

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.

Balmoral M. S.,
Hartland, Paulpietersburg,
Natal, South Africa,
April 11, 1923.

Dear Friends:

Probably the burden of prayer which the Holy Spirit has been laying upon your hearts lately has been heavier than usual, for He is faithful, and just now the need for fervent and availing prayer is greater than ever.

Since the latter part of February death has claimed many from our midst. Of the death of Mr. Aosthuizen and Mrs. Nolan you probably have heard. Mr. Nolan died just one week after his wife, and was buried by her side. Mrs. Grielzel, another of our neighbors, has been very sick, and either Helen or Alice have been with her since March 28th. Just yesterday she is well enough to do without their ministry. Of course our white neighbors are just as truly "His little ones" as any of the natives, so helping them in their sickness and sorrow is ministering to Him. Alice and Helen recognize this, and have rejoiced in this service for which they are so well fitted. But now that there are so many natives sick, are glad to be free once more, so they can rest up and engage in the work to which they were called and which lies on their heart.

Manjoli Hadebe, brother to our native worker Filita has been mentioned in the Highway lately I think. He lived on our farm, had three wives who are earnestly seeking, was interested himself and had several children who attended school here last winter.

He had been sick for quite a while, and on Sunday Papa and I went to visit and pray with him. After a lovely ride in the cool morning air we reached his kraal, and found his older brother, Mandundu, (there in attendance, medical as well as brotherly) and brother-in-law (come to pay a sympathetic call). On entering the large, cool hut we found him wrapped in a gaily colored blanket, and lying on his straw mat with a low wooden stool under his head for a pillow. Freshly cut grass covered the floor of this rough grain hut, and round him sat his three anxious wives, each with a baby either on her back or in her arms. He recognized and spoke to us, tried to join us in singing, "No, not one" (in Zulu) and "Amened" the prayer. After having done what we could, we left, promising to return that afternoon. The sun was sinking behind the western hills when we came in sight of the kraal. Just then his spirit fled its earthly clay. Soon the wailing of his broken hearted wives reached our ears.

After a short prayer with the sorrowing ones we left. The funeral took place at noon the next day. Aloni helped the four surviving brothers get the grave ready. It was dug in the usual manner with a little shelf in one side at the bottom to receive the body. With relatives and native Christians there were over 20 grown persons present. Sickness and death are great allies to the work of God

in the hearts of these people. A chastened and soft-hearted people listened to the gospel message there by the open grave and the presence of the Holy Spirit was manifest.

What followed was very interesting. The corpse, carefully done up in a winding sheet, was carried out of the hut and to the grave in the straw sleeping mat and gently lowered and placed in the shelf. Then each of the wives came out with a bundle of his earthly possessions which, according to native custom, were to be buried with him. We counted thirteen mats. Some were sleeping mats. These would represent beds. Others to sit upon, take the place of chairs. Upon others they lay their clothes when they disrobe at night. So these thirteen mats represented his bedroom furniture. Two little wooden pillows, a cow-hide shield, his extra sleeping blanket, his "ball-dress" consisting of a skin wreath, and skin loin-cloth, two more loin-skins, a beaded spoon holder with wooden spoon, a knife, pocket book, an old ragged hat, coat and pair trousers, cow-hide wind-shield, and lunch bag, with other little items were carefully packed round him. Then flat stones laid against the side of the "cave" or shelf in which he lay till it formed a good substitute for a coffin. The poor widows, crouched down under their blankets, two handed the things out one by one while Aloni and Mandundu disposed them about the person of the dead husband. This seemed an inexpressably sad ceremony. Then the burial service, and the throwing in of the earth, and the funeral was over.

When Helen and I went over to pray with the widows on Thursday we found they had built up with stones over the grave, and had thorn branches around the "monument" to keep the goats, etc., from knocking it down.

This grave was situated in the very center of the kraal, right in front of the chief wife's hut. They always have their graves in or near the kraal, on account of their superstition regarding "Abapapi." They believe a witch doctor can come in the night, and by means of powerful medicines, get the spirit out of the corpse, under his power and authority so he sends them where he will to make people sick or do them harm. They call these spirits "abapapi," and fear them greatly. So that is why they have this little shelf at one side of the grave, putting the corpse there so when the "mtagati" or witch doctor comes to get the spirit he will fail to find the body. This is also why they want the grave where they can help watch it and the "mtagati" will fear to come.

They believe that none but the very old die a natural death. All others who die they think must either have been poisoned or bewitched. So they go to the devil-doctor or deviner to learn who the guilty party is.

We who live in a Christian land cannot begin to think what an awful thing heathenism is, how awful it is to be "all their lifetime subject to bondage through fear of death," and how great is the terror inspired in their hearts by death. Pray earnestly with us that more and more

may learn and avail themselves of the great deliverance Jesus died to give.

Yours for souls delivered,
FAITH SANDERS.

COTTAGE FOR SALE.

Mrs. Annie Wiggins offers for sale her Cottage at Riverside Camp Grounds, near Robinson, Me. Any one wishing to buy is asked to write to **Rev. P. J. Trafton, Fredericton, N. B.**, for information.

BEARETH ALL THINGS.

How much better it is to suffer wrong than to do wrong. In doing wrong we become guilty and place ourselves under the whip of an accusing conscience; but in suffering wrong patiently we show forth the spirit of Christ. As a sheep before the shearers is dumb, so when scourged before Pilot and when crucified, He opened not his mouth except to pray for his enemies. We Christians are not to go about to secure our rights or to get even with those who do us injury; no, it is ours rather to bless those who curse us and give to the world an example of enduring the wrongs that others put upon us, patiently. I know that to endure is much harder than to work; a great writer has shown how much harder is the position of the anvil than of the hammer. The hammer strikes and swings and pounds with a great flourish, but the poor patient anvil has nothing to do but to lie there and endure the pounding. How often we Christians pray to be made like hammers that we may break in pieces the walls of the enemy, but God only allows us to become anvils and the enemy beats and pounds upon us. How hard to be pounded—to have nothing to do but to endure. "Charity endureth all things."—T. C. Reade.

DON'T SEEK SYMPATHY.

A friend who has had her share of illness and worry, if not more tragic troubles, has an unsympathetic bit of advice, which she is fond of giving in season and out of season: "Never let anyone pity you." I have come to think of it as the distilled essence of wisdom.

Cross the street rather than meet that friend that will screw her face up into an expression of pity, and tell you "how pale you look." Hide yourself from that other woman who is always bewailing your hard lot as the oldest sister in the family, to whom all childish woes gravitate to be comforted, all baby hearts and dolly heads come to be mended, while a hundred little household chores find you the handiest person in the world to attend to them.

These friends mean well, but they are making you grow old and wrinkled. They are drawing down your mouth corners, pursing up your lips as if for martyr fires, training your brows to worried wrinkles. Put a stop to it instantly! Say to yourself a dozen times a day, "I am a happy woman—a lucky girl—if there ever was one!" Aren't you? Make an inventory of your bright things.—Ladies' World.