PRAYER BELL

PANDITA RAMABAI

JULY—AUGUST, 1948

KEDGAON, POONA DISTRICT
INDIA
‘For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it’

(Isa. 55: 10, 11)

How often we forget the simplicity of these words and are humbled as we see God fulfil them before our eyes. Such was my experience recently. The message of the Lord to our women’s class, which is held in the Gospel Hall for women of our outside families, included the ministry of giving of our time, talents, and means to the extension of His Kingdom. In the preparation of the message, the thought occurred, ‘How can I mention giving of means? They have so little.’ However, the Spirit of the Lord reminded of the blessedness of giving.

The message was given on my last Sunday before leaving for Mahableshwar. The women said that they would like to give each week as the Lord enabled. I confess that the thought of their giving left my mind completely, but the Lord kept it before them. Little did I realize, as I was especially remembering them in prayer at the time of their class, that they were constrained to give. You can imagine the joy that was mine on returning to find that they had given regularly and could testify to the joy and blessing received in so doing.

On asking for what purpose they wished the offering to be used, the women immediately replied that they desired to place a good picture of the Lord Jesus Christ and some Gospel Texts in Marathi in the new Gospel Hall, that Hindu people might read them and come to know the Lord. These women may not be able to preach the Word, but they can help to leave a silent witness for the Lord, who has become so precious to them.

Our study this year is ‘The Women of the Bible.’ It is revealing to us something of the great place which women can have in the bringing in of the Kingdom.

JANET CALLAN
FOR THE NEW HOSPITAL

With wrinkled and gnarled hands they sit breaking stones. Their bodies are old and bent, they tire easily, but one thought keeps these elderly women at the stone pile—'It's for the new hospital'.

Early in the morning the men with pickaxes go deep into the earth after the limestone. The bullock carts bring it to our kiln, and day after day these women, who have grown old in Mukti, sit and break the huge stones into small ones the size of walnuts. Then they mix it with bits of coal as though they were mixing a cake, fill the kiln, let it burn for ten days, and out comes the lime with which to build our pile of bricks into a hospital.

Muscles ache with the stone-breaking, backs are bent with the heavy work, one coughs now and then from tuberculosis, but they doggedly go on breaking stones, for their hearts are singing the words, 'It's for the new hospital.' Why do their hearts thus sing? Last year when the epidemics of measles, mumps, and whooping cough all raged at the same time, there was not enough room in the old, tumbling-down hospital. The children slept two in a bed but still the epidemics spread. There was no room in the hospital. The thin, sick, fevered faces of the children come up before the women, and they bend their backs anew to breaking the stones. They see the faces of the villagers, poor and sick, coming for help and being turned away. There is no room for them in the old hospital. They see the nurses, Indian and missionary, working frantically to save a life with no one to help them, for there is no doctor to call, and the women's sore hands grasp the rocks more firmly and break, break, break them into little stones.

And there are others who work for the new hospital—you who pray and give. We thank God for each of you.

The ground has been broken, the foundation laid, for God has set His seal of approval on the hospital in the form of a legacy from America for $7,000.00. On their knees before the Lord, the missionaries thanked God for this token from Him, and had faith to believe that He who had begun a good work would complete it.

As the women break the stones, will you join them in your prayers 'for the new hospital'?
RAMABAI HONOURED

On the morning of May 19 at the appointed hour a beautiful, shiny-black, Buick sedan rolled up the hill and came to a stop. Sir Maharaj Singh, Governor of Bombay Province, had come to visit our Marathi Language School in Mahableshwar and to meet the missionaries. As he stepped from the car, he said, 'I want to meet some people,' consequently he met everyone present. He had been invited, not just because he was the Governor, but because he is an outstanding Christian. Dr. Reid Graham, Superintendent of our Language School, has been acquainted with the activities of Their Excellencies and knows of their stand for Christ in their native State, the Punjab.

But the Governor was not alone. He was accompanied by Her Excellency, Rani (Lady) Maharaj Singh. As I met them, I thought, 'Here are two people, who, by their lives, could influence India more for Christ than the combined efforts of all the missionaries.' His Excellency, the Governor, went about unaccompanied, shaking hands with everyone and inquiring our names and homelands, and sometimes even our hometowns, for he had visited most of our countries. One exception was Miss Libbis' homeland, New Zealand, but he expressed the hope of visiting that country in the future.

Dr. Graham accompanied Lady Maharaj Singh about the Language School. When I was presented to Her Excellency, and she understood that I was from the Ramabai Mukti Mission, she greeted me with much warmth as she said, 'Ramabai has always been a great inspiration in my life. When I was in America, how often I quoted her.' She is anxious to visit Mukti. I remarked that an invitation had already been sent to them. She said, 'Be sure to send it to me as well as to the Governor.' They are expecting to spend the rainy season in Poona and hope to visit Mukti at that time.

Her Excellency continued talking with Dr. Graham and myself for some time. She spoke of her longings and ideals for the Christian Church in India, the need of training our Indian Christians to be economically independent, self-supporting, self-respecting, and respected citizens. She believes only those with a zeal for souls,
compelled by the Spirit of God, should be allowed to carry on the work of evangelism. We gathered that she felt that not all missionaries have been and are the spontaneous, living witness they could be. One of the greatest works, she said, which we could do for them would be to pray, not only for themselves, but for all of India's leaders, especially those with whom they work.

The Sunday following their visit to the Language School, the Governor, his wife, and daughter attended our church. Following the service, a young woman doctor, of the Church of Scotland Mission, and myself were invited to go home with them for lunch. They desired the doctor's services for their tiny granddaughter and I was included because the Rani was so interested in Ramabai she wanted to hear more about the work of the Mukti Mission. The Governor himself asked many questions. He is a man with high ideals and a humble spirit. With a very fatherly attitude he made suggestions that would help us, as missionaries, to win the confidence of these people to whom we have come to minister.

