

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.

P. O. Hartland,
Via Palpietersburg,
Natal, So. Africa,
September 7th, 1917.

Dear Highway:

I am wondering if there is not some one in Canada or U. S. A. who would like to donate an automobile to our Mission work. We could then more frequently visit our distant outposts.

There is our recently organized church near Utrecht, the journey to and from which took us five days. In an open trap like ours one hardly likes to start on a long trip in the rainy season. Summer hail storms are not infrequent and often very severe. Last year scores of sheep, within sixty miles of this Mission Station were killed by large hail stones. One can never be sure, during our rainy season, of more than a few consecutive hours of fine weather.

The road is a difficult one, extending from "low veld" to "high veld," from the warm lowlands, suitable for winter grazing and supporting untold thousands of sheep, to the cold high-lands, where ice and snow are not uncommon. Heavy snows on the high veld this winter have caused the death of many cattle.

For miles up these steep hills and sometimes down, our horse had it hard with only the trap, while Mrs. Sanders and I walked. Before we started, now six weeks ago, I had a rheumatic hip joint which made me limp with pain, and has confined me to my bed ever since our return. Possibly it is this unpleasant experience which makes me long for a machine that could do the journey comfortably in one day each way, and carry its passengers up and down the mountainous hills.

Since beginning this letter a call came from a sufferer across the Pongola, in the neighborhood of our Church at Ntungivini. She had been unwell and had not eaten any food for five days, was the story her sister told me. Imagine the scene. I was lying on my bed, listening to this tale from the weeping sister of the afflicted one, who stood on the verandah by my bedroom door. Another sister who had been working on this farm, had just arrived and now was crying, while a third girl, who had come with the first named, was quietly weeping in sympathy, for tears are contagious. Even Jesus wept under similar circumstances.

Though I am unable to sit or stand without pain, I felt that with a good automobile, I might have attempted the journey. A good enough road leads right to their kraal. I advised them to go on eighteen miles further for our Paulpietersburg Doctor, who has a motor car, but would probably charge more than they can pay and would not be there in time to do any good. They replied that they could not walk so far, and also that their young sister had only "a little breath in her," when they left. I presume this girl-wife is now beyond human help, as it was yesterday the call came.

A more horrible, helpless death than hers I can scarcely imagine. Her surroundings! What the midwives are doing to help her! What they are saying among themselves and to her, for if they thought she could not live she would die from mental

suggestion, as they always openly express their worst fears and evil predictions would, in this case, form the constant stream of their conversation. No one present has a doubt but what witch-craft is the source of the trouble, and therefore all their efforts will be of no avail. Death is the only possible prospect. Later they will try and find out who cast the spell, and, were it not for the white man's laws, the offender would be put to death.

But I am getting away from my subject. Yes, an automobile can reach all our outposts in the Transvaal, cross the Pongola by the bridge, even when the river is in flood. Not more than twice in three years have I failed to appear at the Communion service there, and that was due to sickness.

And yet, as I mentioned in a recent Highway letter, our work over there has not prospered this year as it should, and as it has on this side of the river. Not that an automobile alone would solve the problem, but it certainly would help.

As you know, we are trying hard to get possession of a building site—there are now negotiations going on to this end.

With a decent church building and comfortable lodgings, combined with the conveyance in question, there will be little excuse left for small harvests.

At home and in this country the auto is made to serve certain ends. Even in war it has its uses and counts (the British tank for instance) as a mighty machine for destroying life.

If one here (not a "tank") could be used not to destroy life, but to increase the yearly number of souls brought into the kingdom of Christ, then it is a need, and though expensive, will well repay the outlay.

Trusting that somehow this need may be supplied, I remain,

Yours in Him,

H. C. SANDERS.

P. O. Hartland,
via P. P. Burg, Natal.

Dear Highway: In my last letter I spoke of a motor car being a probable help in our work, especially across the Pongolo. Last Sunday was my regular appointment over there, and we had a good and profitable day. One woman, almost the first to testify, arose and stated that she wished to "nikela," or give herself to the Lord. Her case is interesting, as she once worked for us as kitchen girl, and for the intervening ten years we have hoped to see her take this step.

We are still burdened with the thought that our work across the Pongolo is not being looked after as it should be. Even if we could have our Paul to visit there part of his time, it would be a help. But at present he is at school in Vryheid, and Sundays helps in the native work in that town. He boards with the Missionary there, Mr. Anderson, and finds much opportunity for preaching in Zule, and like work.

Among our native workers, Aloni has gone to seek employment where he can earn more money than we pay him, while Johan Sukazi went some time ago. Samueli, too, would have gone, I presume, but is not well enough. All his temporal needs we must supply.

This is a famine year in our locality, and Samueli feels it heavily, as his brother, with whom he lives, has a large family of children. Samueli is expected to help his brother in return for the cattle that have recently been paid for the woman who is soon to be Mrs. Samueli.

A European missionary has been trying to induce Samueli to leave us and join him. He offered him \$10 per month and the loan of as many sacks of corn as he needed.

When one of these native workers goes he generally takes with him part or all the church he has been ministering to. So there was nothing left to me but to give Samueli the six bags of corn and what other items he needs. He was nicely fitted out with suit and shoes for his coming wedding. So, for a time, he will not be wanting to leave us for the mere loaves and fishes. But yet, we are face to face with the problem that this instance illustrates. Other Societies pay ten or fifteen dollars a month while we give our workers only five.

Aloni, however, received, together with his wife, ten dollars, and yet he has gone to earn more.

It seems to me that if we are to hold our good men we must pay them a living salary, about ten dollars.

If, because times are hard, you can't afford this, then we must go on and do the best we can and run the risk of having our workers drawn away by unscrupulous missionaries who will gladly buy them and their little flocks.

When we first located here, fourteen years ago, all this region was heathen only. But now there is a good proportion dressed and attending church. Further, as we have mentioned before, proselyting is as bad here now as in the home land, and much worse. There is a growing movement known as the "Ethopianism." They advocate independence of native churches and even political independence—"Africa for the negro" is their text.

Three years since, you may remember, I was much burdened by the thought of the greater need in the regions beyond. The way did not open for us to go, so we have remained on, doing our best here.

We still feel that our present duty is to look after this work, and yet would much prefer working in a more needy field. And since we are remaining on here, we trust you will uphold our hands in this newly developed contingency. To hold our own and make progress, as we always have, we must pay more for our workers.

We have prayed much over this matter and are very sorry to ask more than you have been doing, but trust you will see the need and cheerfully respond.

Ever yours in His service,

H. H. SANDERS.

THE HIGHWAY LATE.

This issue and the preceding issue of the Highway has been delayed on account of the holiday rush.

"Deceit may prevail for a day, but in the long run, the schemer is sure to come to grief. The one who is open, honest, and straightforward is certain to attain ultimate success."