

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE

Altona Mission,

Dear Highway:

I recently had a dream of home. I thought I was in a prayer meeting at a Quarterly Meeting. Several gave very helpful testimonies but I didn't seem to be acquainted with them. Then Sister Alice Tedlie spoke and I was thinking how good it was to hear from one whom I had known for a long time, when I wakened and found it only a dream.

But it was a helpful dream and reminded me that it was time to remember the friends in the homeland with another letter.

Christmas mails are still coming. Our Christmas season is very long but we welcome every letter that arrives and enjoy them more, I think, because of their long journey. I do want to thank all who have helped to brighten this Christmas season for us. Cards have been many and beautiful. We have received over one hundred so far. The gifts of money have helped greatly as everything is so very expensive here now.

We have had a whole week of rainy weather. Our water tanks are full and overflowing. We have not had such late rains, in other years. Eugene wanted to go to Metula's section for Sunday but he will not be able to. The river is very full again.

This week I had my S. S. on Thursday afternoon, as Friday was a holiday and some would be going to their homes. It being Good Friday we decided to have one large class. The teacher read about the sufferings and death of our Lord and explained it so nicely. After he finished I spoke a few minutes. I also spoke of the cruel death of Jesus and then of the fact that we were to have holidays for Good Friday and Easter Monday. I told the children that I wish to know Jesus better and I asked how many would raise their hands with me, and in so doing we would pledge ourselves to take a little extra time during this Easter season to learn to know Him better. I was quite touched when nearly every hand was raised. About eighty children were present. May the Lord help these dear children to become personally acquainted with Him while they are still young. We have a great responsibility, as S. S. teachers, to rigidly instruct those under our care.

At present, we are all well but many are sick about us. Johanesi's and Trifinas's baby is very ill with whooping cough, and very many other children also have it. I am keeping Kenneth away from them as I do not wish him to get whooping cough at the beginning of the winter.

May the Lord bless you all, in the homeland.

Yours in His service,

G. M. KIERSTEAD

Altona Mission

Dear Highway:

The mail today brought us letters, Christmas cards and a Highway, so my mind turned towards Canada and our sailing. It hardly seems possible that four years have passed already! On the other hand it seems as if we have been out here for an age!

When my mind turned to the letters and the many and substantial personal gifts that you have sent, my first thoughts were to thank the Lord, the Giver of every good and perfect gift, and then to thank you, the givers. We cannot easily express what each letter, card,

and good wishes mean to us missionaries so far from home and friends. It is like a ray of sunshine in the midst of darkness or a shower after a drought.

Missionary life is most lonesome as one has very few real friends. Brother Sanders once expressed it by likening us to bats. The birds say he isn't a bird and the mice say he isn't a mouse—he isn't one of us. Many South Africans don't want too much to do with us because we associate and work amongst natives and most of the natives, are offish and rather suspicious of us because we are white.

Perhaps most of you may not understand the reason for all this but you may understand to a certain extent if you know that Europeans and natives have, in the not too distant past, fought and wrangled; cruelty and barbarity ruled the day. Even today the conquered writhe and murmur under the yoke, and the conquerors feel they must be firm—even hard—to keep the pot from boiling over. The relations between Europeans and natives is a real problem out here. Looking at the question from one angle one pities the native, but looking at it from another angle, the European is struggling for a home, even his very life. He, because of his inferior numbers is afraid of being submerged or blotted out in the presence of hordes of blacks and semi-savages.

Needless to say this element makes it very hard to get very close to natives so that you can win their sympathy and win them to Christ. So many treat the Gospel with contempt, and answer that it is the white people's religion and the white people's God, and that they don't want to have anything to do with them.

In spite of all of this, the Gospel works; souls are won; people are transformed; miracles are performed; it is truly the power of God, nothing else.

It does not matter if we are misunderstood; if it is lonesome, so long as God has called us to the work. On earth we may be "fools for Christ's sake," but in heaven we shall sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. Hallelujah!

Yours in the fight,

E. A. M. KIERSTEAD

Altona Mission

Dear Highway:

Our Altona Quarterly has just closed so would like to give a short report of our meetings and deliberations.

The following officers were appointed: President, Johanisi Ndhlangamandhla; vice-president, Philemon Dhlamini; secretary, Andrew Mtetiva. Those in attendance included: Rev. Charles Sanders, Paul Nkosi, Andrew Mtetiva, Philemon Dhlamini, Johan Maseko, Johanisi Ndhlangamandhla, Daniel Sukozo, Jimson Ngomezulu, Absolom Sibiya, Paulina Lukele, Triphina Msibi, Talida Nzima, Thyphina Shabangu, Losaya Nziba, Tulina Nkosi, and others.

Two women were appointed as Prayer Helpers (Abatandageli), two others (a man and woman) were disciplined for breaking church rules, and two babies were presented to the church.

Although the attendance was below the average throughout the quarterly, the Lord blessed us with good messages, conviction, and a large number at the altar services. Brother Sanders conducted the Communion service on Sunday.

We desire (D. V.) to have our yearly Con-

vention at Hartland beginning the first Tuesday of July. We plan to ordain two native preachers as Elders at that time.

Continue to pray for your Mission work.

Yours in Divine orders,

E. A. M. KIERSTEAD

Hartland M. S.,

Dear Highway Friends:

We have had more rain than usual for this time of the year, so the hills and valleys are clothed with a more rank growth of the wild grasses. It is cool and there is still some moisture on my window on the inside.

It is nice to see the new plaster on the walls, the job is not complete yet but what has been done makes things look a lot better. The old Mission house has had its storm-side wall renewed with burned brick, made on this Mission farm. The renewing of this wall will make the old house able for another long term of service. When the inside of this new wall has been plastered and painted with our local clay muresco, and quite a few others fixings completed it will seem quite homelike again.

Another Native child has passed on. The child's uncle came for the bit of calico to be used as the final burial garment. It is common practice for the dead to be wrapped in white for burial. I understand that the old custom was for the grave to be made so as to admit the corpse in a sitting position and that a cow-hide formed the final garb. Now the grave is made similar to the way we do it. Only a few natives, about us here, can afford a coffin of rough planks, so they have made a good substitute: a small room is dug out of the ground, large enough for the body, it is made the same length as the grave and is an extension dug out of the side and at the bottom, making a sort of L. Small poles, or stones of the correct length are leaned against the entrance, after the body has been placed in a lying position, and when the earth is returned to fill the grave this little room is thus kept from being filled with earth and acts almost like a coffin.

For several months now we have found it difficult to obtain Zulu Bibles and Testaments and even Hymnbooks. It seems that the Scriptures are scarce in other languages too. A famine for the Word of God: is this what we are coming to? I have suggested to our Native Christians that we had better take good care of the Bibles and Testaments we have. Last mail brought me a very welcome surprise: two small parcels of tracts and the Gospel of St. John, in Zulu; they are from the Scripture Gift Mission, London, England. It is an unsolved mystery to me as yet, just how they obtained my name and address and why they sent me these. I suppose that some friend of mine, perhaps now in England, or possibly even the British and Foreign Bible Society, from its Durban branch had these valuable scripture portions sent to me. What I like about the tracts is that they are mostly Scripture quotations. This lot of Scriptures will help to feed the hungry multitudes.

I enjoyed the Altona quarterly very much and feel that all who attended at least had the opportunity to make spiritual gain. The aggressive spirit that manifested itself in our midst, aggressiveness towards the pushing out beyond our present frontiers to the needy heathen, was one feature that was very gratifying to sense. "Let us not be weary in well doing for in due season we shall reap if we faint not." When the church