DEAR FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES IN THE MASTER'S SERVICE,

You will rejoice to read the messages from the six Missionaries who arrived in January. They settled in immediately and Miss Woodward and Miss Amstutz were soon at work again while Misses Terry, McGregor, Stone and Siemens got down to Language Study. They had all had some instruction in Marathi before arriving here and it was a great thrill to everybody to hear them use this new Language when speaking in Church at their Welcome Meeting.

We always feel greatly indebted to the Council Members and Secretaries who work so untiringly for Mukti's interests in the home countries, adding this ministry to many other duties which has entailed great sacrifice in time and strength. Our English Secretary, Mrs. Barratt, feels the time has now come for her to retire after forty years of faithful, loving service, and many will miss her appreciative letters. To her and her husband and all who have co-operated with them, we extend our sincere and loving thanks. Mrs. Barratt kindly continues as Secretary in England until the one of God's choice has been found to take her place.

Our building work is going ahead and we praise God for the way He is meeting the needs. In order to have the work well done it is necessary to have skilled workers who demand high wages in these days, but we believe the Heavenly Father approves and will continue to send in sufficient for all these needs. 

ISABEL CRADDOCK.
THE JOY OF A HOMECOMING

A happy holiday in America came to an end in December, when I turned my face toward India.

To the many friends who stood back of us in prayer while we prepared our return to India, and continued to pray as we journeyed, we wish to express a heart-felt thank you.

The trip with my two companions was a pleasant one, and the Christian fellowship with the other missionaries aboard ship was a joy to our hearts.

The cold, grey days spent on the Atlantic caused us to appreciate the warm, sunny days on the Mediterranean and the waters leading to India.

At last in the early hours of a misty morning, the lights of Bombay appeared in the distance. It was thrilling to see them, and my heart welled up in praise to Him for all His goodness to me and for the privilege of returning to this land.

A number of hours of delay in port were almost unbearable. When we had finished with Customs, there was an intense desire to hurry "home". Never had the train ride seemed so long.

As the train pulled into the Kedgaon station, we saw the platform crowded with our Indian Christians, and hands reached for ours from every direction. A couple of blocks in a bullock cart brought us to our Mukti home, where rows of women and children were waiting to welcome us.

As we looked at the missionaries, we could tell the burden had been heavy, but His strength had been their portion. There was praise for all He had done for Mukti.

There was the excitement of meeting the home folks, each one having something special to tell. Then there was the joy of opening trunks and boxes. Exclamations were many as the new things, which had been so cheerfully sent to the Philadelphia office, were taken out of the trunks. Everything came through in good condition, for which we certainly thank Him.

Many of the children are new, so there is the joy of renewing old friendships and the joy of making new ones.

We needed your prayers as we traveled. We need prayer as we start our term of service here. We shall need it every day for Mukti and its many needs.

—Julia Woodward.
THE PRAISE OF THANKSGIVING

"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise." At the very beginning of my missionary service twenty years ago I entered Mukti’s gate with praise and thanksgiving. After an absence of nearly seven years, my heart again was filled with praise and thanksgiving as I entered Mukti’s gate. What tears of joy, what rejoicing, what thanksgiving as the women and girls told us how they had wept and prayed for our release during the three years of our internment in Manila.

There are quite a few of the dear faces missing, some now serving Him in His presence, others serving Him in other regions. But there are also new faces. While excitement ran high and familiar faces pressed forward to be recognized, some of the new little ones joined the others in calling out, "Don’t you remember me?” “Moushie, what is my name?”

In spite of the fact that our few missionaries have been working so short-handed, they are not swamped, but gloriously triumphant. Why? Because your prayers have brought an undergirding which only His chosen ones know.

The voyage was a good one. In a daily devotional service and Bible study hour for all on board ship, there was blessing in Christian fellowship and joy over souls saved. As we crossed the vast expanse of the Pacific ocean, I often thought of the chorus:

‘Wide, wide as the ocean,
Deep, deep as the sea,
High, high as the heavens above
Is my Saviour’s love.’

