

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.

Hartland P. O.,
Via Paulpietersburg,
Natal So. Africa,
March 22, 1926

Dear Homeland Friends:

It is beautiful to be back again to our little corner of service for the Lord and we do praise Him for the benefits and blessings of our trip to Durban.

Africa seems dearer and the souls of these black people more precious than ever since our return.

We find the weather has become cooler, although we still have real hot days. There is an autumn chill in the morning and evening which is very welcome to us all, and we thank the Lord for bringing us through another hot season—the worst we have had since coming to Africa. How glad I am that our winters bring us relief and refreshing, although the poor natives find winter much harder on them. They cannot stand cold weather as we do. It is marvellous how they can work in the awful heat. They really are wonderful people in many many ways.

Yesterday at Nell's outpost, the widow reported that her son has been very sick since he went to his white man, and their hearts were very sad because he is so far away from them all. The wife wept and seemed quite broken up. May the Lord use this to soften their hearts. The mother asked for money to go on the train as she longs to see him. Today she came for the money and received it with a burst of grateful tears, saying, "My heart is full of pain with the longing to see him. He has no father to go to him so I feel that I must go."

The dear Lord is gradually wooing that dear soul to Himself. He has such wonderful ways of dealing with these poor black people. It is beautiful to see the tenderness He shows. We see His love and compassion manifested in so many ways. Oh, that we might more fully realize the depth of that wonderful love! This is the prayer of my heart.

Yesterday I went to the chief's kraal to have a meeting. One of his wives (he has sixteen I believe) has asked for meetings there and last Big Sunday took her stand in the Church as a seeker. Magubulundu (the chief) spends much of his time across the Pongola among his other three big kraals. At this one where I had meeting he has just two wives, a very few children, and elderly woman lives with them, a step-mother I believe. I was there the Sunday before we went to Durban and he had arrived the night before. A number of the people had been called for a feast, an ox was killed and they were preparing it for cooking. He excused himself from meeting on the plea of weariness and pain in his body. I wanted so much that he should hear the Word of God, but he lay in the shade of a beautiful wattle grove near his kraal and drank beer I think. Only the Spirit of God can show him the sinfulness of his life, following only the desire of his flesh and reaping results that are already manifest in his debauched face.

The people were swiftly and quietly working, carrying out his orders to the very letter and a respectful atmosphere

pervaded the entire kraal. The few who attended service seemed under a restraint but we had a very good meeting and they listened very well to the Word. At the close of the meeting the chief appeared and invited me to partake of a nicely roasted piece of meat served on a wooden platter, and when I left presented me with a very fine piece to bring home, sending a native girl to carry it, which was very kind of him.

Yesterday the Lord did give us a very nice meeting. Hearts were convicted and I do trust Him for results. Only seven were present besides children, but the Lord was with us and I was truly blest.

It is a long ride and in some places quite difficult, but very beautiful as well. One part of the way is especially difficult and tiresome—a steep, rocky descent, about a mile in length. I do not look around to admire the scenery during that part of the journey I can assure you. I just keep praying that the Lord will keep my horse from stumbling and falling, and try to hold myself in proper position as we go down, and how thankful I am when we reach the foot of the hill (and I am sure Pony is too) where we cross the Intombi River and ascend a much easier hill to Mandundu's kraal. I was so happy that he also accompanied me yesterday and attended the meeting, for you know how we are all so anxious that he shall become a Christian. We have spoken of him to you many times and we trust you are praying for him. He is such a real heathen, but the Lord speaks to him and we trust to see him really saved. His face looked so hungry yesterday and he listened so earnestly. My heart ached with the longing for his soul. He said, "I alone am to blame if I do not get to heaven; it is because I am not willing to enter by this way," and his voice sounded so sad. We can only continue in prayer for him and trust the Lord to bring him to repentance. He is able to do it.

We will be glad when the weather grows cool enough to do more kraal visiting as we have opportunity. We can do very little of this during the intense heat. Nell was out Friday all day and felt well repaid. Our faithful native girl, Umilieta, went with her. She is indeed a comfort to our hearts in every way. One of the most peculiar characters and yet so honest, faithful and true, we have always been able to trust her fully. She was so faithful in everything when we were away, we feel that she really deserves great praise. Our hearts are touched many times by her thoughtfulness. She always reminds me of the faithful servant who was not ashamed to meet his Lord because he had been faithful. She works part of the year for her white man and then comes to us and we welcome her gladly for she is a jewel. She has done this for three years. She prefers to come here, earn money and be independent, rather than stay at her grandmother's kraal, and live in idleness or work for nothing. Last year she went across the Pevaen when Faith had special meeting there for ten days and she was definitely converted, and we pray that she may be among the faithful of the Lord and have an abundant entrance into the kingdom of God. We really would like to have you remember this dear native girl in your

prayers that the Lord may have His way in all her life and that she may be saved from an unhappy marriage which so often happens among the Christians unless they are real staunch adherents to Christian principles, willing to be blamed and even persecuted because they will not hurry and get married to bring in the cattle. Many of them are also too weak to stand out against the attentions of some attractive heathen man and thus they "sell their birthright for a mess of pottage." Another sad thing is that Christian men are scarce in comparison with girls and women. We surely need more Christian men. Continue to pray that this Church of black people may be purified in spirit and have their robes washed in the precious blood of Jesus. How glad we are for the call to work among them.

We are glad to find Faith improved, but she has no real strength and nerve energy to go on in the work which is so dear to her heart. She needs a complete change to restore her to her former health, and we believe the dear Lord will bring this about for the sake of His cause.

Helen joins me in love and we are so grateful for all that is done for us.

Yours in Jesus,

ALICE F. STERRITT.

LETTER OF YOUNG NATIVE WOMAN
TO HER HUSBAND, AWAY AT
WORK.

Hartland M. S.,
Paulpietersburg,
Natal, So. Africa

Mr. Mlauli Mavuso:

I ask of your health. We are all well, but I am not well. I am very much troubled. The person whom you left under my hand has departed, I know what whither. The people say she has gone to her father's home. I am left all alone. I must watch the "amabele" garden from dawn till dark, and there is no one to relieve me while I go away to our gardens by the Pongola to seek food. I am simply starving because I cannot leave the watching and go procure food.

Your father, Nyawana, says: "I found my children no longer complete. One has gone to her home. I have found no fault or quarrel as cause of her departure."

I am perishing of the cold. When you went away, you knew I had nothing to sleep with. Our baby is dead of the cold, for I have nothing but a mealie sack to put over him at night. And you say for me to wait till you buy a sleeping blanket for a woman who has both blanket and shawl! I have no blanket, no mantle, no—nothing at all. I am simply naked and I am the mother of your child.

The money you sent home: 15/- bought a sack of mealies and 15/- paid your debt at Mfundisis. The money had increased, so you must pay 2/- more.

Thanks for the money you sent me as a present. But it has not proved sufficient. With 1/- I bought stamps (to answer you) and matches (to build my watch-fire) and there is only 1/- left, and I have nothing to put with it to buy a mantle. However, I managed to get one myself with the money for my mat grass. You should send me a 4/- mantle, large enough for me and the baby too.

I have an "icala" (court-case or "big