'Will you take my baby girl?'

RAMABAI MUKTI MISSION
July–August, 1957

Yale Divinity Library
New Haven, Conn.
These four arrived on the same train

For many months our cradles in the hospital were full to overflowing with 'Buds', the baby girls God had given into our care. Four of these 'Buds' were placed in the compound of the 'Blossoms', while others were placed in our new family groups. This left us many empty cradles.

The Lord soon showed His plan in this, for then many little ones began to arrive. One came from a distant village, while another was brought because her mother died. In the picture on the cover you can see the sad-faced father and one of his sons as the man asks, 'Will you take my baby girl? Her mother died and I cannot care for her'.

'But wouldn't you like to get married again and keep your little girl?' the missionary asked.

'No, I will never marry again. A second wife would not be kind to the baby or to my two sons. I can keep the boys but cannot raise a baby. She would only die if she stayed with me. Someone told me you love little girls here and know how to take care of them'. The father wiped the tears from his eyes as he said good-bye to his baby.
Slowly the cradles began filling up as one baby girl after another was brought to us. One was taken by the Lover of Little Children unto Himself, but soon another came to take her place. There were still seven empty cradles waiting to be filled.

One day a letter came from a mission hospital telling of four baby girls needing a home. Could we take them? Also there was a little boy of five who was a victim of cerebral palsy from birth. Since we had a physiotherapist, we were asked if we would also take him. Before they arrived, a village woman came with a baby for our fold. At last came the word to expect the four babies and the crippled boy on the morning train. Four nurses went to meet them. As we waited on the platform, we wondered what they would be like, whether they would be well or sick, and we were prepared to love them all.

We watched every compartment as the train pulled into the station, but saw no sign of four babies and a crippled boy. Two of us went to the back of the train and two to the front searching for them. The train’s whistle blew, and we decided they must have missed the train. Then it was that we saw a missionary and an Indian helper struggling to get out of the train past a crowd of people in the doorway. For a few moments confusion reigned, and someone ran to tell the guard to stop the train. Babies, boxes, bottles, bundles of clothing and blankets seemed to be everywhere, with a shower of train soot over all. As the train once more began to pull out, all were safely on the platform, and each of us found ourselves holding a baby. They looked confused after a night on the train, but not one was crying, and the tiniest one was fast asleep.

For little Dadu of the cerebral palsy it was a different matter. He had had a terrifying journey. Each time the train’s whistle had blown, he had been frightened and had gone off into spasms. Often a child like Dadu is used by his parents to beg and thus help increase the family income, but his parents are Christians. They brought him to a mission hospital in the hope that something could be done for him. From there he was sent to us for special physiotherapy treatment, and he may have to have an operation. When Dadu is better, his parents want him back. He has a sweet smile when he is relaxed and happy, and he is not a dull child. The parents are able to help a little with the many expenses that will be incurred by giving him a chance to live a more normal life. We are looking to our heavenly Father to supply all that is needed for Dadu.

Two new babies have now been added to the four, and every cradle is filled. As He has brought these little ones to us, so He will continue to work in their lives. We believe He has a plan for each of them and only want to be used of Him in helping to fulfil that plan.
The bullocks received a royal welcome when they were introduced to the Mukti Family by Miss Callan

'I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord,  
O'er mountain, or plain, or sea;  
I'll say what you want me to say, dear Lord,  
I'll be what you want me to be'.

Often we sing this hymn without realizing all that it may involve for us. That thought has occurred to me on various occasions. A missionary's life can never be called dull. There has been the variety of stitching up cows torn by barbed wire, dressing sores on bullocks, treating goats, chickens, and other animals, supervising the printing press, taking funeral services in the absence of the pastor, teaching adult literacy, housekeeping for the missionary family, and learning the intracacies of the Sub-treasurer's office. This is a normal list for most missionaries in Mukti, but to it these last two months has been added supervision of the farm. With a manager for the dairy and one for the fields, this did not appear at first too formidable a task, but there is more than meets the eye. Several new lessons have been
learned, and the latest has been the cause of much amusement to our missionary family.

On return from vacation, I learned that four of our bullocks were too old to do much work, and that we should buy four young bulls. The best market in this area is at Baramati, which is about twenty-eight miles from here by a third-class road or fifty-four miles by a national highway. We were informed that the short-cut was in good condition, and started off on it with three of our men in our station wagon. For about seventeen miles the road was good, but after that the car had to go very slowly, avoiding pot holes and ruts as much as possible. In one part rough rocks had been thrown down to build up the road, and the car jolted along on these, while in another section heaps of gravel and stones at both sides of the road left only enough room for one-way traffic. At the end of an hour and forty-five minutes we arrived at Baramati, thoroughly shaken and glad to be there at last.

The men went ahead to look out the desired animals and bargain for them, while Miss Fletcher and I bargained for some fruit, ordered some fertilizer after listening to a long discourse on its amazing properties, and visited the public health office for some information about D.D.T. powder and rat exterminators.

