PRAYER BELL

Ramabai Mukti Mission

Kedgaon, Poona District

January—March, 1947

‘Our residue of day or hours
Thine, wholly Thine shall be
And all our consecrated powers
A sacrifice to Thee.’
—Charles Wesley

Although 1947 will be well advanced when this Prayer Bell reaches our friends we take this opportunity of wishing all a year of blessing. Whatever it brings may we never lose the sense of His abiding Presence and Power.

In previous years we have told of the large gatherings in church for the school programme and then for the Christmas Day service; but this time we would like to give you a glimpse of some of the smaller parties arranged by different missionaries for those under their individual care. Even the old ladies like to be invited to a tea party although they have only acquired a taste for tea in their later years!

After the fun and merriment which always accompany Christmas spent with so large a family, we began to prepare for our New Year’s special services which were conducted by the Rev. Chowdhari of Nasik. The messages

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CHRISTMAS PARTIES

Christmas has always been a happy time in Mukti and this year was no exception. One learns "it is more blessed to give than to receive". Our first party for our Bethel families was the men's C.E. on Christmas Eve. All gathered together very happily. The Indian orchestra played and sang Christmas carols for about a half hour after which Mr. Damle, the Evangelist, gave a short Christmas message. Then the time to serve tea and sweet meats had come and as we had only 20 cups and saucers between the 35 people the tea had to be served in two sittings. We provided paper for plates which saved a lot of washing up. The boys and men were very happy and went on singing carols until 10:30 when they went home very reluctantly.

Our second party was held the Friday evening after Christmas for the women from Bethel. Mothers turned up with children so we had a crowd of about 50. Knowing that we did not have enough cups for the men's party I had asked the women to bring their own mugs. Although Christmas was over the women and children wanted to sing carols, so we sang and the children did their share too. After the singing was over one of the mothers gave a little talk on how to be lights in the home. The children were very anxious that the tea and sweets be served as this was more exciting to them than listening to a speech. The room was so full that it was difficult not to step on their toes while serving. The happy crowd left about 9:30.

Now the Bethel Children's Sunday School had to have a party, so the first Sunday after Christmas was arranged for them. All the children came with their mugs. We had a gramophone and played the Christmas carols and the children recited verses of Scripture, after which sweets, cakes, fruits and tea were served. The children drank their tea, but their food was still on their paper plates. When I asked them why they did not eat, they said they were taking them home, so we made paper bags out of their plates and all went home with their paper bags. What a happy crowd they were!

ELIZABETH MORRIS.
PRITI SADAN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

'Teach me to love and work and give,
To pray and praise and keep the tryst
  And all my happy life to live
Confessing Christ.'

It was a great joy to my old women from Priti Sadan (Home of Love), numbering about eighty, when they were told that we would have tea together on Christmas Eve. We love to give a little treat to our respective compounds we are in charge of and since I have two departments it is sometimes a hard job these days to know what is best, so I decided to give a tea to my Big Girls and some concoction to the others.

At 2:30 they all trotted into my room with their brass bowls. I had kept this tea party secret for there was not much to give with tea. Sugar is rationed so we had brown sugar and Indian made biscuits. Since my room could not hold so many of them, they suggested we go on the office verandah. We all sat down and to my surprise they started singing a carol, "Halleluiah to our Saviour." Although some of them went flat at times, yet it sounded sweet to me and they all looked happy and grateful.

Bhimabai Harishchandra.

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were practical and searching, being truly blessed to many of our young people, especially some of whom are now gathering together in a class for instruction and preparation to testify later by baptism to the new life received and being lived by the power of Jesus Christ. We trust these young lives, will be dedicated to God for His own purposes and willing of His will.

Isabel Craddock.

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for the animals. For all this building work we have been able to secure the services of a fine Indian Christian contractor who has done excellent work elsewhere and is glad to have the opportunity of working for Mukti.
\textbf{BUDS’ CHRISTMAS PARTY}

If you had been a small Indian girl living at Mukti you would have been a little bundle of excitement at Christmas time. After the thrill of decorating, Kalika Bhuvan and the joys of Christmas Day came the Christmas party.

We had three parties, one for the children, one for the young nurses and one for the older nurses, and while the nurses enjoyed their parties it was the children who really got the most fun out of it.

After giving vent to some of their surplus energy, they all sat down on the floor in a large ring while the nurses handed round English and Indian goodies and superintended the activities of the smaller people.

We received a gift of dolls, but unfortunately they arrived a day too late for the party so we had to have a dolly-receiving ceremony a day later. This was a very joyous occasion, accompanied by impromptu songs of their own composition, by the Buds, such as “We’ve got new dollies.”

Altogether Christmas amongst the Buds was a very happy time and He who Himself has been a little child undertook that these little ones might celebrate His advent with gladness.

\textit{Muriel Asbery.}

\textbf{BARTIMI SADAN CHRISTMAS PARTY}

Bartimi Sadan Annual Party once took the form of a little entertainment by the young girls. To begin with a group talked of their country and how much its greatness was due to help received from folk from other lands, but the chiefest help was the bringing of the Christmas Message of a Saviour.

Songs were sung and then specially-made tea was served to the Missionary guests and tea and biscuits to all the Blind. This had been made possible by gifts from friends in the home-lands.

\textit{Isabel Craddock.}
BIRTHDAY PARTY
‘Count your blessings’

When the children from Fruit Garden understood that I was to leave India before my birthday they requested that we celebrate it in January. So we set the date for January 8.

Early in the morning they dressed in their new clothes and ribbons and quietly came to my door and sang, “Happy birthday dear Moushie.” They garlanded me with a garland made of small colourful shells. They all had some sweets and as their saying is, “eat sweets and speak sweety.”

