

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.

Hartland Mission Station,
Natal, Jan. 4, 1927

Dear Highway:

Yesterday was our Christmas, or rather New Year's celebration at Entungwini, across the Pongola river. The day before, we held the Communion service. The baptism had to be postponed as the candidates did not arrive. Thirteen children were dedicated to the Lord, their parents taking the usual vows, to bring them up in the way that they should go. Solomon, our blind evangelist, stood for his sister's infant, at both its parents are still heathen. And yet they both wanted their children to be Christians. They are like an old man I was speaking with, who said, "Yes," I am a Christian because I have ceased to offer sacrifice to our ancestral spirits, and all my children attend church."

After meeting, Tomasi, our coming preacher, said to me, "There are two girls outside who want 'Nikela Ebandhlem.'" So I followed him out and around by the side of the church, where stood two smiling young girls. "These," said Tomasi, "were afraid to stand up in the meeting." Their names were duly taken, and they now are pledged seekers.

Early next morning the bleating of goats was heard as they came from different directions. Six were slaughtered and cooked, together with riced or crushed corn.

"Here comes another goat," said some one. We all looked and saw a half grown, grey goat coming along, with a short piece of grass rope around its neck. "No, that is not a goat, it is my dog," said a woman. And went on to explain, "its mother died, and now it follows me about wherever I go. It is a great trouble, as it finds its way into my grain hut, and the gardens. We can not make it stay with the other goats." Later on it came in our church, got up on the seats and refused to be driven out. It found some stray kernels of corn on the floor, and visited all around, showing fight to any one who opposed its will.

No one thought such a thing out of place, but rather homelike, as the goats, sheep, pigs and fowls are allowed much liberty in the native huts.

There were nearly four hundred at the Xmas feast and gospel service. Prayer was answered and all the meetings were wonderfully blessed of God.

I was late getting away for home Monday afternoon, and had a race with the gathering storm. It overtook me at the Pongola River, but with a good horse and rain coat, I fared better than many others who were thoroughly drenched.

And yet all are thankful for the rain, as it breaks a long drought, and saves the crops from dying. Thus far, this summer is the driest and hottest I have ever seen.

Samueli has a lame foot, made worse from his long walks. We are waiting upon God in faith that he may have a horse. Isaya had a gift of one recently. Joseph and Lydia both have horses. An old one, given to us last year, we have just passed on to Jona. From twenty to thirty dollars will buy a young horse for Samueli, enabling him to do more work for the Master.

Most of the reports from our various native workers are encouraging. We are asking our Lord for an abundant harvest of

souls for this new year, both in the homeland and here.

Yours for Jesus' sake,
H. C. SANDERS.

Hartland P. O.,
Via Paulpietersburg,
Natal, S. Africa,
Jan. 7th, 1927

Dear Homeland Friends:

We look out upon the New Year with hope and courage trusting in the promises of God. We have seen much to encourage our hearts this year, many definite answers to prayer, and He has led us forward. We do praise Him and I believe He will give us "much more" during the days of 1927. I was given this beautiful verse for the new year, "the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee: Go up and possess it. . . . fear not neither be dismayed," and how I do praise Him for it. How His word strengthens our souls and gives us new courage and increases our faith! I believe we are going to see a beautiful year of salvation in Africa. I am so glad for the privilege He has given us of working in a little corner of His vineyard, and would not be elsewhere in the world today than in Africa.

Christmas was a time of intense heat as usual and we found it very trying to the physical, but the Lord gave us blessing and we pray that His own blessing may rest on every effort put forth at that busy time. I never saw the church fuller than it was Christmas Sunday morning it was certainly packed, and the afternoon service was held out of doors, as was the regular Christmas service. I expect the others have written about it all. There were many lovely testimonies that day. One dear little woman stood with uplifted hands and tears streaming down her face, praising Jesus with the glory of the Lord upon her. The Lord spoke to hearts through that beautiful testimony and many eyes were wet with tears. It is so wonderful what the dear Lord does for those natives and we do praise Him. I should like to tell you a little of Makunzini Mhlope's story which he related to us a few days ago. We have spoken of him before—the man from Nell's Sunday meeting place, who gave himself to the Lord so whole heartedly when his father died.

He with his sister and a young boy relative were among those who were baptized on Christmas Sunday, and it has been a great blessing to their souls.

About ten years ago Makunzini or Paulos as his name now is, heard Lydia preach from Matt. 25:31-34 and his heart was struck with fear for he knew that he would surely be among those on the left hand of the Saviour at that day.

He was engaged to a heathen girl, had paid in all the cattle for her, but went to her, told her of his desire to be Christian and wanted that they give up their heathen ways and seek the Lord. She refused and was very much against his doing so. A Christian woman advised him to go on as they had planned and wait for her to become willing, as arrangements were all made for their wedding. This seems very poor advice but was probably given according to the light she had, so poor Paulos did as many others have done—chose the girl and neglected salvation.

During these ten years the Lord has often spoken to his heart, reminding him of his

heavenly calling, causing his heart to ache with the emptiness of his life and to hunger for righteousness. His father was a dear old man, much loved by his wife and children (we also thought a great deal of the fine old man) and when in his dying hours he told them he was going to the Lord, the heart of Paulos was more deeply touched. The following Sunday he gave himself to the Lord in spite of his hard hearted wife. The dear Lord graciously met his soul with forgiveness and peace, and he has gone steadily on, a really beautiful character. His wife still drinks her beer, snuffs tobacco, and says her heart is still hard, but we can see she is softening.

The day after his baptism, some heathen relatives came for him to accompany them to a witch doctor where a great heathen performance would take place, to find out who caused the death of a young child in one of their kraals. His refusal brought a great storm upon him, but he was kept in peace and quietness of heart. He thought of Jesus and his temptation after His baptism and was glad to suffer for righteousness sake. They were all very angry with him, and his wife said she was going back to her own people. He said, "It does not matter, I have chosen the Lord and have taken my place among the people of God. I listened to you once and threw away my Lord, but now you will find me like a cement wall."

He told us this with a shining face, so glad that Jesus had brought him out into the light of the gospel. He feels that He cannot praise the Lord enough for what He has done. For three days his wife would not speak to him but his heart was full of joy. His mother and two other women, who want to be Christians, and are trying in their own strength to follow the Lord, were very quiet when the people were blaming him for deserting them. This is an encouraging sign, and they do respect him. The young sister is going on nicely with the Lord.

I wish I had time to tell you more of the sweet experiences the Lord has given them. In his quiet way Paulos is continually witnessing for Jesus. He is truly a bright light in the darkness around him.

I had hoped to write a longer letter, but it is time for the post to close, so I will write another time.

We are having some cold days and very refreshing nights for which we do thank the dear Lord. It was so very hot just two days ago.

May the Lord's blessing rest upon our home church this year in a special way, we pray.

Yours in His happy service,
ALICE F. STERRITT.

ENCOURAGE CHILDREN

Children need encouraging even more than grown-up people, just because they are ignorant and inexperienced and naturally forgetful, and therefore so easily led off and carried away by the passing amusements of the hour.

But you must not doubt their conversion, or be led away to pronounce it all a mistake, because they display faults, or are occasionally naughty, or disobedient, or irritable, or bad-tempered; that is to say if they are occasionally overtaken and overcome by their besetting sins.—War Cry.