You have experienced how good it feels to get home after a long time away from one’s loved ones. That is the way I feel now. The people, the surroundings, even the air I breathe, rejoice my heart. From my upstairs room I hear the noise and chatter of the playing children, and in the mornings their Marathi hymns in devotions.

As word comes from the evangelistic band at Supa, I find a burden on my heart for those who have not heard the glorious gospel that has transformed our lives both now and for eternity.

My last word as I send my love to you, is pray for us.

—ELDA AMSTUTZ.
THE PLACE OF GOD'S APPOINTMENT

A sunrise that bathed the clouds with pink, the hills with blue, and the water with sparkling gold welcomed us to India. It was a glorious reception. It seemed God's welcome to the land of His appointment after five years of endeavoring through fire and sword to come.

As I stepped off the train at Kedgaon, a tidal wave of brown faces swept me to a bullock cart decorated with bright streamers. Even the bullocks' horns were crowned with flowers. As we jostled along in the cart, a throng of Indian women surrounded us, all waving, all shouting, all smiling. It was a triumphal procession leading to a triumphal entry.

The cart stopped by the gate, over which “Welcome” was woven in silver, and a wee brown girlie approached us laden with flowers. As I knelt before her, her chubby arms went around my neck and left there a garland of Indian flowers. And then another garland doubly expressed the fragrance of their loving welcome.

First the ribbon-clad Buds greeted me, then the Blossoms in their little dresses of varied hue. There were the school girls in their blue and white, the teen-agers in their graceful saris, and then the older women, their black hair tinged with silver. Hands reached out to me from every direction—brown hands, baby hands, chubby hands, thin hands, scarred hands, little hands, big hands, blind hands, deaf hands, eager hands. The faces and hands went on like a never-ending sea, and then the faces began to blur as something welled up within me, choked me, blinded me—tears of unspeakable joy. At last I had reached the place to which God had called me.

The next evening at sunset I slipped away to the cemetery, and there placed one of my garlands on Ramabai's grave and the other on Krishnabai's. Holy quiet seemed to wrap itself about me as I stood there, paying homage to their memory and praying God I might faithfully follow in their train.

That same day the Indians gave me a name by which I shall be called all my life long at Mukti. It is “Anandi Moushie”, which means “Joyful Auntie”. What more can I say? That name tells all.

—CAROL TERRY.
THE PLACE OF FAR-BETTER THINGS

It was during the early summer of 1944, in a white house in Washington, that a person knelt alone crying out to God that He would reveal the reason for the grief that had come—grief that nearly consumed, grief that almost blotted out His face.

When a mission field is laid upon a heart and the deepest desire of that heart is to go there, then a slowly closing door to that field brings sorrow, not joy; unrest, not peace.

The kneeling figure sought His face but could not find Him; called Him, but He gave no answer.

Because of His loving kindness, the answer came at last. Very surely and clearly a verse was given. "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it."

The kneeling figure listened and was comforted, believed and rejoiced.

Of course, you have guessed—I was the kneeling figure. The open door was Mukti. It was not long afterward that the letter came saying that I might come to Mukti if I believed that God were so directing.

Perhaps the year of decision following was the hardest. Had it not been for the prayers of many and of Him who is our High Priest, I would have been sifted as wheat. But now as I look back on those days and nights of trial and despair, I find that in their place God has given His peace and has drawn me closer to Himself. I have been separated from the old things to something far better.

One of the many far-better things which stands out in my mind very vividly just now is the following:

I stepped down from the Tonga to behold a sea of smiling faces—Indian friends who were there to welcome me. Then I stooped down to look into a small brown face wreathed in smiles, and two brown eyes that shone like stars. And then two small brown arms went around my neck to place a garland of flowers. Next I was lost in the jumble of salaams, smiles, and handclasps of the reception line. Could you resist loving and serving such a people? I cannot.

Oh, God, "How great is Thy goodness which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee."

