

## Missionary Correspondence.

### CHAPTER XVI.

REV. H. C. SANDERS, M. D.

SNAPSHOTS AT THE SCHOOL OF THE PROPHETS.

*Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.*

We all liked our farm superintendent, Mr. Titus. He chose Walter Esson to drive the horses and care for them, because Mr. Esson was experienced and capable. Whether following the plow or wading through the depths of theology, this young Scotchman was a hard worker, seeming never to weary. He was fond of argument and honest in debate, for which reason he and I were constantly discussing the hard questions of theology. Some of the students often warned us that only harm could come from argument, but we considered this the best way to clear the tangle of thought and arrange truth systematically in our minds. Though we frequently held different views, and still more often took opposite sides of argument, yet we always debated in a good natured and helpful way. To-day both he and I have clearer ideas as to what we really believe, and why, than we would have but for the discussions of those three years we spent together at the "School of the Prophets."

After graduating, Brother Esson returned to his home in Scotland, was ordained, married and went to Jamaica, West Indies, where he still is a tireless worker and very successful among the negroes. He had looked forward to Africa, but like the majority of our class, did not reach the field of his early dreams.

Among the missionary students, my special "chum," the one with whom I exchanged secrets, was Albert Newhall. He was a typical New Englander, with whom the principals of right and honor are as their flesh and bone. As a student, he was brilliant, and after completing his course at the U. M. T. I., he took the degree of M. D. before going to his field of labor. I would say "chosen field," but, like Mr. Esson, he had expected mission work in Africa, whereas his society sent him as far from tropical Africa and negroes as possible—to frigid Alaska, where his splendid talents enable him to fill a large sphere.

Among the strictest rules of the U. M. T. I. were those regulating the mingling of the male and female students. They met at lectures, ate at the same table and were allowed a social half hour each day in the sitting room, where those who wished might converse in the presence of the matron. When walking to and from church, or elsewhere, the young men were to keep by themselves, and not within speaking distance of the young women. Some thought our Principal rather strict, but all were proud of the high moral character our school has always maintained. There was to be no "falling in love," while to contract a marriage engagement during a school term was unpardonable. This very thing, however, sometimes happened, which reminds me of a story our professor in church history at the U. M. T. I. told us.

It was during the Middle Ages, and among a strict sect of monks of the Roman Catholic faith. They lamented the weakness of the priesthood to withstand the charms of the opposite sex, and sought a remedy. By way of experiment they took to themselves a baby boy, not yet old enough to remember his own mother. This baby grew to manhood in the seclusion of a monastery, never having learned of womankind. Finally the day came when they

were to test their experiment. Would this young man be susceptible, like other men, to feminine allurements? He was taken to a village and escorted through the streets, where he soon saw a group of young women. The elder priests were deeply grieved to note how extremely interested their pupil became; but when he enquired what those queer and handsome looking creatures might be, they tried to deceive him by saying they were birds. His next remark, however, showed them that their experiment was a failure, and all their work in vain, for he said, "I wish you would catch one for me."

The State of New York contributed a member to our class who came nearer the Puritan standard of uprightness than even my friend Albert. That these two, Miss Agnes Sowle and Mr. Albert Newhall, became engaged during a school term, no one suspected. It was, doubtless, the stress of circumstances that led to their love affair growing in a school whose discipline was faultless, even extreme.

The apparent explanation is this: The working of our huge washing machine needed the strong hand of a man. That his was stronger than hers is doubtful, as she was above the average size, while he was under. Be this as it may, the running of the washing machine became the allotted work of Mr. Newhall. For three years he served as apprentice to Miss Sowle in this capacity. Bright and early, every Monday, they said "Good morning," and plunged in the by no means desirable task of doing the wash of a family of twenty to forty persons. She understood all the details of laundering and never so much as thought of slighting her work, even if he did, which was not at all likely.

