

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE

Altona, Dec. 14, 1936

Dear Homeland Friends:

Have been intending for some time to write but we have been extra busy, and the days slip quickly by.

We have had an extra cool spring and summer so far, never since our arrival here in Africa have we seen it so cool. We did not get the usual hot spring winds and dry time, the rains came very early and in abundance almost in floods and the gardens in some places were fine but a big hail storm came and destroyed the green fruit and pumpkins and corn. The gardens can be replanted, but there is no remedy for the fruit, but as the natives say, "We cannot blame God as He knows best". We feel very thankful for every cool day for the heat these days seems to finish our strength.

The natives all around us are ploughing and planting and as usual doing a big lot of shouting at the oxen for they do not plough without shouting at them very loudly.

We had a very nice native wedding in November. The bride who is a girl in our church has had a six years' engagement, and has kept the Christian rule without any fault. We tried to give her a very nice wedding which was due her. We decorated the church and seats of the bridal party with crepe paper, and everything looked very fine indeed fit for a white bride. The only drawback was the rainy weather. Mr. MacDonald managed to get here by car on Wednesday to marry the couple, returning home early on Thursday morning.

A native wedding usually takes three days. After the wedding ceremony which was very nice, the bride goes back to her father's home where they have a big feast next day. Then the groom and his friends takes the bride from her father's home. This wedding being an extra nice affair, the friends all came here to the church and Thursday night was spent in singing to the bride and groom. They had special songs. The young married couple had special seats facing the friends. The bride looked very nice in a white silk dress and veil. The groom also looked very fine in a nice suit and white gloves.

The friends were very happy indeed and during the evening they gave the bride many presents. It was a very nice time for us all. The natives do love a wedding. On Friday the feast was at the groom's home where the bride again received more presents. They had more singing and a little service. Our two preachers were here with us to accompany the wedding party these days. After a little social time the crowd returned to their homes, after having three days of happy celebrations.

The school is now closed for the Christmas holidays. We had as usual a very fine school closing, about three hundred people present. The church could not hold them all. The heathen as well as Christians always come. The school exercises, singing, drill and the industrial work which was on exhibition was very nice indeed. The forty children looked very neat in their school suits which were made in the school as well. We had a Christmas tree for them with candy and presents for each, which made them happy. Then the day was finished with a feast which was provided by the children. Four goats and twenty-two hens and a lot of stamp made a fine feast for all. There was a very happy spirit felt with thanks to all.

We are very fortunate in still having our good teacher with us. We are very thankful for her. The people all have respect for her.

George Sanders surprised us that day by coming and spending about four hours with us. We were very glad to see him.

Three weeks ago we had our usual annual meeting together to thank the Lord for His year's blessing, and all to give of their means for the Christmas feast. This is always a very blessed time in the Lord as they always seem to give with all their hearts which is very sweet to us. Over two pounds were given which will enable us to buy a beast. Several goats also were promised, besides about twenty hens. May the Lord bless their hearts is my prayer.

In last Sunday's service at Emozane another woman gave herself to the Lord. There have been several in that section this year give themselves to the Lord and boys also.

We are still without a preacher at this place but we are hoping that Johanise will soon be back with us again. Mosi Nkonza, Aloni's son, about twenty-three years old, has been with us for five months now. He is a good boy, a great comfort to us and very bright; can do most anything even to making coffins when the call comes for one.

Wishing you all a very Happy New Year,
I am,

Yours in Christian love,
HELEN M. STERRITT

CORRESPONDENCE

Houlton, Me.

Dear Brother Dow:

Please find enclosed money due on Highway. Although I have no church of my own denomination I am enjoying God's love and peace in my soul. We have a Union Church and often we have the Christian Alliance man out here. We enjoy his preaching, although I get real homesick for some of the old services like we used to have in Gordonsville. Hope Mrs. Dow and family are well.

Your sister in Christ,
MRS. ERNEST TURNEY

Marysville, N. B.

Dear Highway Readers:

Greetings in Jesus' Name. How rapidly the months are passing. Our church year has passed the halfway mark. We will be planning for another Camp-meeting at Beulah so soon.

It has been a busy year for everyone. The regular routine of church services, the special efforts put forth in revival work, the quarterly meetings and Young People's Conventions, make a full year indeed.

I trust with the numberless calls that are coming in for consideration we are not forgetting the all-important work of Missions.

May I remind you once again that there is a little section of country in the southern part of South Africa that God, in His good providences, has given to the people known as the Reformed Baptists.

In the early days of our denomination there was a desire born in the souls of our fathers to have a part in carrying the glad news of an uttermost salvation to the unchristianized parts of the earth.

While some offered themselves as workers and others were ready to bear the heavy expenses involved in such an enterprise, God led to the place above mentioned and we seem to hear Him say, "You have asked for a part in this great work, here it is. These souls I entrust to your care. This is your field of labor, 'Occupy till I come'."

My friends, what a responsibility we incur

when we stake out a parcel of country and promise God that we will become liable for the best interests of its people, spiritually and otherwise. Our presence to them becomes an open channel for the highest and best that Calvary has provided and God can give, or it becomes an irretrievable curse, to which God would be justified in saying, "Cut it down. Why cumbereth it the ground?"

We stand responsible before God and the souls in Africa, whom our work effects to render service satisfactory to the Lord or else tell Him we are ready to release our claims and clear the fields for others who would take our place.

To the first, we as lovers of God have assigned ourselves, to the latter, we have no need to submit.

Let no one think from the tone of this letter that I am pleading for a lost or dying cause.

We never have had more reasons for encouragement in our African work. Letters from our Missionaries state that the spiritual condition of the work was never better. Faithful native workers are pressing into new territory with an effective ministry. Scores of new members are being added to the churches, and all this is very encouraging. Besides the Government is showing appreciation for the work that is being done among the natives.

While two of our missionaries are obliged to come home because of ill health we find ourselves able to replace them with two more efficient and well qualified workers namely: Grace and Charles Sanders. You will note by a recent issue of the Highway that Grace and Charlie will sail for Africa on the 25th of March, D.V.

Financially, last year was the best year we have had for some time. When the needs were presented through the Highway your spirit of liberality responded admirably. The result was a very great increase in missionary funds.

God has been good to our land. During the Christmas season it seemed to me the message of "Peace on earth good will toward men" has not found expression from so many hearts before. And rightly so. The man who isn't thankful to God these days for a land of peace and order must be incapable of that soul faculty.

I feel to say with the Psalmist, "What shall we render to God for all His benefits?" This ought we to do—pledge ourselves in renewed service in the great harvest fields of the world.

How shall we join hands for a great missionary offering again this year? To appoint a certain day in which all our churches unite is inconvenient in some ways. Some churches can raise money at one season of the year better than at others.

Let me offer a suggestion. Seeing that this work needs to be given special prominence in all of our churches, and especially is this so this year owing to the fact we will be under heavy expense sending out two workers and bringing two others home, this is my suggestion: Let every pastor arrange with his church, or churches for a great missionary offering on a Sunday the most convenient in your particular field. Set the day as soon as you can. Make special plans and encourage a great day.

Some of the pastors have already written me re this matter. This has greatly encouraged me to set before you again this year the needs of our Foreign Mission work.

Let me assure you once again that the members of the Mission Board are no wasters of your money. We purpose to be as conscientious in the expenditures of your money as if we were handling our own. We may err in our judgments, and doubtless have, but I believe every