

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE

Natal, South Africa

Dear Friends in the Homeland:

It is a long time since I have written or rather since I have sent a letter to you. The last letter, written over six weeks ago was mislaid, so I guess I had better not send it.

We are rejoicing over the coming of Brother and Sister Kierstead, for the way the Lord is blessing them, and for the way the people are receiving them. Being the son of missionary parents is a great asset for Brother Eugene. Several baptized by his father have lived to see him, and it is a great blessing to them.

It is a great inspiration to these people to find the children of their beloved missionaries taking up the work carried on by their parents. "Child of the Umfundisi," they say, which is about equivalent in English to saying, "Child of our father." Mrs. Eugene is very very well liked.

The crowd that was present at the Welcome service at Hartland M. S. was not as big as it might have been because of our being delayed in Durban so some of them came in vain the first time . . . still we had a very good crowd. At Altona I never saw a larger crowd except at Christmas time, and we had a wonderful service there. We have had wonderful meetings in every place that we have been together, and all over our work, our people are rejoicing because of their arrival.

Our field is a large field. People in the Homeland cannot understand how much it means for the missionary to visit all the outposts, nor how often he must visit them. How many sick and needy he must attend to. Then when you speak of distances, or hills . . . you have no adequate idea of what they are. I took Brother Kierstead into the country to Maritzburg on business, while we were in Durban. He came back, and his words to his wife were, "Gladys, you never saw hills or even dreamed of them!" Since then he has learned by travelling up some of them and winding along the bridle paths on horseback what a task it can be to travel fifteen or twenty-five miles in this country.

One thing in his favour, and the favour of his horse, that he is strong and light. It means a lot to them both. I used to ride in to town and some of them used to say, "Get off and walk" . . . thinking that I was too heavy for the poor horse . . . many is the time I pity the poor horse that has to carry me around.

However, it is very necessary to visit frequently every outstation and to build up your people, even though they have an evangelist.

However, we thank God for all that we have, for the progress that is being made, and for the wonderful spirit of unity that prevades our entire work. We thank Him for the loyalty of our people and the depth of Spirituality among our workers . . . though they are not educated . . . some of them can barely read, yet they are used of the Lord to win souls.

When one understands the situation . . . the gross darkness which was their natural state and in some cases the cruel persecution through which they must go. Take a man about fifty or sixty who gives his heart to the Lord . . . the heathen excommunicate him from all of their dealings, treat him as a child, and in business affairs where he should be consulted, he is simply cast aside. The insults

and injuries visited upon him, in some cases result in failure, but despite all this, many come through shining.

Two weeks ago we had a wonderful experience. I baptized a woman who must be between 100 and 110 years of age. She remembers when the first white people came to this district (and they celebrated their 100th anniversary a year ago). She gave a very clear and definite testimony of sins forgiven and assurance of her entrance into Heaven. Up until about a year ago she attended services regularly which meant a walk of about ten miles each way. How long this walk took her I do not know, but she was a regular attendant.

Another most unusual experience I had the same week was of baptising in the river which was called "The River of the Witches." This service taking place on Saturday, we had some snaps taken. If they come out good I'll send some of them home. We had a splendid service there.

There is so much blessed and interesting news that we have to tell, but time and space do not permit.

Trusting that you will pardon this long delay, and that God's richest blessing may rest upon your Camp Meeting, and your entire work, I remain,

Yours in Him,

D. M. MacDONALD

SABBATH OBSERVANCE

Your committee on Sabbath Observance reports as follows:

There seems little in the way of definite statements we can make concerning the increase or decrease of respect or proper observance of the Lord's Day throughout the land.

However, we do know that this beautiful day of Spiritual privileges and improvement is used by worldly people, including many professing Christians, as an opportunity for outings, picnics, visiting and motoring. By those greedy for gain, it is used as an opportune time to sell everything which can be concealed or camouflaged behind a lunch counter. In some parts, games and sports are countenanced, and beyond a mere empty show of worship, it is hailed as a holiday.

While we do not believe that we can make men righteous by legislation, yet we do believe that an arousing of Christian sentiment, a determined stand and straight forward action by folk who call themselves Christians, would command much respect for the day and preserve its peace and sanctity for those who really want to enjoy it. An incident in a small town of our province shows us what can be accomplished by a little sentiment and action. The Temperance League appointed the three pastors of the town to visit the stores, requesting the proprietors to post notices to the effect that their stores would remain closed on Sunday thereafter. Although some sales had been reported previous to the visit, we are glad to note that the business men had respect enough to comply and keep their doors closed.

Reading from Neh. 13:15-22, we have a very interesting account of his attitude regarding those who failed to observe God's law. He states that even after the gates were ordered closed for the Sabbath day, that the merchants and sellers of all kinds of ware lodged about

the city wall once or twice, and then he testified against them, and furthermore he said, "If ye do so again I will lay hands on you," and "from that time forth came they no more on the Sabbath." Would that we had more Nehemiahs! Then would we have the walls of our Christianity rebuilt with watchmen posted to maintain them as God has commanded.

The criticism may come that we as Christians are under no obligation to keep the Sabbath as that was a law which pertained only to the Jews. Truly we do not keep a Jewish Sabbath, but a Christian Sabbath, such as Paul and the other apostles and disciples observed. The principle of the day of rest goes far back of the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, even to the day of Creation, when God completed His six days of labor and rested on the seventh day and hallowed it. It is a fundamental principle and token of our respect, love and worship of God that we hallow one seventh of our time.

Quoting from a reliable authority, "He (God) blessed this day and sanctified it, because He had rested upon it. From that time He set it apart, and appointed it in a peculiar manner for His worship. And the Hebrews afterwards, in consequence of this designation, and to preserve the memory of the Creation, sanctified, by His order, the Sabbath Day or the seventh day, by abstaining from all work, labour, and servile employments and by applying themselves to the law, and to prayer. And at Mount Sinai by a positive, moral and perpetual commandment God hath appointed one Himself; which in the New Testament is called the Lord's Day, and is to be continued to the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath."

Thus looking back we keep in memory the Creation, and looking forward we have in mind that "Blessed and eternal rest provided for all the godly wherein they shall be perfectly freed from all worldly labours and troubles."

The Sanctity of the Lord's Day is one of the bulwarks of our Christianity. Let us guard it carefully, teaching it to our children and to the stranger that is within our gates. Let us say from our hearts with the Psalmist, "I will delight myself in thy Commandments, which I have loved." "Moreover by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping of them there is great reward."

Respectfully submitted,

MRS. HANDLEY MULLEN,

MRS. F. A. DUNLAP

MRS. J. A. OWENS

PRAY FOR THE IMPOSSIBLE

Somewhere we have heard this strange message, and with all its audacious boldness it rings true to the highest possibilities of God's Word. It is easier for God to do a difficult thing than an easy one. The very structure of His infinite nature is such that He lives in the realm of the supernatural, the omnipotent, and the infinite. When we ask Him for some easy and trifling thing there is always danger of our mingling with our faith a certain amount of human reasoning and looking quite as much to second cause as to God. But when we come out into the clear light and the high altitude of the impossible, then there is no place for anything but God, and He is untrammelled by our human reasonings and limiting unbeliefs.—Alliance Weekly.