

## MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE

Paulpietersburg,  
Natal, South Africa,  
December 18th, 1914.

Dear Friends,—

The South African rebellion is about at an end. General DeWet was captured and last week General Beyers met a sad fate in the floods of the Vaal River fleeing capture. These, with Col. Maritz, who was badly wounded in the knee and fled into German West Africa, were the leaders.

Ever since the Boer War there has been a feeling among many of these Dutch that when the opportunity came they would throw off the English government and establish a Dutch Republic. Evidently they thought the time had come when this war in Europe got well under way. German influence seems to have helped this on. Col. Maritz, a trusted man of the Union Government, seized his opportunity when being sent with 1200 men to German West Africa to protect our interests there, he gave these soldiers under him their choice of three things—to be shot; to be sent into German territory as prisoners of war or come with him and join our enemy. As there were many loyal men in this force and they were near the enemy's line it put them in a bad place.

There was a little while of suspense as to what the outcome of this might be, but the Premier, General Botha, remained loyal as he had professed, and quickly put himself at the head of a force intended to crush Maritz. In the meantime further trouble which had been brewing, broke out in the Transvaal and Orange Free State. General DeWet raised a small force of men in the former state and General Beyers a small force in the latter. This changed plans somewhat, and General Botha left the force he already had near German West Africa, strengthening them somewhat to look after Maritz, while he went north to catch these two. He has succeeded as I have briefly stated above. DeWet awaits his trial, and Beyers is drowned, a sad ending to a somewhat promising career. General Beyers was commandant-in-chief of the Union forces at the outbreak of the European war but resigned his position when he learned our forces would fight the Germans. It is believed that he and the other two, with many more that have not come before the public, had planned this rising long ago. Beyers was in Germany two years ago, and had a long interview with the Emperor, some say, and this rebellion was then hatched.

The Paulpietersburg and Vryheid contingents are returning to their homes and it is expected that all the other soldiers will be home for Christmas.

Now that it is all over I feel to thank God for his care and help. He was our refuge and helper during the few anxious hours we had and we did not worry.

We are surrounded by Dutch people, what few there are in here, three families, and, at first, could not know if they were with us or against us. We alone, eighteen miles from the nearest help, surrounded by natives who, in many cases, are the Boers slaves—you see we could think lots of things, but God is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it and are safe.

We have not even been disturbed. All the Dutch in here were loyal. One man has two sons away still; another had two but one has returned home, and save our anxiety day by day to learn how things were going all has been as usual with us. It might have been different if Paul had been a year or so older. He may have

gone into training anyway. I have gone over all this and know a little tiny bit how to feel for you mothers who have had your boys go away to war. God bless and sustain you; it is indeed a time of trouble.

We, too, are in a great battle against heathenism and sin. We need your prayers. Souls must be saved or they will be eternally lost. Some are so hard to reach, others are hungry to know about God. Some are at our doors, others many, many miles away. We need more helpers, more workers. We are doing our best, are praying much and working too. The battle goes hard just now. There are many difficulties, much that would discourage us if we would let them. But we encourage each other in the Lord and go on looking unto Jesus.

It has been a very wet season and all gardens are coming on well and promise a good harvest. There should be no famine next year. It is hard not to be able to help all of the many who come day by day for us to help them to buy corn. So many now are buying in small lots of from 32 cents up to \$1.25 because they have no more money. It would be an interesting item if we knew how much food we have given away this season. We know what it is to be in straightened circumstances ourselves, so can the easier pity these who are in greater need.

We have God's presence and blessing and expect victory through Jesus.

Yours in Him,

MRS. H. C. SANDERS.

Paulpietersburg, Natal,

Dec. 7th, 1914.

Dear Highway,—

Yesterday was "big Sunday" across the Pongola. I did not go over the day before, as usual, but left home very early in the morning and returned after meeting, being seven hours in the saddle. There was a man, perhaps 36 years old, baptised—one of the very few we ever get at that age. A bright girl and a very promising boy were also baptised and taken into the church, together with others who had belonged at Balmoral before we organized over there. So now we have a strong band of forty members at that station.

