RAMABAI  MUKTI  MISSION
PRAYER BELL  November—December, 1949
Mukti’s needs are legion, but the need that eclipses all others is the spiritual need. For ten years there has been no resident pastor to shepherd the Bethel families. The spiritual need both inside and outside Mukti’s walls weighed heavily upon the hearts of our workers. There was much prayer that God would send us one chosen of Him to lead our children and adults out of darkness and defeat into light and victory.

When we heard that Mr. Chowdhari, our friend of many years, felt that he could no longer itinerate for the Children’s Special Service Mission because he felt his own family needed his presence more in the home, we coveted him for Mukti. There were other organizations that would have been glad to have had him, but God called him to Mukti and he was obedient to the call, even though it meant sacrifice.

If you could see the large company in the church on Sundays sitting in rapt attention listening to the messages, if you saw his tirelessness in working among the outside people often until the late hours of the night, I am sure you would agree that he is God’s gift to Mukti.

However, our eyes must not be unto man except as a tool. It is God’s Spirit that must do the work, as we all together pray and intercede for precious souls. Pray! Pray!

On November seventh Mukti welcomed two new missionaries from America, Miss Ruth Bollman and Miss Virginia Nicholson. They have happily settled into our family and are now busy with language study. They will need your prayers as they obliterate this barrier to India’s people.

—Bernice Steed.
TO FEED HIS LAMBS

It was early in the morning at 2.00 o'clock on Saturday, August 6, that I arrived in Mukti. Everything was quiet then, but at 7.00 o'clock of that same morning I heard many feet walking and voices whispering. Miss Steed knocked at my door and asked me to come out and meet the Mukti family. What a surprise! There they were—small and big, girls and women, boys and men, workers and missionaries—all standing in lines on both sides of the path to give me a hearty welcome. Soft, sweet voices sang a welcome song while little feet came forward and tiny hands presented garlands of scented flowers. Cameras were moving backwards and forwards taking pictures. It was a great joy that day to join the Mukti family as one of its missionaries, to work with them for our Lord.

I shall never forget those bright, shining eyes and clean faces that lined the pathway of welcome. The Lord's challenging question to Peter came to me like a shooting arrow, 'Lovest thou me more than these?' My reply to Him in Peter's words, as I felt my unworthiness for the work before me, was, 'Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee.' And His voice came back to me saying, 'Feed my lambs.'

All these twenty-two years of my service for Him with the Children's Special Service Mission, holding meetings in schools, in the open air, in churches, by the wayside, and in young people's camps, brought joy in feeding His lambs. My heart fills with gratitude and praise and joy as I go through the names of boys and girls who through that time came to love Him as their personal Saviour and who learned to feed on and love His Word. When I look back to those days of feeding and leading those young souls to Himself, I cannot but see thousands who were praying constantly for them.

In Mukti I have not only lambs but sheep as well to feed. How can I do this big task without someone praying for me and for these nearly 800 souls who live here? May I ask you, will you pray? —L. N. CHOWDHARI.
THE SONG THAT IS MUKTI

‘If you go, go all the way’ was a goad in the years of indecision. When my Lord showed ‘all the way’ to be Mukti, He supplied strength and assurance for the journey from home to a world that before had lived only in pictures, in books, and in dreams.

One day in Bible school I asked my Father for a genuine love for His people of India, since He had called me there. His answer quickly came, ‘I will do it when I put you there. Until then bear the burden I have given for these about you.’ As the ship docked at its first Indian port, Karachi, the Author of Faithfulness gave that Spirit-shed love for these people. Now they are my people. I am at home.

My happiest moment in India came on my first dawn in Mukti. Wee voices of song poured through the air. Oh, it seemed that hundreds of children swelled the anthem of joy to their loving Saviour. These same voices make the courts of Mukti ring at noon, at night, and at times I have not measured. To have missed the music of Mukti song alone would be punishment enough had I continued to resist the call of God.

The day before those voices made the dawn ring with music I had stepped from the train down into a Mukti welcome. Missionaries, a gaily decked tonga, and a joyful spirit ushered us to the gate.

Buds to sunset ones waited. ‘Welcome to you’ in English came carefully over tiny lips. They did work so hard to make those unfamiliar sounds. Sometimes in the excitement of garlands for the new moushies the song almost disappeared. Not confetti but ‘Salaam, Moushie’ showered us from every age. I hope the years of my life before them will increase and not lessen the welcome of my Lord’s presence among these, my own.

One year ago all of this world lay bathed in the vapours of dreams. Because my Father imparted His faithfulness to friends in the homeland and to those whom I have never seen, the dream is now blessed reality. I am grateful to each one. His grace through you has been sweet as we labour together in the gospel.

Many in our land have no song. I long to go all the way that not one shall lack opportunity to accept the Son who implants a song in the human heart.

‘And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord’ (Psa. 40:3).

—RUTH BOLLMAN.
HE KEEPETH HIS PROMISE FOREVER

Come with us to New York and see the daylight fading as the S.S. Steel King slowly pulls away from the wharf. The skyline of New York's skyscrapers stands out against the sunset sky. It is sunset for our life in the States.

The years of growing up in Japan are in the past, as are the years of study in the States. Through these experiences the Lord has been preparing me for future years of serving Him in India. At the dawn of a new day we watch expectantly for the first glimpse of the shores of a new home. There are new sights and sounds in Bombay, yes, but there is something familiar about it all, for it is the Orient where I grew up, and from the first it seemed like home.