We set out for a walk, and after walking about two and a half miles came to a river bed. Here we formed a circle and sang the 23rd Psalm, after which each gave a Scripture verse. We all joined then in singing a song in Hindi, “We shall see Jesus our King.”

After this the children gave two little action songs. They kept saying, “Oh, Moushie isn’t it lovely here?” After a time of prayer in which they praised the Lord, we started home again.

After their morning meal we went to the Well of Peace and they had a good time swimming in the tank. Finally they started saying “We are getting hungry” and on our return a big vessel of Indian food was awaiting us. We had a good feast together. Elma Adhav asked the blessing on the food, and although she was very hungry she remembered to pray for those who have nobody to make them happy and who know not Jesus. She also prayed that the Lord would give us a spiritual hunger. The whole day brought many blessings.

Tara More who joined our family on November 30, had never known of such love and good things. She joined us saying, “I love it here so much.” She has no more clothes than do the others, but she keeps remarking, “I have such nice clothes and so many of them. Oh I am happy here.” She came in a Hindu beggar child, but looks quite a different girl now. Please join us in praying for her salvation.

MARIE SCHRAG.
WATCH NIGHT SERVICE

'And thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.'—Matt. 1:21.

Ten o'clock on New Year's Eve and all the Mukti family is seated in the church except the Buds and Blossoms. Our Pastor led the service—Praise, Prayer, Testimony. Then Mr. Chowdhari, C.S.S.M. Evangelist and our special speaker for the week of New Year meetings, gave the message. "Thorns" was the title. Thorns representing sins and the curse. India is the land of thorns big and little. There are the large thorns which represent the sins that everybody sees, but what about the small, almost invisible thorns that get into the soles of the feet and often fester—so the secret sins in our lives.

We had all been requested to bring a thorn with us. In his hand was a crown of thorns, so prickly that he could not bear it on his head, yet our sins put that crown of thorns on our Saviour's brow. So Mr. Chowdhari pled with young and old to put away the sins that wound, through the Sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary. Owing to rain the bonfire for the night was postponed until next afternoon when we gathered round in a large circle, and after learning a hymn (on thorns) one by one from the youngest to the oldest, we threw our thorns on the fire as a symbol. It was all most solemn and impressive.

Saturday evening there was a special young people's service—13-25 years old (I was allowed in with my compound girls!). Youth's importance in the Church of Tomorrow was brought before the girls. But it was only as they found their salvation in Jesus Christ could they become a pillar of the Church. India needed them badly.

Afterwards my heart was thrilled when two of my girls, Mary and Kusum, came to me, seeking salvation. Mary, a girl of very poor parentage, a thief, liar and troublesome—poured out her heart to the Lord Jesus and then burst into song in happiness for salvation received. Kusum, a girl sent by the Juvenile Court for protection from a hard living family, was a difficult and quarrelsome girl. She too found her way to the Saviour's feet. I went to the compound with them and after asking me to call the girls together, they spoke of their Salvation and confessed.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL DEDICATION SERVICE

The climax of the week of special meetings came at the Sunday afternoon service when the seventy officers and teachers of the Mukti Sunday School (Beginners, Primary, Junior, Intermediate, Young People, and Senior Departments) were consecrated to the Lord for the coming year.

In this impressive service, Mr. Chowdhari, who is the Sunday School representative for the Marathi-speaking area, addressed his opening remarks to the congregation, reminding them of the fact that a very essential part of our ministry is that of feeding the lambs with the Word of God in the Sunday School.

The superintendents and teachers then gathered around the altar, where they were admonished to consecrate themselves that their labours be not in vain and were given the arresting challenge that into their hands was committed the religious education of the Church and that if they failed in this the Church must fail. No calling is more difficult, yet none higher or more joyful!

The Congregation was then asked to stand while Mr. Chowdhari presented to them their responsibility, for only with their sacrificial help and understanding co-operation can the work of the S.S. be carried on. The solemnity of their part was brought out in the thought that the indifference of scholars hampers and handicaps the ministry of the teachers, while their wrong example undermines any teaching given.

All of our Mukti Sunday School scholars and teachers have dared to accept the responsibility placed upon them and have consecrated themselves to the task of the new year. We would request your prayers that the Lord may enable them to fulfill the vows they have made.

NULAH PHILLIPS.

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their sins and asked forgiveness from the different girls they had wronged. Both are now attending a Baptismal Class. The change in these girls is very marked, but friends, won't you hold these two up before the Master, for the Enemy of souls would trip them up.

GLADYS FLETCHER.
We ask continued prayer for:

Miss Callan: while she visits the American Ramabai Mukti Mission Council headquarters in Philadelphia, U.S.A. and tours various States in the interests of Mukti.

Miss Schrag: as she proceeds to America for a much needed furlough after over six years spent on the field.

Vinthal Dongre: who is now in Bombay preparing to take the Senior B.A. Exam. in April: that her health may stand the strain of these last weeks of study and that she may return to Mukti to be a witness for Christ more especially among the Junior teachers and older school girls.

Madhukanta Makvane: as she takes her S.T.C. Examination in April. She is looking forward to returning here to work in the school after the hot weather.

We ask you too to remember our girls who are married and now have young families to bring up. Also our school girls who will be sitting for their Primary School Leaving Certificate in April and will then be leaving our school to go for further training if considered eligible.

We praise God for bringing safely to us six missionaries from America whose messages will fill the next Prayer Bell.

Our friends will rejoice with us to know that building work has at last been commenced. Although the plans for the Hospital and Gospel Hall are not yet complete, a boundary wall has been started inside which at its extreme end is to be erected a new farm-yard as requested by the Government. There will be a milk room, store rooms, and rooms for watchmen in addition to the stalls

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