where the one begins the other must end. But God says, "Come now and let us reason." The truth is, faith is reason counting God in while doubt is reason counting Him out. I remember, like it was yesterday, how I reasoned; "Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and I am a sinner. Therefore He must have come to save me. And since I am doing the best I know to be saved He must be willing to save me." But one step remained—"I believe that Jesus forgives me all my sins

and saves me now." This last sentence was repeated several times until faith, aided by logic, gripped the truth, when at once the peace and joy and glory of God flooded my soul, dispelling all the fear and darkness and misery of guilt. O, it was wonderful beyond description! Tears of joy and gratitude fill my eyes as I now recall that time when God first revealed Himself to that unworthy boy. It was all so real that the glory of heaven seemed to fill and light up the room in which I lay.

I never was the shouting kind, so George slept on beside me, unconscious of the great change that had taken place in his younger brother. There was no "think so" or "hope so," I was born of God and had the witness within. No fear of death now, nor judgement nor eternity! All was as clear and bright as sunlight. I know, beyond the possibility of doubt, that I was a child of God; and in the restful sweetness of that knowledge went to sleep that night with the assurance that should I awaken in another world it would be heaven.

That room is still sacred to my memory. About two weeks before sailing for Africa I had the privilege of visiting the old house. I went to that room, and kneeling alone, thanked God that there, seventeen years before, He had saved my poor soul.

After my conversion I saw everything in a new light. The reasons that had kept me away from God so long and had seemed so plausible then, had now no weight whatever. I saw how Satan had held me, blinded and deceived, fully believing his delusions. And really I had come very near missing salvation. My experience of conviction I had compared to scales just balancing. On one side were the reasons why I should seek Christ, while Satan piled his lies on the other. The two sides had seemed even until Edwin Hammond, returned me the answer, "Christians are the happiest people in the world." This message was weighty and tipped the scales in favor of God and heaven.

It was now easy for me to see why others held out against God's mercy. They were being deceived just as I had been. I felt sure that I could convince them, and at once set to work. But before telling of my early experiences as a soul winner I wish to relate an important chapter from the life of my dear mother.

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This custom his successors continued, and human nature being what it is, resulted in many tragedies. Thus in my own time girls and their lovers are constantly caught trying to escape in Natal.

The men were set free, but the women were killed, and their bodies laid where four paths crossed, as a public warning. If their parents or friends tried to remove the bodies of the slain they were also killed; this was a state of affairs that gave rise to many remonstrances from the British government, as did also the prevalence of "smelling out" for witchcraft.

Soon Cetywago found his position very difficult. He had an enormous army of sixty or seventy thousand warriors who clamored continually for war. He would have fought the Boers, but the English prevented him by annexing the Transvaal; indeed, as I have reason to know, that was the principal motive for this much misrepresented act. He would have fought the Swazis, but we prevented him again. So things went on, until at last Sir Bartle Frere issued his ultimatum, and he fought us because he had no one else to fight.

But Cetywago's heart was never in that war.

Thus after our dreadful defeat at Isandhlwana, when all Natal lay open to his army, I have been informed upon very good authority that his enidunas, or councilors, urged him to pour his regiments across the border and sweep the land from end to end. He refused outright, saying that if the English attacked him he would fight them; but they had always been his friends in the old days, and he would not meddle with their country.

The end of the story is well known. By slow degrees the British troops, armed with rifles mowed down brave savages armed with spears. At Ulundi they made a last effort, pouring their regiments upon our square, set in an open plain. Again and again they charged, but ere ever they came within stabbing distance the Martin bullets mowed them down, and that day the Zulu power was broken. That day the vast military organization created by the genius of Chaka crumbled into pieces. Cetywago was hunted down and captured, taken to England, sent back to Zululand, and, although this is not generally known, poisoned by some of his own people.

A clumsy effort was made to split up the Zulu people into their original constituent tribes, apparently in the hope that they would destroy each other like the Kilkenny cats. Ultimately the whole country drifted under British control, and is now ruled by British officers.

Since that day nearly a generation has gone by, and those natural forces, that are peculiarly active in a polygamous country, have fully repaired the waste of war. Probably in this year of grace there are more Zulus in Zululand, to say nothing of the hundreds of thousands of them that inhabit Natal, than there were when Cetywago ruled. Moreover, the tradition goes on, their martial spirit is not dead; it only slumbers.

A time may come when another Chaka will arise, a Chaka who has learned something from civilization, and make of the Zulus a force with which Africa and England must reckon. They are a people with splendid qualities, honest, single-minded soldiers who fear not death. Moreover, they do not die out like the Red Indian or the Maons of New Zealand, and they have abilities equal, if different, to those of the white man.

What will be the destiny of this people? None can say; it will be shown by time alone. But if I were an autocrat, I should try to make use of their splendid martial qualities in the service of the British Empire. Unless they have greatly changed in the last twenty years, what they did for Chaka they would do for King Edward and his successors. Only there comes the rub; they would do it too thoroughly. If he is properly led the Zulu does not understand the meaning of the word "surrender."

From time to time as I can glean correct statements concerning the past and present of this intensely interesting people I hope to write you of them believing the more light those of you at home, who are helping in the grand work of uplifting and saving the Zulus, have the more intelligently you can give and pray.

Yours in Jesus, Mrs. H. C. Sanders.

The Missionary Fund, and the Beulah Fund are both for the Lord's Work. One is for the home work, the other for home and foreign.