'The Lord hath declared and the Lord will perform, He keepeth His promise forever.' These words have been verified the past few months in many ways. He raised up faithful Christian friends to pray and to give, that all needs might be met. He gave Christian fellowship aboard ship and protected us while we were on the deep. All the baggage was brought through customs with little trouble and arrived safely at Mukti soon after we came. The prayer of our hearts to be in God's place of service for us was fully realized when we were greeted at the gate by the missionaries and Indian friends.

But when we arrived and heard how the Lord has been supplying not only rain and food, but a harvest of souls, our cup of joy ran over. It is hard to settle down to long, labourious language study when there is so much to be done and one longs to be able to speak to the people. God is able, and we know there will be many praying for us. 'Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you' (2 Thess. 3:1).

'Will you not pray for us? Each day we need
Your prayers, for oft the way is rough and long,
And our lips falter and forget their song,
As we proclaim the Word men will not heed.

'Pray, pray for us. We are but vessels frail;
The world's appalling need would crush us down
Save that in vision we behold the crown
Upon His brow who shall at length prevail.'

—VIRGINIA NICHOLSON.
FIFTY THOUSAND SHEEP WITHOUT A SHEPHERD

'They were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered' (Ezek. 34:5). Yes, they are scattered, sheep without a shepherd. This scripture verse was more keenly visualized on this, my first trip to Pandharapur, than ever before. As one of our young teachers who was with us said, 'This sight I shall never forget as long as I live. My salvation has never meant to me what it means now and will mean henceforth. Certainly there is no hope without Christ.'

I have visited a number of Yatras (religious fairs) here in this land, but never did I see a sight like this one. Multitudes rushed towards the so-called holy river in the hope of washing away their sins. We were told that there were 50,000 pilgrims in the village. They said that these mass visits to this particular village are because each of the 33,000,000 gods of India has at least one image or idol there. We asked many pilgrims after they returned what they had received for worshipping the idol. Nine out of ten answered, 'We received nothing, but we spent and offered all of our money.' We asked them why they continued to fall at the feet of these idols, and they answered, 'Our forefathers established this custom, so we have to continue it.'

For three days there were good opportunities for witnessing. At the beginning of the Yatra the multitudes were so eager to get to their gods that they would not turn here nor there, but just ran for the gods. But after that crowds gave ear to the gospel. Many tracts were given out and Gospels sold, as well as some Testaments.

Some who heard the message on Monday came with many questions to ask and to hear more on Tuesday. Some sat and listened for two to three hours, as different ones gave the message of the cross. One young man came and joined the listening crowd almost from the beginning of the message. He stayed on and at the close asked for a Gospel. His face showed signs of keen interest. We hope and pray that he will continue to be interested enough to read and re-read the Gospel, believe, and receive salvation full and free. One man who opposed us took some of the listeners from our group and gave them cocoanut, but those who followed him were few.

Friends, do pray for these lost sheep without a shepherd.

—MARIE SCHRAG.
OUT OF DARKNESS AND BEATINGS
AND SIN THEY COME

Since my return in June, we have admitted many new girls into our Rescue Home, girls who know nothing about the victorious life in Christ. Our last admission was a young, ill-treated wife fifteen years of age. She came in great distress seeking shelter. She told us the following story:

'I have run away from my husband because he has beaten and burned me many times, and I can't stand it any longer.' She showed us the scars on her body and legs as she continued her story. 'I have run away many times before because of his cruel treatment, but usually I run to my parents' home and they have beat me and sent me back to my husband, telling me that I must suffer his beatings as they cannot afford to keep me. Please take me into your home, and I will work and do whatever you tell me to do. Please don't send me back to my husband or to my parents.' The girl was asked how long she had been married, and she replied, 'I was so very small I don't remember.' Will you pray for this young wife, that the light of the glorious gospel might shine in her heart? And will you also pray that her husband may not demand her back? He has another wife, and this little girl dreads the thought of ever having to return to him.

'Prayer changes things.'

We have girls in the Rescue Home who find it very hard to obey rules and they make things difficult for the matron in charge. They need much prayer, and patience is needed in dealing with them.

There are those from whom we receive joy because of their faithfulness and trust in Christ. Two from the Rescue Home are preparing to go through the waters of baptism. One is a girl who came out of Hinduism and has now come to know the Lord as her Saviour. The other is a mother who came into our home with her little baby. The baby is now a boy of five years. She has recently accepted Christ as her Saviour, and it has been wonderful to watch how the Lord has been dealing with her. Two girls in the Rescue Home are now attending the Bible School. I would value your prayers in behalf of these girls who come to us out of darkness as lost sheep for whom Christ died. —ELIZABETH MORRIS.
HIDDEN TREASURE

Among the dust and the cobwebs of the years, I recently found great hidden treasure—some of the earliest records of Mukti. Familiar names of those who are now Bible-women, matrons, teachers, and nurses in Mukti today, shone forth from the murky gloom of the past with a radiancy all their own. These who had been brought out of great tribulation—famine, disease, sorrow, and suffering—are now adorning the Name of the King of kings. Other treasure I found also, of a different kind. It was the names of those in America, England, Australia, and New Zealand who prayed so faithfully in those early days for these who were the flotsam and jetsam of humanity in India.

I thought of those in the homelands today, those who are praying for our babies, our children, our teen-age girls, and asked that they might not grow weary in this labour of love, that in the years to come they, too, might have the joy of knowing their 'prayer children' have been redeemed and are as shining jewels of the King of kings in this new India of today. —KATHLYN HOLMES-LIBBIS.

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