

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.

Hartland P. O.,
Paulpietersburg,
Natal, South Africa,
Feb. 9th, 1926

Dear Friends

"O, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" I. Psalm 107:21.

This is the thought in my heart today as I write to you. Praise to God who never fails to keep His promises and can save heathen Zulus as easy and as good as Europeans.

Sunday, Feb. 7th, was Communion Day with us and a very exceptional one for all who came. It really began Saturday for we always have a conference meeting that day before Communion Sunday.

Many excellent testimonies of victory, of progress, of confession of backsliding from some, and many asked prayer expressing heart hunger to know God. Such a profitable time on that Saturday that it seemed hard to close the meeting, though it was almost dark and some had been there since about 11 o'clock in the morning. Quite a few were at the altar for salvation or holiness of heart. One of the seekers was a woman of past 50 years and had come somewhere near 20 miles. She is from a new outpost that has been opened this new year and a very promising place. Rugged hills and the long distance makes it awkward to get at but what are these things if our hearts really want to lead souls to Christ!

I will cite a case or two of the seekers besides this old lady.

One of our preacher's sons, now about 20 years old, has been a real trial. From early boyhood he seemed to have a most pronounced bent to do evil and has been the heartbreak of his parents, especially that of his mother.

He was one of the early children given to the care of the Church, as his parents are among the charter members of this church, I think, but from about 10 years old stealing, lying, deceiving and vices of the heathen have been his continued companions. He was nearly thrashed to death (I mean rescued from it but threatened) by the parents or relatives of a young girl he molested and his father had to pay a big fine to free him out of the hands of them. He spent some months in jail for complicity in the theft of a bicycle and this time his father could not rescue him for he had broken the laws of the land and was seized by the arm of the law.

For a time after each escapade, he would seem to try to do different and he was getting on fairly well, but hidden sins were not confessed nor restitution made for wrongs done, so of course all his good intentions passed away and then something else happened. For God seems to be doing all He can to save his soul, even from himself.

A year ago a companion got really saved. This boy had been as bad, but he is not so intelligent and smart as the preacher's son so had not so great an influence over others.

Last year he was under conviction and, perhaps would have gotten through, only the price was too great—he has a lot of work to do to confess, restore, etc., and he did none of these things which his

companion did and came through shining. His latest move was to try at least to accept the proposal of a second girl for his wife when he is already engaged to one. This we do not allow. When called to account for it and for trying to leave our Church and give himself to the Zionists he was angry with our Church. Now on Saturday he made a good confession and ceased our prayers. He was at the altar and cried and beseeched God to forgive him, and I believe God did. Two other bad boys were also there and some other seekers. Oh! We do have such blessed times helping such cases to pray through. Sometimes it is a hand to hand fight with the enemy but God does hear prayer.

After a short sermon we had another altar service on Sunday, before the regular service of the day began and about ten souls were there, among them this old woman who is so earnest and so ignorant. A girl, an harlot, also came and cried to God to forgive her—ah friends sin here is often very open, but many hide it as civilized folks do.

Jesus "is the way" here as at home and no amount of spectacular demonstrations can avail. Sin must be confessed, done away with before God will give assurance of forgiveness.

A very great deal of manifestations and demonstrations, prophesying, etc., etc., has been among the Zionists for years and they continually use these to draw away from us our young people, but sad to say, I am told from many sources many see Heaven. I do not see the way there. It is dark, no joyous testimony. Again they seem to teach, one cannot really know their sins are forgiven until death. I have had many answer me thus when I ask them, "Do you have the witness your sins are forgiven?" Their reply is, "I do not know."

What a contrast with the singing, bright and shining testimonies of Saturday and Sunday among us. Bless the Lord! We can know we can have the witness and at death the shining way is revealed.

One thing impressed is all is the deepening hunger upon all classes of people for God and a revelation of Himself in knowledge of sins forgiven. The heathen all about us and far away are continually enquiring from one or the other of our workers and among your missionaries here if we cannot hold meetings or prayers with them. Nowhere we go but hungry hearts are found. No day here at the station but we have them coming for help. They have so many burdens and know so little about God they must be taught everything.

Sunday's meetings could hardly close, and in fact did not till about dark. It was a victorious day and souls were helped.

A widow brought her three children to present them to the Church. There are several more about ready for baptism.

Another very encouraging thing concerning our work is the way the people in the different sections are doing their best to build buildings for services.

The native huts are so hot and stuffy these hot trying days, to hold a meeting for the people pack in till there is not floor space to seat another one. This increases the heat and makes it most un-

comfortable.

At Lydia Nkasi's outpost they have completed a church and paid the builder \$30.00 for his work. It is of stone and a neat little house.

