

Missionary Correspondence.

Paulpetersburg,
Natal, South Africa,
April, 25th, 1916.

My Dear Mrs. Baker:

Today, as Dr. Sanders had to go visit a sick woman a few miles beyond us, in the direction of the Pongola river, I went with him on a donkey. Quite a nice Dutch family lives about three miles from here and on our road, so I put in a little bag a bit of crocheting and thought I would stay with her for an hour or two while the Dr. went on to his patient.

Really I do enjoy visiting this woman. She seems more like home folks than any Boer woman I have yet met. It is so refreshing to talk with her and I always have had a chance to witness for Jesus, tell a bit about our work too, and she is interested.

Now I cannot speak Dutch, neither can she talk in English, so we compromise and chat away to each other in Zulu.

She has one child a little girl about Grace's age and they are quite isolated. I am their nearest neighbor.

It was on New Year's day I last called and then she took me to see their vegetable garden, and large field of tobacco. Now they had gathered, dried and sold 1000 lbs of the "fragrant weed" and had 800 or more lbs either dry or in process of doing so, which they expect to sell soon. Not that they will get money for it, no, just trade at the village store. This is the selling crop for most Dutch farmers, corn, or mealies as it is known out here, may or may not be a good crop, in this section, according as we have rains in season or a drought. Sheep raising, for the wool, is another industry for the farmers here in South Africa.

I have so few neighbors and they all are miles away save our nearest who is about a quarter of a mile nearer the village than we are. My time is so fully occupied I do not get even to the nearest very often. Once in three months, perhaps.

This woman I visited today has parents living near the village and very often goes out to stay with them for a few days, so she is often away.

We have not told you of our work here during the past week so I will jot down a few things that may be of interest to you.

Good Friday was a time of "all day fasting and prayer." Praying for the church members to be uplifted, strengthened and helped in the way of the Lord. Not a large crowd, but a good few came and, we did have a good time, God's presence was manifested, hearts were undergirded, others reached up for deeper experiences and some grew hungry to know more of God. We have some whose experiences are deepening all the time and to those the day was a "feast of fat things."

Sunday following was a very full one indeed. The days are short now so people do not get here till about noon, so much was pressed into a few hours.

We began by a prayer meeting and came near having a break up. Two Zionists (one is one of our young men who has lately been led away.) These knelt close together and, as I tried to pray, began with a sort of shivering chatter, in Gargon, which quickly drew everyones attention away from all thought of true worship to listen or behold them. I ceased to pray and told them kindly we had met here to worship God and if they could not keep still they might go out. Still they continued while we sang two verses of a hymn. Then, arising from the organ I went

to them and said "If you cannot keep still you had better go. Go, now!" And I touched one on the shoulder, they immediately rose and went out. It took a moment or two to quell the distraction and saying "This is, to me, a picture for us today of when the soul desires to draw nigh to worship God, Satan draws near to distract by some suggestions of his." We again knelt in prayer and this time one soon had large liberty. I could not but notice as the different ones I called upon prayed, how God blesses the souls who draw near him" in spirit and in truth. Only a few moments for a short lesson and talk, then another hymn and Dr. Sanders came in for the preaching service. This was also a short one closing with two testimonies before we went to the pool for baptism. Three candidates, one a woman who had travelled, on foot, somewhere about 60 miles. It was an impressive service to me, as the congregation of a mixed multitude stood about the deep pool. There were old believers, young converts, seekers and raw heathen, all quiet and orderly. The sun was hot and the time short so we soon returned to the church where communion was partaken of and a young couple pledged their troth before the people.—I forgot to mention that during the preaching service—just before the sermon—two babies were presented to the Lord by their mothers, one the widow of Sandbla who died trusting in Jesus, about two months ago. His wife is an earnest little woman and answered, so firmly, the questions concerning her taking upon her the training and upbringing of this child for the Lord. The other was Jostina, wife of Aaron evangelist. Of course in this case he promised to help in the training of Joshua. They have four children, Jeremiah, Anna, Moses and Joshua. Quite a household of prophetic names when you include Aaron their father.

