South African Church Railway Mission.

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Light for the Line.

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Members of the Staff are asked to send in to the Editor, every quarter, names of new members of Guild of Good Shepherd, Mothers' Union, and G.F.S., for insertion in Light for the Line.

LETTER FROM THE HEAD.

December 8, 1916.

Since I last wrote my notes for Light for the Line, on August 1st, I have travelled some 14,500 miles, visiting practically all the centres of our activity. This will give you some idea of how very widespread is the area over which the Church Railway Mission works. The chief objects of my journeys were to meet the members of the Staff on their own sections of responsibility, to get to know more of the country generally, to get into touch with our friends along the Line, and to settle various matters of business needing attention. I took with me some War slides I brought out from England and, when opportunity occurred, gave lectures, on the war, to those whose hearts are right and who are as keen as anybody but who seldom get the chance of seeing or hearing anybody or anything except their immediate neighbours and surroundings: no charge to enter was made in any case (except at George), but an opportunity was given for paying to get out and, judging by results, most people were glad to do it at the price. At George £9 6s. was taken, of which £2 2s. went for expenses of Hall, etc., £3 12s. to the Mission Funds and £3 12s. sent by Canon Price to the Blinded Soldiers' Fund. At Waterval Boven £11 6s. 4d. was received and £3 given to the local Mission Funds and £8 6s. 4d. paid into the Special Lantern Lecture Fund, which also received the following contributions:—Victoria Falls, £10; Livingstone, £8 6s.; Kafue, £12 18s.; Francistown, £4 19s. 3d.; Plumtree, £3 11s. 9d.; Bulawayo, £3 13s. 6d.; Mahalapye, £3 14s.; Tsumeb, £2 6s.; Otjiwarongo, £3 6s.; Karibib, £9 7s.; Windhuk Station, £6; Windhuk Institute, £5 12s. 6d.; Albrechts (4th S.A.M.R.), £14 10s.; Usakos, £7 12s.; Rosmead, £1 4s.; Gwanda, £3 13s. 6d.; and Essexvale, £5 9s. 6d., making a total of £126 12s. 10d. After deducting the money received at George and the £3 at Boven, as explained above, we are left with £114 6s. 10d. to spend. I wrote a short note for last month's issue, on my way to Bulawayo, telling you of the fire which had destroyed our Headquarters and everything belonging to our two Chaplains there, except what they fortunately had with them. In response to my appeal on their behalf a total of £18 6s. has been received from sympathising friends; to this we have added the £3 12s. from George
and £33 2s. from the Lantern Fund of £114 6s. 10d., making a total of £55, which has been sent to the Chaplains as a little help to enable them to replace some of the many things they lost by the fire. This leaves us with £81 4s. 10d., and we mean to make it up to £100 as soon as possible, if we are spared, and then divide it between the Blinded Soldiers' Fund and the Widows and Orphans of the Jutland fight. At a time like this we all feel that it is a great pleasure, as well as a real duty, to do what we can to help, no matter how "hard-up" we may be ourselves, and it is difficult to think of any funds being raised at present more pressing for our help and support. I am deeply grateful for the response which has been made, but, after all, what are we doing compared with those who are shedding their blood and giving their lives for our protection at this time? It is sometimes said "People are getting tired of giving"! Could a more contemptible expression be found, when our manhood is making so great a sacrifice for us? Suppose they "get tired" of shedding their blood and giving their lives! what then? We certainly would not be able to sit so comfortably in our homes and have so much to spend on ourselves.

