

OUR TRIP TO AFRICA

by Mr. Stora Emmett

You might find it interesting if we were to "sketchily" describe a week's activities at Bethesda Mission.

We arise with the sun—for there is no electricity—and hurriedly prepare for the 7:00 a.m. prayer service at the hospital. The nurses, doctor, and patients meet in the Women's Ward. The patients enter and stand quietly between beds facing the native nurses who are in charge of this service. A hymn of praise is started and all join in singing. The scripture is read by a nurse, and prayer is offered. All file out quietly and slowly while singing another beautiful hymn in their native tongue. This is the beginning of every day of the week at the hospital.

The doctor returns home for breakfast and family prayer before rejoining the nurses in the morning rounds of the hospital.

Monday. It is 8:00 a.m. The nurses have already reported for duty at the hospital and the doctor has attended to several items of hospital business which seem to be ever with him. There is the "shiring of the cymbal" as the natives call it, or the ringing of the school bell. The bell consists of a large piece of iron hanging from the limb of a tree and is struck with a smaller piece of iron. It resounds throughout the valley so that the children for miles can hear it. Of course, many of them are already there at the school before the bell is rung. The children are quiet and very well behaved. Gene and Wilma, and the native teachers all go hurrying for the day's activities at school. There are three school buildings all in a row which house about 260 students in grades one through eight. One of the native teachers, for the lack of room in the other buildings, holds his classes in the Rosamond Dow Chapel.

At 10:30 a.m. the out-patients begin to gather at the hospital grounds for the Monday clinic. They gather outside the dispensary, and by 11:00 from 35 to 70 have seated themselves around the yard. All out-patients are required to be present at the evangelistic service that precedes every clinic. Preacher Nyoni, the hospital evangelist, brings a fine message after the singing of a familiar hymn. An altar call is given and several raise their hands for prayer. The service closes and the patients enter the dispensary as their names are called. The clinic lasts well into the afternoon.

It is now 2:00 p.m. and school is dismissed. The last of the patients are being seen at the clinic, and now it is possible for the families to gather for the lunch hour unless some emergency has come up such as an operation, a maternity case, or an ambulance call.

Although it was the winter season there, it gets hot during the day—about 80 degrees, and they haven't had any rains for weeks. The gardens are still growing and must be watered, wood has to be cut, special patients have to be tended, and school papers have to be graded.

Darkness comes on very quickly—hardly any twilight at all, but the most gorgeous sunsets.

It is 6:00 and Gene has started the motor down at the borehole. The lights begin to glimmer and gradually grow brighter until they are on in full. They will be on until 10:00. During this time water is being pumped into the two reservoirs on the Mission.

With supper over, Uta begins to gather her crowd to go for a Kraal service, for Monday evening is Kraal service on the Reserve. It will probably be held at Borehole No. 44 tonight at Jambezi. Uta has the service, but has asked Bro. Eugene Hudson to preach the message. They take two Landrovers so as to take as many Mission Christians as possible to help lift the service. The message is well received and hands are lifted for prayer. All shake

hands with the missionaries and thank them for bringing the gospel.

The seventeen miles of African roads through the African night are shortened by the beautiful songs of the natives taking up one song after another as we bump along. We arrive back at the Mission, lighted only by our headlights, for the lights go out at 10:00 after the doctor has finished rounds at the hospital.

Tuesday. The same general schedule, but no clinic today at Bethesda. Uta may have her day off and go to Livingstone. She will want to leave early—all places of business close in Livingstone from 12:30 to 2:00 — so grocery lists and mail must be prepared to be sent with her. School and hospital duties go on as usual.

Tuesday evening at 7:30, everyone, natives and missionaries meet at the Rosamond Dow Chapel for prayer meeting. Most hospital patients are able to attend, and those who are able are obliged to attend the prayer meeting. Preacher Nyoni has asked teacher Ngwenya to bring the message tonight. He preaches in Sindebele with fluency and sincerity, "knowing in whom he hath believed." The service closes with ringing testimonies of victories won. The natives file slowly out to stand outside and wait to shake your hand when you come out and greet you in their native tongue.

Wednesday is another full day. There will be a clinic today, preceded by a preaching service led by the doctor. The message is from Acts 3: 6, "Such as I have give I thee." One of his native nurses interprets for him.

Wednesday evening at about 7:00 there is a Sindebele language lesson for Wilma and Gene, taught by the doctor at his residence. (How much better it would be if our missionaries could have an opportunity to study the language for about six or eight months before actually going into the work).

Thursday morning. There is a real rush on. Hospital rounds have to be made before leaving for the Jambezi Clinic seventeen miles away, which is due to start at 9:30. When Storer and Violet, one of the native nurses, arrives, the clinic is full. About fifty patients are seated around the porch on the ground waiting respectfully for the service to begin. There must be two interpreters here. Nurse Violet interprets in Sindebele, and Nurse Grace interprets for the Munanzwa people.

The clinic is not completed until 5:30. Usually a service is held at nearby Borehole 44 on the return trip, but it is too late today.

Every Thursday at 3:00 p.m., at Bethesda, Bible study is held in the Rosamond Dow Chapel for all native workers at the Mission by Preacher Nyoni. The only ones who do not attend are school boys who work as gardeners. They are excused as they have their Bible class in school.

Thursday evening a Bible study for African nurses is taught by the doctor. The nurses are eager to learn, and search their Bibles with diligence. One can perceive their spiritual growth from week to week and can realize the effect of this on their witness as they deal with the sick patients at the hospital. Wilma serves tea when they have completed their study and then a short social time is had by all.

Friday is clinic day again at Bethesda. Uta will be in charge today as hospital business requires the doctor's presence in Livingstone one day a week. He will take the trailer as there will be bags of maize to take into the grinding mill and petrol and paraffin drums will have to be filled to replenish the supply at the Mission. There will, of course, be the supply of foodstuffs for the hospital and missionaries and natives at the Mission, not to speak of the building supplies to be used in the building program at the Mission. We will arrive back to the Mission at about

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The King's Highway