PRAYER BELL

Kedgaon, Poona District

May–June, 1944.

Jottings

We are all so glad that the Lord has at last brought Miss Craddock to us safely. The blind people were almost beside themselves with joy and said, ‘God has answered our prayers’. They love Mrs. Phillips who has cared for them of late, but Miss Craddock is their very own auntie.

We are so sorry that our dear Bhimabai has suffered the loss of her sister Gungabai. She was one of our old trusted matrons for many years. After working for years at Gulbarga, she came home to Mukti, very ill. After some days of intense suffering, the Lord lifted her to the Heavenly Home where all the suffering is known no more.

We have had a really very bad epidemic of mumps; it has been very trying and bad for the school attendance.

Mumps were followed by whooping cough and measles, so nurses have been very busy.

Many are thinking of well-deserved holidays, though some are counting on staying on through the hot weather.

You will all enjoy the following letters by Miss Craddock, Mrs. Phillips and Nurse Callan.
'What hath God Wrought?'

These are the words which come to mind as I recall something of the happenings of the last five years; for it is just that time since I was making final preparations to go home, and now I am back again in Mukti to begin a fifth term of service here.

Nine weeks ago I embarked, and found myself one of a party of twenty-four women missionaries and one man, representing twelve different societies. Probably the full story of our eight and a half weeks' journey may never be told, but what we do want you all to know is that all the way we were sure of God's protecting care and guidance, composing an invisible convoy over and around us. We would also pay tribute to the untiring devotion to duty of those in charge of the ships in which we travelled, and also to the thoughtful and considerate arrangements made for us.

The three weeks in the transit camp gave us opportunities for meeting men who have been away from home a long time, and they were eager to talk of their homes and friends. Some even came from the same towns, and were able to ask questions about friends and places. All this helped us to realize a little of their feeling of isolation, though letters are now getting through to the Middle East amazingly regularly.

Camp life has its limitations, but here again we were shown every consideration possible under such circumstances; and we shall always be deeply grateful for this as well as for the opportunities for meeting the men. One big delight to me was the getting in touch with one of my nephews whom I had not seen for over eleven years.
But at last I arrived in Mukti where a great welcome awaited me, and my heart was filled with joy to see again so many dear faces, white and brown. Some are missing, and I was able to talk to one of the blind women not long before she passed over. Another is likely soon to follow her, thus breaking here two of the links made on my first arrival. But how great must be their joy to see His face!

The missionaries are courageously carrying on, and I hope soon to take up my full share of the work, though at the moment I am revelling in some extra hours of refreshing sleep.

To all at home who have been standing with me in prayer and gifts I send a heart full of deep gratitude. I shall hope to keep in touch by letter as often as possible, but whether you hear or not you will be constantly brought before the Throne of Grace, for I truly thank God upon every remembrance of you.

May He keep you in safety until the cessation of hostilities, and prepare us all for the problems of 'winning the peace', the solutions for which are in His keeping and power alone.

Isabel Craddock.

School Birthday

This year marks the Fifty-fifth Anniversary of the founding of the Sharada Sadan (House of Wisdom). Founder's Day, better known among the children as the 'School Birthday', is an event which is anticipated weeks ahead by the children. Since we are unable to take the children away for a picnic, it is often difficult to plan events which will be novel and interesting, exciting enough for a picnic! The Lord was gracious this year, giving a
day of joy and happiness from start to close. The day began with a walk long before day break. At 10 o'clock there were sports, followed by action drills and songs. A guest speaker brought a challenging message to the children, bringing out that Pandita Ramabai was a great light in India, and that we, who follow after, are to bear the light. Life was likened to a relay race in which each must do his part to win. At noon there was a tasty picnic dinner at the Banana Well. Then the children were free to play and finally to have a swim in the bathing tank. Such screams of laughter and joy rent the air!

The evening session held promise of even greater things. Through the kindness of friends, it had been arranged that a fine military band should come to play and perform for the children. It was the first time they had seen and heard such a thing, and all were delighted. As the band played different numbers the children finished their sports, after which various little prizes were awarded to the winners in each event.

We are always happy to commemorate this happy day, and we trust that the children, although they were never privileged to know Ramabai, will be challenged by the life of this great servant of the Lord, and will come to serve Him with all their hearts as she did.

‘Final Examinations.’ Six girls from the 7th Standard have just returned from their Primary School Leaving Certificate Examination.

‘Christian Endeavour.’ An Intermediate Christian Endeavour Society, the ‘Victory Circle’, has been recently organized and affiliated with the India, Burma and Ceylon C.E. Union. The
girls have memorized their pledges and received the official badges which they are wearing with great pride. We enlist your prayers for this new society that it may prove to be a place of training in leadership, an organization for the Glory of the Lord and the service of the church, and a place where the children will come to a deeper spiritual experience in the Lord.

‘Village work’. It was a delight to be released from the activities in the school during February and to have the privilege of being with the Bible-women at Supa. The phonograph with some fine evangelistic records proved to be a great attraction to the people. The ministry was a bit hindered because in a strange reversion to childhood days, I came down the night of my arrival with mumps! There were, however, precious opportunities of contacting the people of Supa, for which I am deeply grateful to the Lord.

N. PHILLIPS.

On January 12th the Evangelistic group left for Supa. Two young Bible School girls, Leela and Mogri, were with the group. As the bullocks were sick we had no tonga, so only nearby villages and Supa itself were visited. Some young boys asked for instruction and came daily for study of the Word of God. Of these we would ask special prayer for Madhav, Sakharam and Bhagvan, who learned much and showed keen interest. A school teacher, Gulabrao, who has been under the sound of the Gospel for some years, reads his Bible and prays daily. He has expressed a desire for baptism. Pray that he and his wife may receive courage to step out boldly.

Bapu, the caretaker, had a real testing time. His little boy
was sick ‘nigh unto death’ but God had mercy on him’. He showed implicit trust even at the darkest hour, and the Lord healed. His heart is full of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord for His love and mercy. The child had typhoid, others had it too, and there were a few deaths in the village. There were plenty of opportunities for medical work. Sunday school work and house to house visitation were encouraging. We were conscious of the presence of the Lord and of being upheld in prayer, for which we give thanks, and ask for continued prayer that the seed sown may be watered and bring forth much fruit.

Yours in His glad service,

JANET CALLAN.

May the Lord energise us by His Holy Spirit and accomplish all His heart desires through us.

Yours for His glory,

MISS JULIA WOODWARD.

M. L. HASTIE.

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