

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE

Altona Mission,
Dear Highway Friends: 10-3-40

Many of you are interested in our mission work and its problems I know. This time I shall try to tell you about some of the problems that polygamy makes for us.

As most of you know the Zulu people believe in a man having many wives. Here wives and children mean wealth and prestige.

Wives are bought and occasionally sold. A wife may cost from ten to twenty cattle in this area according to her attractiveness, her usefulness, or her family pedigree. Once she is bought, she is given in marriage to her husband and becomes his property. She is expected to obey him and be subject in all matters. If she disobeys or displeases her lord she is quite likely to be beaten or otherwise punished. Neither she nor her children are at liberty to "believe" or become Christians unless he gives his consent. He also tells them to what church they can go. A wife's duty is to cook and care for her husband, tend the gardens and bear children. Many wives are valued according to their ability to have children. A barren wife is often despised and may soon expect to be deposed in her husband's affections. Zulu men are anxious to have boys to perpetuate their name and give prestige; the girls bring them cattle or wealth. A curious custom connected with a girl's engagement is that her suitor must pay her father about \$25 to open his mouth so that he will talk about the cattle and marriage. Another curious thing is that the mother is given one cow for her trouble in raising the girl and looking after her health.

This desire of men to have many wives and children makes it hard for us to persuade them to become Christians. It is also the reason for many a backsliding.

The wives also create a problem: which one is really his wife? Which ones can we take into the church? Should they obey their husbands or the church first? What if the husband throws one of these wives away? Should she as a member be permitted to marry again? What if a widow is given to her husband's brother who already has a wife or wives? Should a woman who is a chattel be penalized for what her owners make her do? How far can we expect these women to break with age old customs and laws?

Polygamy also gives us trouble with our church girls. There are not enough Christian boys to go around. Should they be permitted to marry heathen especially if they will not promise to take them as their only wives? What if a Christian girl or even a seeker enters a harem, must she forever be kept out of the church? What if a girl allows herself to be courted by a polygamist or a would-be polygamist?

Not only do we have such problems arising constantly, but there are many others resulting from harem life. The husband favors one wife and her children. Wives become jealous and quarrel. One wife tries to poison a sister wife or her children and so on.

My, the trials for the missionaries and the troubles and the heartaches of the women and children concerned! It is only the grace and power of God that can save or keep women in such an atmosphere. The worst of it is that they seem helpless to free themselves. Custom and property rights hold them

hard. A break with these means becoming outcasts not only with their fellows but many times with their closest relatives. Then should they free themselves where would they live; how would they support themselves, and who would speak for them and protect them? Would they not soon become harlots?

Pray that polygamy as well as slavery may soon be abolished and that Christ's great Kingdom may come on earth, the kingdom of love and light.

Yours in Africa,
EUGENE A. M. KIERSTEAD

CORRESPONDENCE

Crawford, Maine

Dear Highway Readers:

I feel greatly impressed this morning to send in my testimony. This is a beautiful morning out here in Crawford, the birds are singing, and it is so peaceful and quiet. God's beautiful sunshine is permeating the earth, and so it is in my soul this morning. God's peace is abiding in my heart. He has put a new song in my mouth, praises unto Him who can make us conquerors through His precious blood and the word of our testimony.

I have so much to thank and praise Him for. He has blessed me in so many ways, and best of all has put His healing hand upon me. I am so glad He can heal the body as well as the soul. Praise His name.

One year ago today I was in the hospital; again in November I had to go back and was seriously ill; how I prayed it would be God's will that I might be taken, the outlook was so discouraging, but God's faithful children united in prayer in my behalf and for some reason He saw fit to spare me, to touch mine infirmities, and today I have a new song, a brighter future to look ahead to, and an experience in my soul of what God's love and grace can do for one such as I, that I wouldn't exchange for the wealth of this world. True, the refining fire is hard to pass through, but praise His name, He has the power to burn out all the dross and establish us and make us new creatures in Christ Jesus. "He leadeth me, O blessed thought." It may be like the hymn we so often sing, "Some thru' the waters, some thru' the flood, some thru' the fire, but all thru' the blood," so I praise my Saviour this morning for the sanctifying power that cleanses us from ALL sin and washes us white in the blood of the Lamb. Am looking forward to meeting you all at Beulah.

Yours for the Master,
MRS. HARRY WILSON

Brother Dow: Southampton, N. B.

Find enclosed \$3.00 due on my Highway. I always enjoy reading its pages.

I am trusting in Jesus for all things.

Your sister in the Lord,

MRS. JAMES CURRIE

Dear Friends: Amherst

Yes! the box for Africa got away, and what a wonderful box it is!

Only one parcel arrived too late to get in, and I was so sorry.

It sailed April 25th on "Dardanus" of the Elder Dempster line, and must be well on its way there by now.

After it had sailed I received a letter from

Grace mentioning something concerning it and saying how much she needed things for her work.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank each donor and also friends outside for their gifts, which made it possible to pay all expenses this side of the ocean, and I hope also those on the other side, letting the box be a free gift.

"What I gave, I kept."

"What I kept I lost."

"There is that scattereth and yet increaseth: there is that withholdeth more than is meet and it tendeth to poverty."

Yours in Jesus,

MRS. H. C. SANDERS

Saint John, N. B.

Dear Highway Readers:

Through the columns of our paper, The King's Highway, I wish to report the special meetings conducted in the R. B. Church, Saint John.

Rev. H. S. Dow was our evangelist. We wish to thank the Lord for such as our brother.

The ministry was of a high order, greatly appreciated by our people and those who came as visitors went home with the consciousness that they indeed had been in the presence of God.

All didn't yield to the invitations and wooings of the Holy Ghost, but those who did found our Christ to be all, yea more, than had been promised. Several were definitely blessed.

By God's help we as church and pastor, expect to make real progress in Spiritual issues.

Yours for souls,

REV. J. A. OWENS

Millbridge, Maine

Rev. M. S. Dow:

Dear Brother in Christ: I believe it is the Lord's will that I should send in a brief report on His work in this part of His vineyard. This is a new field here, having been opened up a year ago last October by Rev. E. R. Bradley, Jonesport, Maine.

And also we have had lots of bad weather through the winter months and the distance is about sixty miles round trip. Our brother has only missed one or two Sundays.

Our Sunday school was opened over a year ago. About forty-five here every Sunday. Last fall two more Sunday schools were opened up on back roads about three miles distance that brings the total number for the three schools up to eighty. About forty of these had never been to Sunday school before.

So we feel that the Lord has richly blessed us in this part of His work.

We had our first prayer meeting about a year ago and have had one every week since, and although the attendance has not been large, God's blessings have been on us and we have received much help from these meetings.

We have had much opposition from unbelief coming in, making it hard to preach, pray or even testify. However we are not discouraged with the result of our work here.

We have a few people that are faithful and loyal to God and seem willing to do their part to help keep the work going on.

Brother Bradley has been faithfully preaching the word to us and holding up the high standard of holiness.

I want to say in behalf of the people how thankful we are that the Lord sent Brother and Sister Bradley here to open up a holiness