Most of those were present and partook of the communion. The testimony meeting in the forenoon was excellent, speaking of genuine spiritual life. The native built hut, serving as a church building, was taxed to its utmost in accommodating our congregation of sixty. It did me good to see many heathen present and note their evident interest in testimony and preaching—truly God was with us in power.

I had purposely left my tooth forceps at home, but regretted it when I saw so many sufferers with bad teeth and remembered the crude native method of extraction, with knife and a nail. On my return journey a woman with toothache ran down a hillside to stop me as I went along the path. All these, of course, I invited to visit our station at Balmoral where the useful forceps had been left.

Of late I have been thinking of Christ's command to his disciples to "heal the sick." This was to be done by means of the miraculous power imparted by Him. The early church possessed the power, but gradually lost it, with the other gifts of the spirit, as riches and backsliding crept in, until today, the church as a whole, does not suspect that the command to heal the sick is still in force. And this is the problem in my mind: Is this command still binding, or is it not? Without discussing the question, as to whether the day of miracles is past, there still remains much that can be done

by the church in heathen lands in relieving sickness and suffering, through medical missions.

Two weeks this morning found me very tired from holding outpost service the day before; yet I was impelled to respond to a call, and visit an expectant mother across the Pongolo, at Emfeni, where we have a preaching station. The sight that I met there will follow me to my grave. I arrived only a few moments before the woman died, and remained to conduct the funeral service.

There was the usual unrestrained weeping for the dead, which is wild and weird. The friends all believed the deceased had been bewitched by some enemy, that sent an animal, that no one saw, into her hut. (Even our Christian natives most all believe thoroughly in witchcraft). But it was not the burial nor the wailing that moved me. It was the unspeakably horrible and putrifying condition in which I found the woman, still conscious of all her ineffectual and hopeless agonies. For four long days she had lived and endured physical pain—and far worse—the mental stress of hope and expectancy gradually fading, like the twilight, into a night of darkest despair and desperation. All the while her friends, like torturing demons, exclaiming, "There is no hope for she has been bewitched." A thousand sudden deaths in the battlefields of Europe, which so sadden our hearts these days, would not contain the agonies concentrated in this one.

And the cause? First, ignorance; second, neglect. What is to prevent this and other physical suffering in heathen lands? The medical missionary, where he is permitted to practice and is thoroughly known, will be called first and not at the twelfth hour as in this case, when all native expedients have been vainly tried.

That scene still haunts me. Its remembrance followed me so closely the first few hours that I seemed unable to think of anything else. Then, when my mind would drop the subject, there would come what I never heard of, but what I call olfactory remembrance. Even in the night, this latter awoke me, and by the law of association ideas, compelled me again to witness the awful tragedy—what I saw and all that I can imagine and know that went before.

For many miles in all directions, the natives come to your missionary when their skill or charms fail, but they will not go to the other European physicians. Not long since I was called to visit a case that might have been like the above, not one mile from the door of our Paulpietersburg doctor. They have not the money to pay him, and if they did, they are too ignorant to trust him.

Were my four years spent in the Medical College time wasted? A thousand times, No. Are you justified in supporting this two-fold work at Balmoral? "Preach the Gospel and heal the sick," was the command. Is it still, or is it not? What would Jesus do? What would he have us do?

Yesterday, a little boy with a stick used to help him walk, came limping along with the woman I spoke of as "running." I inquired concerning his swollen knee that I noticed. "No, he had no accident," was her reply, "they bewitched him." The logical treatment therefore, is evident, and they gave charms hoping to drive away the "spell."

One is led sometimes to wonder how long God will permit such ignorance, superstition, and resultant suffering. The sacrifice of human life upon such a gigantic scale in Europe at this