George, our third son, is helping those on his section to erect a grass house. This will be a shelter till a better one can be built.

At Altona we must try and get one built there. Sangweni, the evangelist for that part, has built a square house for himself but it is now the meeting house till a better one can be built.

At Entungwini (these last two places are across Pongola river) they have about finished a sod walled church.

We need one or two other buildings at as many different places.

It takes time for children to grow up and to realize they must help themselves, so with mission work. With some heathen this desire comes earlier in the work than others but we praise God that at last this want-to-help-themselves is manifesting itself among the different places. Often our people are settled on Dutch farms and, especially across Pongola. These Europeans do not wish any permanent building put up by natives on their farms. This makes a great difficulty but on Altona we can put up a good building as the government has given us leave. We should build on there of stone or brick as sod or grass are only temporary affairs.

Lydia's section is located on a Dutch farm but the present owner is a friend of ours whom we have been able to help now and then and is willing for us to build there.

I am not sure at Bucu's, but I think we can build there. It is a new work but very promising. There are several new places which at present seem very profitable and more work than we can do with present number of evangelists. "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest to send more laborers unto his harvest." This is a real need. Pray for this continual revival which is deepening. We want to see several hundred saved this year if possible. At least 200.- It takes time to instruct the raw heathen so they will know what to do to get saved. This is why for a time we seem to have so few, and then there will be 10 or 20 at once ready for baptism. I am so glad I am a missionary. I thank God for all your support and prayers and help. It is the best work and the foreign field is the most needy of any. Let us continue to labour, watch and pray till He comes.

Ever yours in Jesus,

MRS. H. C. SANDERS.

P. O. Hartland, Via Paulpietersburg,
Feb. 15th, 1926

Dear Homeland Friends:

Yesterday morning, when I started to visit our church across the Pongola, the weather looked very rainy. Not till two hours later did the sunshine begin to appear through the clouds. But this, as you may have read, is thus far, a season of drought in South Africa, greatly reducing the farm crops.

As I passed along I met a boy sitting by his fire, in the smoke. A little farther along, and still on our farm, a second boy was roasting a few ears of corn, for his

breakfast, while watching his cattle. For on Balmoral, the native gardens are very close together, leaving but scanty grazing area for nearly one hundred native cattle, while on some large farms that have but few gardens, these small shepherds have it much easier.

Last year was the first time Balmoral has been honoured by a line fence, on one of her four sides. This year another of our Dutch neighbors, who owns an adjoining farm, has warned us that he is about to fence in his farmland, and we must do our half of a second side of Balmoral. This will make it easier for the shepherd boys.

Not only did I see fires of the boys, but smoke was ascending from many gardens of Kaffir corn. For this is the season when this small grain must be watched from the birds. Women, girls and boys, all take part in this work and become expert with sling and stone. At night they bank up their fires and in the early morning put on green grass and raise a big smoke, so the innumerable birds will understand that no trespassing is allowed in that particular garden. Later they roast corn on the same fire for their breakfast.

In their own homes they sit in the smoke during the cold weather, as chimneys are unknown among them. I often think they really enjoy the smoke.

I make good time for about two miles, then strike the steep hills with their stony paths that prevent the horse from going faster than a walk. Some of the trees and shrubs that more or less thereby cover the steep hill sides, are now coming into bloom. One shrub has a brilliant red blossom and bears long bean-like pods that are very hard. Here, too, is found a peculiar rubber plant that blossoms like honey suckle, and produces black berries that the birds eat. So a bird takes one of these berries to eat while it sits on a nearby thorn bush. The seed it carelessly leaves there, not knowing that it will take root in that thorn bush and produce the native bird lime. For the natives prepare this from the same fruit, and catch birds with this glue-like substance.

Daisies are now in bloom; a big red one with a velvety, black heart, is the most conspicuous. Some of the grass blooms are pretty. One has rich brown pendants, while another within a yard has pendants of a glorious golden yellow.

Then as I reach the highest hill this side of the Pongola River, I can see for in all directions. I wonder that I know all this district so thoroughly the kraals of the people, their home life, with the joys and sorrows. Just now some of them are bothered by Rock Rabbits that live in large numbers about two miles south from where I stand. Then away many miles farther are the Pongola Cliffs, the home of the thriving baboons. From early morning till evening these must be driven from the corn gardens. They have little fear of the dogs or the girls, but have a wholesome respect for a native man who can throw a killing stick or a spear very accurately.

A week ago Saturday, George was called to shot one of these that had left his troop and was alone, near our farm. George was unsuccessful, for late in the evening he returned with a native man

who was carrying Mr. Baboon. They say he was an old fellow, driven from the troop by the younger and more active males.

