

MISSIONARY PAGE

A Crisis And Challenge In South Africa Mission Field

Rev. E. A. M. Kierstead

Until recently education, among the natives of South Africa, has been an important and vital part of the mission program—and still is.

At first the government was little concerned with native education but as time went on the government gave more and more financial and supervisory aid until the major cost of education was borne by the state. In some cases the state even built school buildings and set-up government schools.

The time has arrived when the government wants to take over the whole school system and gear its program to its policy. This means that missions are to be relieved of their schools and this avenue of teaching and propogating the gospel to a large extent. Some missions will be hard hit as much of their teaching ministry was done through the schools.

What makes the situation much more critical is the fact that classes are held in church buildings or in classrooms built on mission stations and on mission owned land and if these buildings continue to be used as school buildings undesirable teachers and undesirable practices will gain entrance into our mission premises. In the past mission control has minimized undesirable influences. The present change may make it necessary to build separate schools or separate mission buildings.

Our government-aided schools at Altona, Entungwini, and Kipunyawo will be affected the most as these schools are on government sites and could be ex-appropriated, although we trust not as the sites were given for church purposes and school is held in church buildings. What is more likely to happen is that the natives will be required to build alternative school buildings on separate sites but even that will affect us as the children will no longer be coming to the mission stations daily and we shall no longer have the monopoly of entry to the schools for gospel purposes.

The schools policy is part of the government's policy of separate development for this multi-racial society. Schools will largely develop in native areas and will be run by natives for natives. Eventually white people including missionaries will not be allowed permanent residence in native areas. This will eventually mean that we may have to find new homes for those who have hitherto lived at Altona and possibly Hartland. The Group Areas Act makes provision for the demarcation of separate areas for separate races. We trust that we shall still have the occasional right of entry into other racial areas for gospel purposes.

We thus will face many problems—how are undesirable practices and teachers to be removed from our church buildings, what alternate means of contact with the children can we find, where are our missionaries going to live if they can no longer live amongst the natives in native areas, where are finances coming from for new mission houses and for transportation to carry missionaries from their new homes outside native areas to the areas where their members and churches are, and so on. Even though these are not urgent problems today they will all have to be faced in time.

By getting sites in the villages of Louwsburg and Paulpietersburg we have begun to tackle the problem of relocating our missionaries but we shall need to get other sites and, what is more costly, we shall need to build parsonages and outbuildings on those sites.

Pray that we shall choose new sites wisely and that these new changes can be made without hurting our mission effort and program. Pray that the missionaries may adjust easily and wisely to these new changes. Pray that the native church will hold steady. Pray that the necessary funds will be forthcoming to carry on in the new set-up.

GOD CALLS WORKERS

When God wants a man to do important work for His Kingdom, He does not call the idle, but He calls those who are already busily engaged in useful service.

Amos was busy with his herds when God called him.

Elisha was plowing in the field.

Joseph was on a mission for his father.

Moses was keeping the flock in the desert.

Saul was hunting his father's lost asses.

David was tending his father's flock.

Daniel was serving the king.

Peter and James and John were fishing.

Matthew was collecting taxes.

Saul of Tarsus was zealously stamping out what he thought was heresy.

So it has always been. Those who are performing well the lowly tasks of life are those whom God calls to the greater tasks. They have been tried and have not been found wanting.

This truth is one that should bring new courage and inspiration to the one who is of necessity engaged in humble tasks. It is not the big task that counts in God's plan for us, but the doing of our task well, whatever it be, whether great or small. The doing well of the lowly task fits one for the accomplishment of the greater. "Thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things."—W. T. McElroy in *The Christian Advocate*.

BIRTHDAYS OF OUR MISSIONARIES AND FAMILIES

January 26	Reginald Kierstead
February 13	Pamela Joyce Sanders
February 14	Harold Kierstead
March 2	Nina Jean Smith
April 11	Mrs. Elsie Morgan
April 19	Mrs. Gladys Kierstead
April 25	Glendon Kierstead
May 3	Jennifer May Kierstead
May 5	Esther Susanna Sanders
May 27	Shirley Kierstead
June 22	Rev. Chas. Sanders
September 4	Mrs. Myra Sanders
October 5	Joy Louise Sanders
October 8	Rev. Eugene Kierstead
October 11	Rev. William Morgan
November 17	Thelma Rose
November 26	Kenneth Kierstead
December 13	Mary Aileen Campbell

Msobotsheni Church Dedication

Rev. E. A. M. Kierstead

A new transmitting and receiving station in a new and promising area has been built and officially opened at Driefontein or Brereton Park whichever you prefer to call it.

This new Gospel station was largely made possible by the Wood Island church and the church building is a memorial to the late Eugene Wilcox of Wood Island. Others who had a share in making this outpost of the Gospel a reality are:—Maple Ridge S.S., Mrs. Kingsley Frost, Young People's Society, Millstream M. S. and Y. P., Mission Board, and African church. The total cost to date has been \$985.45. This includes the cost of a parsonage as well as a church.

The church building is built of earth-cement brick made on the spot and is 20' x 30' in size; the windows are large and of steel; the roof is covered with corrugated iron; the floor and plaster consists of a sand and cement mixture.

The preacher's cottage is built of the same materials except for the fact that the two front rooms have a thatch roof; it consists of three rooms about 12' x 10'.

This new station is built on a 20 acre site that we bought a few years ago in an area demarcated as small-holdings for natives. We already have 3 or 4 outposts and a private school in the area. At the moment Absolom Dlamini, Absolom Ngivenya, and Stephen Mkhaliipi are our preachers in that area.

This new station is just about 25 miles east of Piet Retief and is 65, 70, and 75 miles from Altona, Paulpietersburg, and Hartland respectively. It is just over 40 miles from Ermelo where we are engaged in building a similar station.

In the course of time we should have a missionary and mission house in the Msobotsheni-Ermelo area to help evangelize, organize, and supervise the spread of the Gospel around these two centres. Pray that the Lord of the harvest will send us the right man and family and the necessary means to build and cover the area.

JUST "THE BAIRN OUTSIDE"

In one of the stories of O. Douglas is a character called Bethia, who is housekeeper to the minister and who is a very enthusiastic collector for missions. One day she said to a friend, "I've collected for foreign missions for near fifty years, and it's no a very encouraging job whiles. The maist o' folk are no heeding much about the heathen they've plenty to do wi' themselves. I mind once being in a hoose, an' the wife couldna see her way to give to missions at all. While we were speaking, a bairn gae a cry, and she startit up thinking it was her ain wee lassie, and then she said relieved like, 'It was just a bairn outside.' An' wi' ower many folk missions are just 'the bairn outside.'"

Evangelism may not be the only task, but it is the main business of the church. The Methodist communion can live without costly buildings, elaborate rituals, expensive choirs, and highly-developed ecclesiastical machinery, but it cannot speak for God unless its heart is on fire for the redemption of men.—Bishop A. J. Moore in "Central Certainties."

The King's Highway