Though she could instruct him in the mysteries of this art or any other pertaining to the keeping of house or farm, yet in the studies of school he could and always did help her to a remarkable extent. While their hands were busy with the menial task before them, their minds were engaged in some subject that he understood better than she. Thus it seems only natural that they should have found that each needed the other—always. So they became engaged, and have been helping each other ever since.

An occurrence comes to my mind that illustrates the severe uprightness of my esteemed classmate, Miss Sowle. While she and another young woman were walking the streets of Brooklyn, they were accosted by a wretched looking woman, who begged them for money "to buy food," as she said. Miss Sowle gave her ten cents, and then followed behind to see if the woman would spend it for drink. Sure enough, she turned into the first saloon—they stand on almost every corner of the business streets of this city. Miss Sowle hurried along, reaching the bar just in time to see the poor creature place the dime on the counter and demand drink. "No, you don't spend my money that way," and Miss Sowle returned the money to her purse.

Paulpietersburg, Natal, South Africa,  
December 1st, 1913.

Dear Highway,— Another year is nearly gone. By the time this reaches you Christmas, with all its hallowed memories and joys, will have passed, and you will be facing a new year. What have we accomplished this past year of 1913? Each heart must give its own answer. If any is conscious of not meeting God's requirements, let them haste to measure up for time will not wait. God may call any or all of

of us to render up accounts without a moment's notice. I am convinced that we are living in the age of the greatest opportunities to reach the benighted heathen that this world ever saw. The work is simply stupendous and the doors of all nations, of almost all tribes, are thrown open and waiting for the gospel. What shall we do? As we have in the past, or shall we not "lengthen our cords and strengthen our stakes," that we may extend a helping hand to more of the unreached heathen than ever before. Because difficulties abound is no reason for our interest to flag; rather we must arise with greater faith and overcome them by God's strength and wisdom. At least this is how I feel, and I believe God is in our midst to help.

Here we have had rather a discouraging year in many ways. Some time past a large number of our church members went with the Zionists, or the "Tongues Movement," and have practically ceased to come here for worship or school. We have all along hoped they would return, but up to the present they have not. But we are praying that they may, for they are not being helped as they would have been had they continued to come to us to be taught.

This has interrupted our work in certain ways, such as sewing classes, daily school, etc. Our school has been carried on, but only a very few have attended, and we hold no sewing class.

Now, what shall we do? Well, there is still plenty of material near at hand, but it will be harder to work, because more difficult to persuade those who have heard and till now not wished to believe. But there are plenty of heathen all about us. For some time past I have been asking God to give us the souls of these nearby hardened heathen, and as I pray I have been trying to talk with them too, so my faith is growing; but will not you all join in earnest petition that these may be saved?

Brother and Sister Kierstead have been across the Pongola for over two months now, where Samuel and Solomon work.

As a family, we are all well, and so far have been preserved from fever and other evils. Measles are among the people all about us. We are becoming quite skilled farmers, and are trying this summer more than ever before to raise all we possibly can both for our own food and for the native help and visitors who are continually around us. To farm thus is possible this year, for we have cattle to work with. We have never had them before, as the cattle sickness, East Coast fever, either carried off or prohibited cattle from being moved from place to place. Even now there are restrictions, but since the government has made "dipping" a law the fever is abating and cattle are again in the land and increasing. Unless you take into consideration how we have been hampered by lack of beasts to plow with, etc., you cannot understand some of the difficulties of the past years to do even a little farming, as nearly all the planting had to be done by hoe. This is the first season since we came on this farm that Dr. Sanders has had cattle to plow with as he has needed. In the past we were able each season to hire a little done, and used the horse, or horses, as these happened to be available. But this year it has been different, and the gardens look well. I must add, however, that most of the plowing has been done with two cows and two heifers. What do you farmers think of that? Dr. Sanders has also introduced the neck yoke from home, with great success, for it is far better than the native yoke used here.

Already this season there have been destructive hail storms in different parts of the

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