The pledging of troths before the church we encourage as it helps to offset their heathen custom of doing this and is a very solemn service calculated to help each to stand true to each other till the time of the wedding day and we need everything good we can get to impress these young people about morality and purity, as the morals of the Zulus are far from being as high as ours.

Thus a long and busy day closed with the setting sun disappearing over the high hill just a little way from the church. Many had requests to make of some one of us and all had good-byes to say. Only a few got here from across the Pongola as on Sat. one of the Sisters of our church there died and was buried. I spoke about one woman walking 60 miles to be baptized. She came with Timote from Utrecht district. He has a maimed foot so got the loan of a horse, but she walked. There seems to be quite a little band there and Timote has a good experience. He gave us an account of his conversion and it is a good one I can tell you. He thought he was facing death and there found Jesus. Dr. Sanders is trying to get these churches, the one here and that across the river to undertake his support while he goes on teaching and preaching there.

Today, after class, they left for their far away home. He is Aaron's brother and Dr. Sanders hopes to visit him this winter.

Our children are all well, growing fast and in grace, for this I praise God. Paul and Faith are already great helpers, I wish you and Brother B— could hear them as they preach in Zulu. Really, I am not boasting only stating fact. Faith is more fluent but Paul more weighty as to argument and delivery. Both are precious, young, consecrated lives and God is instructing them in his truths. Judson—

well he just goes right on, has a good experience, gives his testimony in the meetings and hungers to save souls. The rest are "following on to know the Lord." Praise the Lord for children who desire to do the will of God! We wanted them to have good educations—I cannot tell you the heartaches I have had over this, nor the prayers I have prayed or of the tears I have shed in pleading for God to open up the way for this to be done. According to human eyes all has been denied save the barest essentials of learning. But God has opened my eyes to see a bit of his way and to understand that in this "His ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts. But, as the heavens are higher than the earth so are his ways higher than our ways and his thoughts than our thoughts."

I believe this and have ceased that anxious pleading for "just a good education." Rather I am praying, believing He has undertaken and will let me see some day, how much better his plans are than ours.

In the meantime we will do our best to have a school, of some sort, for our own and watch for Him to open the closed door to better institutions of learning.

These lives are so very precious, doubly so because all dedicated to His service. Now he already knows just where he has chosen for each to work. Can we not trust Him to give them just the fitting for that work? God is so real and near. It is so sweet to read his word which is rich with promises, and pour out my heart to him. I am asking still for a big revival for this land and for it to begin in this church which has been so torn to pieces by the departing of so many to the Zionists. "The Lord is good unto them who wait for him."

I am waiting but praying, believing and working too.

Must close. It is bed time and this already a long letter.

Lovingly Yours

ELLA

PRAISE FOR THE NEEDY.

An itinerant preacher stopped for refreshment at an Arkansas house, and, among other things, he was served with apple pie. It was not a good pie. The crust was heavy and sour and the apples were hard, but the good man praised it earnestly. The woman of the house knew that she had had bad luck with the baking, and, as she was really an excellent cook she determined that the next time that preacher came her way he should have a pie that was faultless.

He told her when he was to return, and on that day she set before him an apple pie that was perfectly delicious. He ate it, but, to her astonishment, vouchsafed not a word of commendation. That was more than she could stand.

"When you were here before," she said, "you ate an apple pie that wasn't more than half baked, and yet you praised it to the skies. Now you have eaten a pie that no one need be ashamed of, but you haven't a word to say in its favor. I cannot understand it."

"My good woman," said the preacher, "that pie you served me a few days ago was sadly in need of praise, and I did my full duty in that direction; but this fine pie, bless your heart, does not require any eulogy."—*Youth's Companion*.

Rev. F. L. Orchard and family of Woodstock will spend a month or more at Beulah Camp Ground this summer.