

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.

Hartland Mission Station

My Dear Faith:

You will be interested to learn that I have visited your representative, Jesina, at her home. The real occasion of my visit was the marriage of Ephrim Zikalala to Jenta Shongwe. She can write nicely and has even studied a little English, thus qualifying herself as a possible native teacher. She also aspires to be one of our Bible women, whereas he has declared his purpose to become a preacher.

Last Sunday I went over with Josepha and Lydia in time for the service at the kraal of Absolom, the cripple, but the marriage was Monday, just before sunset. Both the bride and groom were dressed quite like Europeans. But the home and the hut she leaves is only the native style and very poor at that. Where she with her sister had slept was a tiny hut, only nine feet across and six high, badly made, of the usual wattle and thatch. She had done her best to make it attractive and comfortable. There was even a rude bed of rough poles, about three-quarter size, where the sisters managed to sleep on a grass mattress.

I had the honor of occupying the room and sleeping on this bed Monday night. It proved to be the most uncomfortable place I ever slept. In spite of frequent changing of position during the night, I endured aching equal to a bad case of rheumatism, and this did not entirely cease for some hours after I left the wretched bed. The other furniture consisted of a large chest used for her clothing, and a box which serves as a seat and for her sister's scanty wardrobe. The table was small, rough and ready to fall, but its cloth had lace all around its border. The library consists of half a dozen school books, while, for the want of something better, the walls are decorated with about eighty letters, I presume the total correspondence the sisters ever received. The envelopes were just stuck in under the wattle poles, without any attempt at design.

And yet to her visiting friends, as you know, this room would appear very grand. There was a second small table at the head of the bed, with a large colored handkerchief as a spread. A suspended paper bag probably held a best hat.

There was a glass bottle serving a milk pitcher, while the sugar was served in a rather nice glass butter dish. I saw two white enamel plates, two cheap cups and saucers, knives, forks and spoons, hot water kettle and teapot, and all tending to show their desire for a better way of living.

But the bride that came from these extremely poor conditions was superior to her surroundings. Her dress was pure white, like the veil, all combining to make her very beautiful and charming in the eyes of him to whom she gave her heart and hand. To me it was an object lesson I can never forget. If only the bridegroom had been taking her to a home a thousand, thousand times better than hers the figure would have been nearer complete.

But a beautiful sunset, just then glorifying the western sky beyond the mountainous hills helped my imagination to picture the glad coming of our loved and longed for Lord and Bridegroom. O, the joy unspeak-

able and full of glory, increased by the long waiting and the infinite contrast between the earthly home and the heavenly.

Yesterday's experience emphasized the contrast between conditions here and there. For there we shall never attend a funeral. Before I had time to get in the house, upon my return home Tuesday, it was "You are needed at once in the hospital hut." You will remember Paulina's sister-in-law, who had already lost two children. Her third was buried yesterday, Wednesday. Her's was an impossible case and only with difficulty could the mother be saved.

Our native workers came to help and dug the little grave where the other two natives were buried, near the old orchard. It was a sad procession that followed the tiny box with its bouquet of sweet, pale, pink roses and white winter daisies. The young mother so greatly desires a child, like all these Zulu women do, and this one was such a large and beautiful baby girl.

There was a strange coincidence at Jesina's Sunday evening. A young wife there presented her proud husband with both a boy and a girl. She too had great difficulty, and further gave the sad history of having lost her first child at its birth. But this time the doctor had arrived and was able to render the imperative assistance.

In the same kraal lies a woman on her face with her whole back a raw sore. Her dress caught fire and before it was torn from her by the father of the new twins, she was burned almost to death.

They had already gotten medicine from our Dispensary, and now I was able to instruct them as to proper treatment.

At the little grave yesterday, Aloni, in prayer, was thanking God for sending a person here who could do a work that the natives could not do: Save the threatened life of an expectant mother. But my mind looked ahead, and I wondered as I have many times before, who will take my place as doctor when I am gone.

There is no question as to the need. It pays any society to have a medical man even to minister to their own missionaries. Think of sacrificed lives in Eastern, Western and Central Africa, noble, consecrated missionaries that might have lived to serve, had there been proper care at hand.

Even the heathen natives suggest to me that I teach one of my boys, while one has thought Norman the most likely. But time will tell us what God has in mind on this line.

Your Jesina kindly gave me her hut and bed for the first night, Sunday, where I was comfortable. But poor Lydia was with others in a grain hut. Next morning she said that they had lain on the corn which, being unshelled, was so hard and rough that she was unable to sleep. This after seven hours in the saddle left her tired indeed. So the next morning, when Joseph and I were starting for home, she was still sleeping to make up for lost time.

On our way over to the bride's from Jesina's Monday we were waylaid by two of our church women who had cooked for us a feast (idili), consisting of stewed beans and porridge of pumpkin and corn meal.

Here they showed us great heaps of corn they had just reaped. This they said was more than they had room to bestow. They had to build new grain huts to hold the bumper crops. The reason for so much blessing, they believed to be that last year from their very poor crop, they had given a full

tenth to the Lord. And these women with heathen husbands, and they, themselves, so recently saved. This should shame us, who are so much more enlightened. How many of our people feel that they can not afford to give God his tithe.

Five hours it took Joseph and me to travel home. As we came down the mountainous slopes to the winding Pevaon River and faced the great hills on the other side I was reminded of the dream I had on that hard bed. In the dream I saw two horses guided by leading strings, soaring above the hills and tree-tops and thye came gently down just in the right place.

When we had crossed the Pivaan three times and had reached the top of the great hills at Pinz Rand, I again thought of the strange dream; the horses had gotten from mountain top to mountain top, but not in the quick way of the dream.

"I told the Makoti, (Paulina's sister) you would be here when she needed you," was your mother's greeting. It is good to have faith in God, and have Him plan and direct our paths. For He runs all His providence on schedule time. He is never late, and usually his trains come in just as the hour strikes. Notice Haman in the outer court, already to ask the life of Mordicai that he might hang him on his seventy-five foot gallows. It was the next day that Peter was to have been beheaded, when God stepped in and opened the prison doors. Paul was near Damascus, ready to arrest the saints of the Most High when God's train came in with the shining headlight.

The Spirit of God guided Philip to the eunuch and caught him away so that the train arrived on schedule time at Azotas.

So we are to believe God, that "the steps of a good man (or woman) are ordered of the Lord." We may say "a coincidence" or "fortunately we happened along just at the right time."

We have just heard of the "flying fool," of world fame, who has been the first to cross the Atlantic Ocean alone. He stated that he would trust to his "luck."

But we are in the Royal line, made kings and priests unto God, and builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit; builded on the foundation of the Apostles and prophets Enoch, Elijah and Philip took trips in the airship of glory and did not need to "trust to their luck."

God's plan and providences for all His prophets and Apostles always blended and dovetailed as perfectly as the temple of Solomon that fitted and was builded together without the sound of a hammer.

Since God so guided and worked through them who are the foundation. Then is it difficult for us to trust Him for guidance, who are the superstructure? No, we are in the Royal line, heirs of God and joint heirs of Christ. Divine guidance is only a small part of our glorious inheritance. God still lives and is with His humble followers.

In my dream the two horses were directed by unseen hands that held long guiding lines. Sister Alice said I had not been needed before, though she had stood faithfully by a night and a day.

Of late I have had much blessing and light on the two texts: 'The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him,' which means the expectant, undoubting awaiting of His incoming train. The other text has a suitable connection: "He that believeth shall not make haste." The best example being our