Altogether it was a very happy experience. As I rode home up those hills in that lovely, shiny-black, Buick sedan, with the chauffeur and attendant in their striking red and white uniforms, my heart rejoiced that India has among its leaders two such Christian characters as the Governor and Rani Maharaj Singh.

ELIZABETH STONE

SPARROWS ON THE WING

The din of chirping sparrows, the pecked-away places in the walls, the bedlam as adults and children chase flying birds from one corner to another, the flies, and the disease they carry, will soon be gone from the Nursery, because new screens will be protecting the health of the Buds. As the work of screening goes on and as the sparrows and the flies wing their way away from Kalika Bhuvan, we send you on the wings of prayer a blessing for responding to the call for help for the Buds. In behalf of the babies we thank you. May God bless you in your love for His little ones.

CAROL TERRY
THE YOUTH OF MUKTI HONOURED

'Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth' (Ecc. 12:1).

Examination papers, written in the many different languages of India, poured into the India Sunday School Union from 57,000 young people. This represented a year of diligent Bible study and much work, not only for those who wrote the examination, but for those who taught the participants. The examination covers a wide range of Bible stories, theological subjects, and a great deal of Scripture memorizing. Since the Primary children are not old enough to write the examination, theirs is taken orally. How worthwhile all this learning of the Word of God is! The Scriptures tell us, 'Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it' (Prov. 22:6).

The examination took place in November, 1947, and then came months of anxious waiting as the thousands of papers in many languages had to be corrected. It was a great day when in March ninety Certificates arrived in Mukti—every one of our girls who had taken the examination had passed. This is our third consecutive year of having a one-hundred-percent pass. The following is the report of this year's record: Honours—29; First Class—38; Second Class—21; Third Class—2.

The crowning joy was a letter to say that Mothi Sathe had received the Intermediate All-India, Sadhu Sunder Singh Medal, and also the regional medal, with a 95 percent pass. This means that from among all the Intermediate-age young people in the group of 57,000 who took the examination, Mothi was the highest in the nation and the highest in the Marathi language area. And then Shalini Dongre received the Junior All-India, Mrs. Devadatta Medal, and regional medal with an 89 percent pass, which means that from among all the Juniors in India Shalini was the highest in the nation and in our language area. It was a glad day for us as, in front of the whole church, these young people went forward to receive their awards of medals, Bibles, and Certificates from the hand of our Pastor, Mr. Hivale.

At the present time there is no medal for the Primary-age winner. We are hoping that next year we shall be able to give a Pandita Ramabai Medal to the highest in the nation of Primary age, which is the age of our Blossoms, in honour of a woman who not only belongs to Mukti, but to India.

GLADYS FLETCHER
‘As Jerusalem to the Jews, Benares to the Hindus, Mecca to the Mohammedans so is Mukti to the Indian Christian women. I have always enjoyed coming to Mukti and seeing God’s wonderful work here.’—Ethelbai Ward.

‘We looked forward to our visit to Mukti with great expectation, and were not disappointed. The kindness shown to us has quite overwhelmed us. Our spirits have been blessed in seeing the joy in the faces of hundreds of children and women studying together, working, playing, and representing countless hours of faithful leadership and help in the Spirit of Christ by His servants. Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by you in every place (2 Cor. 2: 14).’—Mr. and Mrs. Jack Derr.

‘I love it all—the gold mohur blooming on and on, shining brass vessels, clean, bright children, the industries, hospitality, spiritual life, and your faith in Him to keep the open door.’—Geraldine Chappell.

‘Mukti means an institution displaying the love of Christ—a place where Jesus could truly say, ‘Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me,’ a place where one feels a Spirit, a compassion, a united drive to realize the salvation of those who by circumstance of life may come to Mukti. Your labours are not in vain.’—Earl Lee.

‘Mukti—Pandita Ramabai’s memorial. Nay—more! The memorial of God’s work of grace in the life of one Indian woman. It was in 1936 that I brought three little sisters to Mukti from Bombay. One of them was wonderfully saved here in Mukti and is now training to be a Bible woman in Poona. The baby, then a year old, has been carefully nursed and is now growing up to be a healthy, sweet girl. Does it pay? I say yes. I am sure all these consecrated missionaries and workers at Mukti say yes too.

Home of refuge, Home of peace
Built on a life that to Jesus did yield,
Here many a sin-sick soul has found release,
And many a broken heart has been healed.

God bless them.’—Ruth Eckberg.
LITTLE MISSIONARIES

Some of our readers may recall the article in the last issue of the Prayer Bell on the Sunday School work carried on in the hills by the new missionaries studying the language. Little, ragged Hindus were reached with the gospel, as they sat around on the ground and eagerly listened to the words of life.

But they were not the only children taught in the hills. There was a Sunday School for children of the missionaries. The children in this class were tiny ones, perhaps the oldest being about four years of age. Every Sunday, tightly clasped in pudgy little hands, they brought their small offerings. At the close of the season they faced the big problem as to what to do with the money they had brought throughout the three months and had saved for the Lord’s work. It was a matter over which little hearts prayed. Mukti received their decision in the following letter, written by the Sunday School teacher, which accompanied their gift of Rs. 25–1–9.

‘Here is the Sunday School offering for the Mahableshwar season—Rs. 25–1–9. The teachers and children have decided that this money should be sent to Mukti Mission for clothes for the children. It has been a real pleasure to teach the missionary children, and we hope they all received a blessing from the lessons and fellowship together.’—Doris Frazer.

We know the angels in heaven rejoiced over these tiny hands and tiny hearts praying and giving for the glory of the Lord.

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