

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE

"Concord" Missionary Home,
Durban, S. A., April 17, 1939

Dear Highway Readers:

It has been a long time since I wrote last. Many things have taken place since then, and now we are safely in Durban. We do feel to thank the dear Lord for His leadings thus far and for the safe journey across the seas.

We shall never forget the kindness of the Saint John friends during our stay there as we waited for the ship to be loaded. We stayed in the home of Rev. and Mrs. H. S. Mullen and we shall always remember how kind and thoughtful they were to us. We want to thank them again, and also the dear people who made our stay among them so pleasant.

We left Saint John about midnight the 9th day of March and by morning we were near the shores of Nova Scotia, and that was the last land we saw until we reached the west coast of Africa. One early morning it gave us quite a thrill to see land not far away. It proved to be the Sal Is.—one of the Cape Verde group. About two days later and just two weeks from the day we left Saint John, we arrived at Freetown.

I cannot describe my feelings as I looked at that beautiful city and realized that it was Africa—the place that God had called us to. It was extremely hot and uncomfortable, but we enjoyed our day there while coal was put in the ship. Freight was taken off and more loaded on.

It was not safe to take the children ashore on account of fever, etc., but Eugene went for a few hours. He found it a most interesting place as it is made up almost entirely of natives.

During the next two weeks the trade winds kept our ship rocking just enough to keep us all feeling rather uncomfortable. Again it was exactly two weeks until we reached Cape Town. The lovely albatross birds followed the ship the two days before we reached there. They would fly very close to the boat and we enjoyed seeing them so much.

We arrived at Cape Town in the night, and when we awakened on Good Friday morning we were anchored in the harbor and a very beautiful picture met our eyes. The tablecloth of mist was well spread over the world-famous Table Mountain and we thoroughly enjoyed once more seeing land. We were not able to land all that day but on Saturday we spent all the day at the docks as the freight was removed from the ship. The children had a fine time running on land once again.

As I looked at Cape Town and realized that very soon we should be at our destination and be ready to work as best we could for our Master in this land, my heart cried out to the Lord for His special guidance and help. I went in my cabin and picked up my Bible and it opened to Prov. 3:23-24, and I read these words: "Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble. When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid; yea thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet." Then in the 4th chapter, the 11th and 12th verses I read again: "I have led thee in right paths. When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble." I so praised God for all His help and for this special blessing just at this time when I especially needed added assurance of His love and care over us.

We left the Cape that evening and early

Easter Monday we wakened to find ourselves at Port Elizabeth. Again we were able to go ashore for a few hours. We visited the famous Snake Park while there. It was a most interesting sight to see those deadly poisonous snakes being handled by the keeper.

We left Port Elizabeth that evening and by morning we were in East London. It is a lovely little city, most unusually situated and very hilly but with nice beaches, etc. From the docks we had either to hire a taxi to take us around and up the hill or go up 148 steps. The taxi was expensive so we chose the steps and were astonished to find ourselves just about in the heart of the city, by the time we had reached the top.

We took the children to the beach and they had a nice time playing in the sands and watching the sea lions and penguins that were in large cement squares filled with water near by.

That night we left East London and arrived at Durban on Thursday about two o'clock in the afternoon—just five weeks to the hour from the time we went aboard the Calumet in Saint John.

With the except of Reginald, who was a very good sailor indeed, we were all not very well for most of our passage across the seas, but it was wonderful that in spite of it we were never really homesick or lonely. It is wonderful how God more than makes up to us anything we give up for Him.

To our great delight, Brother and Sister MacDonald and their little ones, Maryella and Daniel, and also Johanesi, our native evangelist from Altona, were there to meet us. The MacDonalds welcomed us most heartily. The children are getting acquainted and enjoying each other's company too.

Sunday morning my heart was so blessed as I attended a little Zulu service for the servants here at Concord, the beautiful Missionary Home at Durban. I could only catch a word now and then that I could understand, but when Johanesi prayed in closing, that prayer so touched me and helped and uplifted me, and the tears flowed as I knelt near those black people and thanked God that He had counted me worthy to be called to this land and to this people to tell them of Jesus.

We also attended a Salvation Army service and part of a Zulu service. As I looked over that large audience of black people I longed to be able to talk with them. I could understand so much better something that I have heard my mother-in-law say in Canada. She said that often as she struggled to get the Zulu language she felt she would be willing to be black if only she could talk to the people and tell them the message of Jesus.

We have met many missionaries and attended meetings and sweet seasons of prayer here at Concord. A sweet spirit seems to rest over this place and we have enjoyed the fellowship.

We will be at Hartland for next Sunday—Big Sunday—and the next week will reach Altona. We long to get settled and get busy in the work of the Lord. I cannot tell you, dear ones, how our hearts go out in love and sympathy to these black people. May God help us to always do our very best in His service.

We remember you all daily in our prayers and pray that God will continue to bless our dear homeland people as He has done in the past. We intended to write to several while on ship board but I know, dear friends, that

you will understand when you know we were not able.

Yours in His service,
GLADYS KIERSTEAD

Natal, South Africa,
April 16, 1939

Dear Friends:

How thankful I am this morning that "God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him." Acts 10:34-35. When we face these Zulu people—some raw heathen, some dressed in European dress professing to be Christians, but with no heart experiences: some in heathen dress having been baptized as they are, never having repented or separated from their sins, and made leaders in their church—the fact comes forcefully home to our hearts, Christ died to save such. Yes, just as much as He did for you and me. It is then our responsibility to enlighten these who have not had the light or are being deceived by "false prophets." If we fail God, He will find someone else to do this. For He came to seek and save "the lost." When, a few years ago, I read part of the life story of Messrs. John and Bona Flemming, how that God re-called a busy missionary from the African Mission Field to preach in their hometown church, and that through him they found salvation, I felt "someone must have disobeyed God." God surely sent someone there first but he did not obey, so He had to find another who would obey, so those men could be saved from the depths of sin and made bright shining lights in this world of darkness.

Are we obeying God? Have we gone when He sent us? Did we give when He urged? Did we speak when He whispered, "Talk to this soul about Me?" Have we prayed, have we interceded in agonizing prayer, when He spoke to us? God help us. By Thy grace we will quickly obey Thee.

The past weeks, though so busy I cannot write to you dear ones personally as I long to, have been blessed ones to my soul. One morning I asked God for a soul that day. A short time later some native girls came to ask for work. I took them down in the garden and as one stooped to cut down the high weeds, I questioned her and found she had been given to God when an infant, brought up in a Christian home, but had no heart experience, though very hungry. So we knelt down in the weeds and she sought the Lord. A few weeks previous to this, a boy was suddenly taken with chills and high fever. I put him to bed in the Hospital and told him the serious condition his one lung was in and warned him to prepare to meet God. He had backslidden. Faith talked to and prayed with him and that night a stranger asked for a night's lodging. I had prayers with them in the Hospital room and both prayed earnestly for reclamation from backsliding. The following morning the boy's lung was clear and he was free from pain, temperature normal. He coughed very little and felt well. Surely a miracle had been wrought. When God used the rod, he repented, so it was lifted. Praise Him. A few days later, during the Quarterly, he and another boy definitely sought God, and received the witness.

Yesterday a heathen man came for medicine. I asked him what church he attended. He replied, "I don't attend church." Then I asked, "Do you not want to go to Heaven?"