Then this side of the Pongola Cliffs, and away over beyond the "Big Hill," is a monkey infested district. Many have both baboons and monkeys to contend with, as well as the grain eating birds. Their compensation is that they have also plenty of deer and other game to hunt; so they like the district in which they live. Were they allowed fire arms, the baboons and the monkeys, and most of the other game, would soon vanish. While a possible native uprising would be a more serious affair than those of recent history.

And now I descend the last long hill and reach the river, one and a half hours since I left home. I am surprised to find a wash out. The gradual ascent of the farther river bank has been washed away since my last visit. "Blue bock" manages to climb up, but how shall I do when we return?

Another one and a half hours and Entungwini is reached. Five of our native workers are already there, before eleven o'clock; but our meeting does not begin till more arrive, one p. m. My breakfast was light and very early, so now I take my lunch, supplemented by the donation of a cup of new milk, that tastes of the inevitable native wooden milk pail. I presume they have learned to enjoy this flavour, as they say they do that of the strong smelling corn that has lain for months in the cellar, under the cattle kraal, that is proof against weevils and all vermin.

Just as I finish, another native worker, Jona, enters the hut and announces, "Here is a person dead, with a jaw bone." I understand and promise to extract, the offending tooth. Four more follow before meeting and two after. Jona reports four new seekers at one of his outposts, and one at another, for which we praise God. One of them is a young woman who was at our hospital last week with her sick baby. Years ago she made a stand for the Kingdom, but went back to heathenism, and remained until now. Many are the talks we had with her during those years.

The new church building: This is the first time I have seen it. One section of the sod wall is nearly ready to fall outward, while a part of the thatch roof has little slant that it will leak during heavy rains. But they built the best they knew, and we all are grateful for a room large enough and airy.

God richly blessed our service, and all seemed helped. Four recently baptized at Hartland, were received into church membership, while two children were presented to the Lord.

Four young men asking baptism, consented to wait until Easter Sunday, and then come to Hartland.

Already this letter is too long. On my way over I spoke to a man thus: "How is it, I have known you, and you have had the light for over twenty years, and yet you still wear heathen dress." "Yes, that is so," he replied, "but I am a Christian, because I do nothing wrong." "What about you consulting wizards and witches? That is a sin," was my rejoinder, which convinced him of sin. Then I add-

ed, as the Lord gave the message: "But you are condemned for rejecting the light. What about that mulberry tree yonder, do you need to pick its leaves off when winter comes?" "No," he replied, "They fall off of themselves." "Just so, all your sins will go when you accept the light," was the reply that seemed to go home to his heart.

Coming home I met three heathen women whom I have known for years. "How are your twins?" asked one. "One is well, the other has died," she replied sadly. Then I told her of the way she may live so as to meet the lost one and have family reunited in a world that knows no sorrow. How she listened! I am sure she intends to seek the Lord some time.

Yours in His harvest field,

H. C. SANDERS.

Hartland P. O.,
Paulpietersburg, Natal,
Jan. 10th, 1926

Dear Friends:

It is good to trust in the Lord and watch how He fulfills His own promises.

"Trust in the Lord and do good. So shalt thou dwell in the land and verily thou shalt be fed." Here is a promise we have been proving continually ever since we first came to Africa.

It is, too, a land "of the shadow of death" at times and all sorts of dangerous snakes and insects abound. A land of burning sun and drought some years, and then prices of food mount up high till a 200 lb. sack of corn will bring anywhere from ten to fifteen dollars.

Famine conditions are pitiful here, because the old, and young children suffer the most. It seems always the woman's lot to have a hard time, in heathen lands. The men can have an easy time and some seem to care little for some things till the food problem becomes pressing, then they get up, leave for work and promise to send home money as soon as they can get it. They are fed in towns and while at work but what about the wives and children and the old mothers.

Often they must beg or borrow food and know not where the next day's supply is to come from.

Of course the missionaries are besieged with requests for help, to lend food or money or to give them work so they may earn food. One is sometimes put to one's wits ends to help. Imagine the pastors of churches at home having to help their people to find food for themselves! But when the lean years come this becomes part of the missionaries' care.

Rains have come at last and people are so busy planting and rushing in the crops as there is scarce time for the food to ripen before the sheep come down from high veldt for winter grazing and take all they can get of garden stuff.

But the prospect is a poor crop.

Our new members need much prayer. They know so little of the word and must be continually helped and encouraged. But we praise God for what has been done and for the advancement made and are looking up for greater blessing this year. "Hitherto ye have asked nothing, etc.," is ours to claim and receive, for God loves to give largely.

Yours in Jesus,

MRS. H. C. SANDERS.