

Missionary Correspondence.

Paulpietersburg, Natal, So. Africa,
July 16th, 1916.

My Dear Sister Baker,—Let me tell you a little about this "Missionary Training Home and School." You are likely wondering what I mean, so I will tell you.

One day it came to me the manifold nature of our work. A downright M. S. with all that means of ministering to the needy in various ways, including caring for the sick and running somewhat of a hospital and dispensary, teaching these Zulus in their own tongue, to read and write, holding services through the week here and also on Sunday when we split forces and, like today, hold eight different meetings this side the Pongola river, direct our evangelists and home helpers both here and in the church across Pongola, etc., etc., infinitum. Also training our own boys and girls as missionaries—Here is the work they have done today. Faith took the meeting here, while I cared for our own children, Paul went on horseback to Mhloke's home six or eight miles from here, Judson went with his father (on a small donkey) to have a service for an old man about four miles from home. On his return he went to visit a sick woman who lives about a mile away but on Balmoral. Now these three are already into the harness and we, Herbert and I, are doing all in our power to make an indelible impression upon these young hearts and minds that there is no work so important as soul winning. We are surrounded (especially in the winter when the sheep farmers are here with their sheep) by white people who, more or less—usually more—live as if "God is not in their thoughts." They are not sticklers for the truth, nor free from deceiving and break the laws of the land if they think they will escape detection. Here is an example. A man, in high authority, came in here this open season to shoot buck (small antelope of which there are about four species sparsely scattered over the country in the deep ravines and small bush spots in this district). Paul was invited to join our neighbors in this hunt and went. He had heard that only certain kinds were free to be shot, the others royal game because protected by law. However changes are frequently made. In camp that night this man (an officer of the law) talked game and among other things said at this hunt everything here was free to be shot. Next day near dusk Paul shot a young one supposing this man told the truth. It afterwards transpired, we learned, that that specie is still royal game. What do you think of that! I tell you I haven't got over the shock of that yet. To stem such things we must be continually on our guard, keep the laws, even if ridiculed by all our Dutch neighbors and that is what we are trying to do and I believe we will succeed in impressing our young men (these boys of ours are fast becoming that) no matter what others do. God expects us to stand for righteousness and let Him take care of our reputation. It is not always easy to get young men to see as we do as you know from the years of teaching you yourself have had.

Paul is a beautiful type of Christian early young manhood, pray he may be kept in the hour of temptation, similar to the above, which must come. "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil."

Another evil to shun—Nearly every Dutch farmer makes half or more of his living by raising and selling tobacco. It is the best paying crop in this district, especially the warmer

parts like in here. Herbert turned a native man away from this farm and one-half the reason was he intended to put in a big piece of tobacco, notwithstanding his (Herbert's) request not to.

In all the tight places we have been in the past. With all need we have felt for a little more money to school our children and make both ends meet easier, we have never done this and I pray it never may be a temptation to us nor ours. Every young man smokes with now and then a rare exception and all think it the proper thing to do. Our neighbors know, somewhat, of our opinions on the subject but we stand alone. There is also a heathen influence to stem. If we would have our children brought up morally pure, we must constantly work and watch against this. I have thanked God for the help in this that there have been pairs in my children so, in a way, each child has had the one next him or her, as a companion. It has simplified matters when we strictly forbid our girls and boys to have native children to play with. We tell them why and then help them over the difficulty by saying 'you have your own brothers and sisters to play with.' I have been and am still an exceptionally busy woman but I have never allowed my babies to be solely cared for by native nurses, nor even partially. I never considered I had a nurse for the most my little ones were left to servants' care was for an hour at a time. I have a little girl or boy drag the child about the yard in a little wagon but always where I could see and know all that went on. It was in me to do this before I really knew the reason. I had a fear lest they let the baby fall, etc., but how I have thanked the Lord he led me to this when I early discovered other evils they might learn from their native nurses. So, much to my Dutch neighbors' surprise, all of my children spoke first in English and slower, but after, they learned Zulu.

Sometimes the burden of responsibility of raising these children, in this land, for God has almost seemed to crush me and I have hungered to have some of the homeland mothers to confer with and talk over family cares, but Jesus has supplied my every need. To Him be all the glory!

How I wish you—and others—could see our beautiful clean-souled children! Oh, my dear, yours are all safe in Heaven, away from the sin and evil of the present world. It seems to me 'tis growing worse and worse; pray even more earnestly for ours that they each and all—not one left out—may also reach that sinless land and never backslide from God. My dear, I know it would break my heart but I believe I say the truth, I had rather have each precious one die now, and my home be desolate as yours must be, than have them become men and women but lost to God and his work. Your heart will understand me, for you are a mother, these lives are so precious, so unreplacable and I covet them and yearn over them all to live for God. Now having written this you will realize how very thankful I am to see each young life just as it begins to expand, reaching up and yearning to live in the sunlight of God.

Judson is a real missionary spirit in so young a child. His prayers continue to surprise me and the Christian experience is deepening. The younger ones are also waking up and coming on. Do you blame me for calling this a "Missionary Training Home?" I am so sorry the organ has become so long delayed. It becomes a crying need continually. Paul is taking lessons but even with his limited

knowledge of music sees how inadequate the little one is to get on well. Judson, George, Miriam and Grace all want lessons and I am expecting to give them right away. It will be all the more appreciated when it does come.

I have forgotten the description Brother Baker gave me of it. I wonder if you could answer the following questions concerning it or will it make extra work for you? How many stops has it? How many octaves has the key-board?

Another great need is a few song books as Best of All, from 4 to 6 books; Songs of Praise and Salvation, 4 or 6; Alexander Songs, 3. These can come by book post. Our children love to sing but our books are few. Let me know if you could supply these at how much. First ask Ida if she got some for me. I asked her two months ago but she never said if she had or not.

The children, as well as we, will miss Herbert's father more than we can tell. They wrote to him often and he to us and them.

Our work is indeed encouraging, especially across the Pongola where there is more room for expansion among raw heathen. Here we are digging away in much old ground; it is true, but we are finding diamonds. The schools are fairly well attended, etc. We are praying and working for these hard cases, those who for years have heard and seen the light. My heart goes out to these more than ever. Pray God to break the stony hearts.

Had almost two weeks' change at Durban and Pietrmaertzburg. It did me good and I was thankful for even so short a stay, my first in over two years.

The children ran things in our absence and did well indeed, the first time they were ever left all alone to manage.

My brother in France is still in the thick of the fight. He has been there over a year and a half now and been most marvelously spared. We are hoping there will not be another winter for the poor fellows in the trenches.

Faith calls to supper and I have written a long, long letter so it may make up for the long time I have been silent.

Lovingly yours,
ELLA

BALMORAL FARM.

July 26th, 1916.

Dear Brother Baker,—Several times of late I have felt I would like to write to you about Balmoral, and now I feel I must supplement Herbert's letter.

To all he says about buying before New Year's, 1917, I agree. It seems the time to buy has come. Nothing can be gained by delay and much might be lost as he has stated in his letter. I will add a few things that may make things a bit clearer.

1. Balmoral, though one of the smallest farms in this part of the district, is one (if not the only one) that has more land for cultivation than any other right here.

2. It has water for irrigation, so a winter garden can be had as well as raising table vegetables in time of drought. Notwithstanding the number of natives now here, we do not use all the land that we might by cultivation.

3. It is centrally located for mission work and because of this better than any other farm here on which to locate a station. The public road passes through it, even right by our door. Hence, many natives from across Pongola going to towns to work pass up on their way.

4. Regarding native location—when this comes to pass we will be right here and our