—JEAN MCGREGOR.
THE DOOR OF OPPORTUNITY

Five years ago I was among those to wish Carol Terry "Godspeed" as she sailed for India and Mukti. The last Saturday in January of this year I was among the first to greet her as she stepped from the train at Kedgaon station. The verse came to my mind, "But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first."

Five years after Miss Terry sailed for war-threatened waters, I was brought into contact again with the work of the Ramabai Mukti Mission, its responsibilities, and its needs. God opened a door of opportunity for me to serve at Mukti, and how could I, who had dedicated my life to serve Him, refuse to enter a door that He had opened?

God gave blessings with the decision. His goodness was like a benediction. The first great blessing was the response of Christian friends to the needs of my outfit. May God bless those who so willingly give that we may serve.

God blessed us with a good voyage and Christian fellowship aboard ship. We were delighted with the wonders of the deep, and marvelled at the lovely sunsets and beautiful moonlit waters. God had gone before and made provision for us along the way, and we were able to secure accommodations in Colombo and passage to Bombay. Lovely as the trip was, we rejoiced when we boarded the train for Mukti. I think Miss Woodward was the happiest of all, for Mukti to her meant "home". How grateful we were for her guidance and care all through the trip.

Many of Mukti's older women came in the heat of the day to the Kedgaon station to greet us. How eager we were to see them, and their welcome was beyond any of our dreams. Our hearts were glad within us. The happy faces of the girls, the babies, and the older members of the family made the welcome at Mukti's gates the greatest blessing of all, and the genuine warmth and friendliness of our fellow missionaries deepened the joy of the welcome.

Daily my wonder grows at the scope of the work and its possibilities. With a heart full of joy, I pray for His establishment of the work of my hands at Mukti.

—ELIZABETH STONE.
THE FRAGRANCE OF A GARDEN

"For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations" (Isa. 61: 11).

In my second year at Bible school, a study of the life of Ramabai was included in our Missions Course. I was impressed by the unique way she named the various parts of Mukti—the gates Praise, and the children Buds, Blossoms, and Fruit, thus portraying Mukti as one large flower and fruit garden.

When the Lord laid this work upon my heart, He led step by step to my acceptance. I looked forward with eager anticipation to the day when I could enter the garden of Mukti, and in some small way help in the nurture of the little ones so dear to the heart of our Saviour.

After about five weeks of travel, I arrived at Mukti, to be met by a host of Indian friends and the faithful missionaries carrying on the work.

Will you enter the garden with me? First there are the babies, the tiny buds needing tender care and prayerful nurture to encourage growth and development. Then we see a lovely group of older Buds who are giving joyful promise of blossoms soon to break forth. As we continue our tour we come to a section filled with blossoms, fragrant with promise of future fruit.

Then we come to the Fruit Garden, where we see evidences of school life and practical preparation for useful lives unto His glory.

The various stages of development in the rest of Mukti then meet our eyes. There are some who are maturing, others who have faced the storms of life for many years, some who are bent, some bruised, and some broken. The autumn of life is approaching, and they are fading silently away.

This is indeed a wonderful garden, and every part of it is dear to the heart of our Saviour. I am happy to be here and participate in the work of presenting Christ to India's womanhood.

During my time here no sacrifice shall be too great, no duty too small, no task too commonplace, no responsibility too great, but that my all shall be put forth in service for Him who has called me into His garden called Mukti.

—Anne Siemens.
Prayer is asked for:

Miss Morris who expects to sail the middle of April for her much needed and over-due furlough.
Miss Callan during her busy stay in America.
The Students at the Language School in Mahableshwar, especially Miss Asbery who hopes to sit for her first examination in May.
For all who stay on the Plains through the Hot Season that strength and grace sufficient for all needs may be theirs.

Think through me, Thoughts of God,
My Father, quiet me,
Till in Thy holy presence, hushed,
I think Thy thoughts with Thee.

Think through me, Thoughts of God,
That always, everywhere,
The stream that through my being flows
May homeward pass in prayer.

Think through me, Thoughts of God,
And let my own thoughts be
Lost like the sand-pools on the shore
Of the eternal sea.

—Amy Carmichael.