When we received word to come to the animal bazaar, we went there trying to appear composed and well informed about bulls. Lying at the gate were some scraggy bullocks, lines of carts and lorries, and some men were pulling on a rope which had a goat tied on the other end with its feet firmly fixed and every inch of it showing determination to remain there. She was obviously a new purchase and did not approve of her new masters.

We came to a large open space with crowds of people around. To the right were goats, with carts scattered all over the place. Toward the middle were two long ropes with bulls of all sizes, shapes, and colours tied to them. To the left we saw a fine bull which we learned our men were trying to purchase. The price was too high, so we passed on up the line trying to look as though we were not even interested. He was a fine animal, and it was hard to think that we might not get him. We then examined a pair which our men had chosen. We learned that one had six teeth and the other eight, but as the last two teeth were still small, he was still quite young. Their mouths were opened, and we had to take a good look. By this time we were the centre of attraction, as a large crowd of interested people watched us. I was clutching a bag containing three thousand rupees and was looking to the Lord to protect from thieves. We had to watch the bulls walk and trot a bit, but the crowd made that almost...
impossible. Then, too, the other bulls for sale were in such close proximity that we had to make some quick moves.

Nearby stood another young bull, a two-year-old, who was obviously an aristocrat. He seemed upset by the noise, but we were assured that he was most gentle and was accustomed to women. In fact, a woman had tied him there. The routine examination had to be done, and as his owner and the owner of the pair were ready to sell at a reasonable price, we made our way to the office. This was no easy task, as buffaloes were in the way and bulls which had been sold were lined up at the office window to enable the clerk to write a description of each one on the receipt. When the owners of the first bull thought that we were not going to buy him, they started to decrease their price, and we were able to buy the bull at a good price.

By the time our business was completed, there were several goats in the office with us in addition to the line of bulls outside. However, we made our escape, gave the men the money they would need as they walked our four new bullocks back to Mukti, and started off for home. Our return journey on the national highway was completed in exactly the same time as it had taken us to go by the short-cut and with much more comfort.

It was good to see the bulls arrive safely at Mukti on the following afternoon. They received a royal welcome which they did not really appreciate. Many men of this district have called to inspect them and to give their opinion and advice.

We praise God for His hand of blessing upon what He has called us to do no matter what that task may be, and request prayer that our oxen may be strong to labour and that in all things the Lord may be glorified.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Many in Mukti have been ill with the ‘Asian influenza’, but we praise the Lord that there have been no serious cases and that the epidemic is abating. Pray for those still ill with it and for our tiny babies, who are weak and in need of much loving care.

The evangelistic work in the villages had to be stopped because of the epidemic of influenza, but now that it is abating, the gospel teams are starting out into the villages again. Pray that they may be led to prepared hearts, and pray that their own hearts may be ready before the Lord to meet the challenge.

Remember the Bible revisers as they press steadily onward toward the goal of a completed Bible. The work is very meticulous, and they need the Lord’s guidance continually. Great sums are still needed for the printing of the first edition, which we hope will be of 10,000 copies.
MAIL NOW FOR CHRISTMAS

Balloons that squeak, balloons that soar in the air, balloons that can stand on their own feet, balloons in the shape of rabbits and ducks, balloons that are red and yellow, blue and pink, balloons that can be tucked under one's pillow at night, balloons, balloons, balloons—this is one of the greatest delights of our children at Christmas. We do manage fairly well to keep the balloons out of the church, but that is compensated for by their being able to wear new hair ribbons on their black braids. All this is made possible by you who are our friends and know what Christmas can mean to the heart of a child.

You are invited to send Christmas cards to our children, each containing a balloon and a ribbon, if you would care to do so. We shall be glad to put the name of a child on the card when it arrives. You may address the envelopes:

Care of Miss Carol Terry
Ramabai Mukti Mission
Kedgaon, Poona District
India

We appreciated very much the thoughtfulness of friends who sent parcels last year containing many Christmas cards and ribbons, but found that the duty on such parcels was very high. It is best to mail the cards individually, as there is no duty on a single card containing just one ribbon and a balloon. There are some who wish to send gifts for our children's Christmas. It is best to send money for such gifts to our secretaries, and then the gifts will be purchased here in India.

Way down deep in the heart of a child there is a greater joy to Christmas than the surface delights, great as they may be. The story of our Saviour, manger-born, is sacredly precious to each of our children. Will you follow your gifts with your prayers, that it might be a time when the full devotion of hearts may be given unto Him who was born to die on Calvary that we might live?

As we pray that the holy hush of true worship might come to the heart of each one at Mukti during our Christmas services, we pray for you His love, His peace, and the joy of touching the souls He would have you touch for Him.
The Ramabai Mukti Mission is an international, undenominational Mission of evangelical faith, with representatives in the home countries as follows:

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