

Missionary Column

NEWS FROM GLENDON AND BETTY KIERSTEAD

It seems hardly creditable that we are already in the month of May. How quickly time marches! The pressure of the multitudinous duties on the Mission Station takes its toll in energy and strength. We were very pleased to be able to take four days off from the school for a short visit to Johannesburg.

CHURCH WORK:-

The Altona Area continues to show progress, and is always a source of encouragement to us. During the Christmas Conference, Amos Mobkazi was ordained, and is helping us in this area, though he is still attending Bible School himself. He is located at Kipunwayo, seven miles from Altona. The students of E.H.B.S. go out each Sunday to some outpost, and do prove a real blessing. Attendance has increased in a number of the local churches.

Encouraging reports reach us from other parts of the Field. Bro. Charles Sanders wrote not long ago about a fine baptism in Ermelo. Time would not permit my telling all of encouragement from each Area.

IKHWEZI:-

The Ikhwezi is a new venture of our African Conference, Ikhwezi is the official name chosen from the publication of the Native R. B. Church. (The name means "Guiding Star".) For many years we have needed a publication in Zulu, but this need has only become a reality this year. The African Conference appointed a Committee to prepare and circulate a monthly publication, and this is being done. The present subscription list is about 80. Owing to the cost of printing we are at present doing the printing by mimeograph. A new mimeograph has been ordered to take the place of our 30-year old machine. Please pray for this vital project, that it might be supported, and that it be used of God to reach, and spread the Gospel of Christ.

E. H. B. S.:-

On February 4th the doors of E.H.B.S. swung open for its 6th year of ministry, to 27 students. Another student registered later bringing the total number of students taking the full course to 28. There is an additional class that meets only on Saturday. By including them we teach 32 students.

There are some 75 students registered in our Correspondence Department. It is serving Christians of many churches, and is offering four subjects, all vital for any soul winner! Doctrines of Salvation, Christian Perfection, Homiletics, and a course in Sunday School work. It is our prayer that the seed sown will bring forth fruit for the Master!

Owing to the strain of the work, and the lack of staff we did not reopen our Night School Department.

E.H.B.S. is playing a very important part in training Africans to reach Africans. Pray with us that this desire will be fulfilled.

PERSONAL:-

Betty and I continue to keep well and enjoy our work. We enjoy all the letters from Homeland friends. Please forgive us if any go unanswered.

Kindest Christian regards.

A MESSAGE ON PRAYER

By H. C. Mullen*

"Pray without ceasing." I Thess. 5:13. "Men ought always to pray and not faint." Luke 18:1.

Without more Scripture or comment, these texts make it very plain that prayer is an exceedingly important requirement of the Christian life. A hymn writer has very aptly called prayer "the Christian's vital breath." It is shown to be so important that it would seem to be impossible to be a Christian and not pray. Who could maintain a Christian experience without daily communion with God? It would be vain for us to attempt to tell the priceless worth of prayer. What a different world we would have if everybody prayed! There is abundant blessing in communion with God. There is spiritual help that cannot be found in any other way. There is blessing in private prayer where none but God can hear. There is a peculiar blessing at the family altar, one not to be found any other place. There is blessing in public prayer that cannot be found elsewhere. Persons who do not employ all of these, are losing a blessing. Some have never tried them all. If they did, they would be surprised at the blessings received.

I have observed through a long ministry that people generally shrink from praying in the presence of others. I don't understand why it should be, unless Satan has a hand in it. The young Christian should soon learn to pray in public whenever a good opportunity presents itself. Children taught to pray around the family altar do not find it embarrassing when older.

In a certain church where I was pastor I noticed that at prayer-meeting only a few ever took part in prayer, and the same ones from time to time. I sought to remedy this, so appointed a meeting for prayer only, and gave a hint that any who would not come expecting to pray, might as well not come. All the regular crowd came, and I think all prayed. At the close a middle aged woman came to me with smiles and told me, though she had been a member of that church for twenty years, this was the first time, she had ever prayed in the church. She was very happy that she had gained a victory, for she admitted that she had often felt like it before but had not done it. She kept up her attendance after that and quite often offered prayer, as did others. This broke the little circle who only used to pray, and new voices were heard from other parts of the church.

Mothers and fathers should maintain a family altar, and should teach their children to pray. How can parents expect their children to become Christians, if they do not teach them the way of salvation and pray them through to God? The home influence is highest in order. It takes precedence over the church and the Sunday school. The child's destiny is pretty nearly settled right in the home. Mother and father, if you do not pray for, and with, your boys and girls, whom will you blame if they wander away in sin and are finally lost? You cannot blame the church, you cannot blame the Sunday school, you cannot blame the preacher. If the child slips by the home influence he is very liable to escape the influence of church and Sunday school. Children should be taught to pray very young. Some of the world's greatest divines were brought to Christ in childhood. They should be brought up around the family altar where the Bible is read and mother and father and children join together in prayer. It is a sad spectacle indeed, to see children brought up in a prayerless home. I was brought up in a home where there was no family altar. I was never taught to pray, not even a bedtime prayer. My parents belonged to the church