

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE

Hartland,

Sept. 22nd, 1927

Bucu Chap. III.

Dear Friends:

On arriving home I remembered there was to be some cutting out and sewing of garments for the little folks of the "Ummumzan's Guza," head-man's children, from some things I had brought with me and could spare, such as a sheet, etc.

The mothers of this kraal wanted to go to the nearest store and buy more material. Last year I had donated to Meleli's children a garment a piece, the year before the same. One feels so sorry for little naked children running around in the cold. This time Paulina told them they must provide garments. "Are you not ashamed to see you have done nothing to clothe them this year, when she has helped you both years before when she visited you?"

Well they seemed to get new light and said, "If only we had a little more money they could do it, but we have almost nothing. If the "Inkasikazi (queen) will loan us five shillings we can manage."

When I heard about it I loaned it, even though it took my last penny.

Next morning they were up and away very early and in the afternoon, when we got back from visiting we found the material waiting for us.

They must be all cut out and sewed by hand that night, so we had a sewing bee and pressed everybody into service that knew how to take a stitch.

No chance to get word home, nor to hear from them as Pongola river was full. A woman had gone over before the rain, promising to bring me a few things from there, on her return. Among the necessary things was a tiny clock, as my watch had gone on a strike the day after I left home, and I had no means of telling the time of day.

However, I fell in with a few ways of wisdom these people have besides the sun—one can remember the time it rises and sets, and set their mental time-piece accordingly. The crowing of the cocks are at stated intervals, such as about 6 a. m., 10 a. m., 12 noon, etc. This can become a great help if one observes well. They tell me a certain little red-bird also has certain set times for his songs, so the shepherd boys know by it the time to return with the cows to be milked at about 10 a. m., from the morning browze, as they are turned out from the cattle yards early in the day.

Saturday, July 31st. It is so wet and slippery and cold we cannot get away to visit the far-away villages of Umquebelo's, where two widows live. However, we do get off about eleven o'clock, and, because the clouds look so heavy, we think we may have to turn back.

Our animals, my horse and her donkey, have to be kept on the grass as road and path are really dangerous.

Because of wire fencing of the farms, we must take a longer route and finally leave our steeds at a kraal.

Imagine my surprise to meet the wife of Mateu Shabanu (he has separated from us you remember). She seemed pleased to see and talk with us. A young man came forward, took our animals, unsaddled them and led them away to feed and we had no further care of them. Then they showed us a path and a way to crawl under the fence. After

walking some distance we saw a group of people carrying stones from a hilly ridge near. At once Paulina says: "They are moving. I wonder if we can get them for a meeting!" Some women came to meet us, one being one of the persons we had come to visit. They all, men and women, seemed highly pleased that we had come and kept marvelling at the interest displayed in them by so coming.

Now at the moving of a village, building, of the cattle, kraal and carrying of the stripped frames of their huts, there is much work to be done, many people have come, the beer has been made for the occasion, so a prayer meeting in the midst of such important work seemed out of place, when one considers the occasion and the people. But we also had very important work to do and this was the day. We had travelled a good 12 or 14 miles and had as many to get over to our sleeping place. When asked if they could leave off they replied, "You go on to the old kraal and we will come in a little time." So we went another half mile, feeling perhaps this was a rather failure as likely the men would not turn up. The devil is very handy with his suggestions at all times.

Ont the outskirts of the village we came to a small hut frame just being completed. One man was inside, another sat on top the dome shaped roof, outside each tying the framework of small poles into shape and security. It looked very interesting to me and as I watched them my tongue was busy enquiring if they knew God, did they love Him, were they ready to die?" etc., etc. Beautiful opportunity to preach Jesus, and they seemed hungry hearted.

Presently the crowd we had left behind came on, the whole bunch, and we all crowded into a hut and had a beautiful meeting.

A young girl, daughter of one of the widow's, is dying of consumption, but is a follower of Jesus. How she prayed!

Umquebelo, the head-man, has five wives; wants to be a Christian and almost gave himself up as a seeker that day.

Little beer had been drunk so all had their senses and we proved God true and the devil a liar, for it was a very profitable time indeed.

The bride of the kraal has been married some time and no child. This is, perhaps, the greatest sorrow a Zulu woman has. She told me all about it with tears. Lately a sister of hers, a Christian, died very suddenly, and she herself it under conviction. We urged her to give herself up as a seeker, but she was not quite ready. She and another walked back with us as far as the fence.

With a chant and a rush a number of the men caught up with the frame of the hut and hurried it away. It is a rather peculiar sight and always reminds me of some fanciful animal having many feet. Up hill, down to a stream, across it and up a very steep place and rough with stones, but they stop nor stay not as if the carrying was easier for the hurry.

On our arrival to the village where we left our horses, Harriet asked me if I could not help a child with a running ear? "Certainly I can as I happen to have my medicine case with me (2 small boxes in the saddle-bag), so I leave ear-drops and pull off a bit of wool from a scarf about my throat to put into the ear to keep out the cold. Then our surprise was great." "Will not the Inkasikazi have a cup of tea? We have no real tea, but I have

made some from wasting corn till it is good and brown."

Now we were thirsty and gladly partook of their hospitality. It was a real earthenware cup and saucer and a spoon and the tea was very palatable. How good of the Lord to have him (the young man) do such a thing! Our steeds all saddled and bridled, were awaiting us, so we hopped on, said good-bye and were off for a race with the fading hours of the fast closing day.

Though almost dusk when we reached Banjwa Dhleimini's kraal we feel impelled to call and see how he is and have a word of prayer with him.

We find his household awaiting us and all eager for prayers. His face had healed and his tongue enough to talk well. His two wives, a sister and an elder brother and himself made up a small but interesting congregation and the Lord blest us.

On our departure he hurriedly caught a fowl as a little gift for us.

Our greatest concern, in the gathering night, was to get over a certain piece of very rough, stony country before it got too dark to pick our way lest we lose the path. This we succeeded in doing, but arrived at home after dark indeed.

My horse, I found out, knew the way and went as straight back as if he had lived in that country for years.

My horse boy had snared a quail and had roasted it for me. We did enjoy it!

Found letters from home and sad news too. One of our Dutch neighbors, a young couple, had lost their dear little new baby. Our hearts ached for them.

MRS. H. C. SANDERS

Hartland Mission Station,
Natal, So. Africa,
Ovt. 18th, 1927

Dear Friends:

In her report this morning, Jostina told of a preacher who has been visiting her flock. He lives across the Pivaan river, and belongs to a certain "Nazerite" Church that is strongly Ethiopian. By this term is meant "Africa for the black man." There are many different native churches that advocate this as one of the tenets of their faith.

Of course their object is to get the church members away from the European missionaries. To accomplish their ends they teach many strange things contrary to the Bible. Among other errors they preach that all the natives belonging to churches under European supervision will be slaves to the white people in heaven.

But this one, Jostina reports, teaches also that the natives may be Christians and yet not leave any of their heathen customs or sins. They should continue wearing their same heathen dress, go on with the weddings, beer drinks and multiple wives, just as their fathers have always done.

This bold teaching makes a strong appeal to the natives, and especially the men. For polygamy is the greatest hindrance we meet in preaching the gospel. Another item of Jostina's report illustrates this. Luke, one of our church boys, has sisters, and thus the means to pay for more than one wife. His mother, also our church member—"almost hates me," says Luke, "because I will not agree to take many wives." So here is where this Nazerite steps in and tries to influence our Christians to join his church.

Then Jostina tells of her other troubles,