I am grateful, too, for the opportunity the Lectures gave me of meeting a great number of our friends scattered along the Line. I should like to give you some account of my journey, of the friends I met, of the adventures (one day I acted as Assistant Steward in the Dining Car, as the Chief Steward was single-handed and a lot of our men were returning from German East; "Cold feet" isn't the word when an inexperienced novice tries to carry five plates of porridge—not to mention five plates of soup—while the train is shaking at "top pressure": but it is wonderful how the feet "warm up" when one gets used to it), of the encouragements and disappointments, but you will see that my space is already nearly filled up; so I must be content to say that I am more impressed than ever with the great need for doing what the Mission has taken in hand and how unspeakably grateful I am to our band of workers for the devoted way in which they try to minister to and care for God's people scattered along the Line, quite regardless of their own fatigue and dangers. If you have nothing else to do just get a map from a Railway Time Table and try to find all the places I have mentioned above.

One thing I must mention, however, and that is the most wonderful change that has taken place in S.W. Africa since my last visit in December, 1915: then the state of things might be described as "confusion worse confounded"—a credit to nobody and an annoyance to all. But now, and you have to know both sides to really appreciate what has been done, one can travel as comfortably as in any part of the Union, trains are punctual and everything is neat and tidy. The very great-
Light for the Line.

Best credit is due to all concerned, from the highest to the lowest, for this splendid state of things: but for having seen it one could hardly have believed that it was possible and it makes one proud to be connected with a Railway Service which can accomplish such things. You will be sorry to hear that our good friend, Mr. Esdaile, did over-tax his powers of endurance in S.W. Africa, as I feared he would: on my arrival at Karibib one could see at a glance that he was “gone in”: he has done splendid work up there and we are grateful to him for it; the only thing to be done was to send him down to the coast, and I am thankful to say that, under the good and most generous care of the Rector, Dr. Schloesser, he is making some progress towards recovery at Port Alfred; but for the present the doctors will not hear of his returning to his beloved South-West. Meanwhile Mr. Martyn Harries is taking his place there. Mr. Winnington Ingram’s course with us is nearly run and he was due to return to England in February: I have received a cable to say that his relief unfortunately cannot come out. At present it is impossible to say what arrangements can be made, but we sympathise with Mr. Ingram— for to him it is a great personal disappointment in many ways—and we are grateful to him for his most kind offer to do anything he can to help us in the difficulty.

Our old friend Archdeacon Rogers has sailed for England and has promised to do what he can to obtain help for us. As Mr. Martyn Harries has had to relieve Mr. Esdaile during his time of sickness, we must ask Mr. Harries’ friends down south to have patience for the present and to be assured that they are not forgotten: as soon as possible Mr. Harries will be back at his own job.

We have lost the services of Miss Watson and Miss Heddy and it is with very real regret that we said “goodbye” to them: they have laboured most conscientiously almost single handed, just “keeping on keeping on”: they will both be greatly missed not only by the Mission itself but also by a host of friends made along the Line during their years of service. We offer them our grateful thanks and wish them God’s blessing for the future. Miss Beckwith was put to work immediately on her arrival in England: we have not yet heard when she is returning, but we hope it will be soon.

It was with great regret that we had to take Miss Holmes from her section in the Transvaal: in the short time she was there she had got a real grip of things and the work was developing splendidly, but as we had no Priest the only thing possible was to ask Miss Holmes to take on Miss Watson’s section and Miss Glasier to take Miss Heddy’s. We are grateful to them both for the cheerful way they accepted being “shunted about.” Miss Glasier will be much missed in the Grahamstown Diocese and we trust before long to be able to fill her place.
Miss Attlee has returned to the Transvaal: we were glad to see her out again and much improved in health, and we hope she will not again overtax her strength—but what's the use of talking? For the present she is "loaned" to the Diocese of Pretoria.

The Rev. A. C. Hobson has already got to work: we extend to him a very hearty welcome and trust that he may have much joy and happiness in his work: his section, we hope, will be from De Aar to Francistown.

It is a time of anxiety and stress, but we can, if we will, overcome our difficulties if only we do all that we can and have faith. "Serve God and keep cheerful" is very good advice.

Just one word to wish you all God's richest blessings in the New Year: may it be, if it is God's will, a year of victory and so of peace: if it is, who will ever forget 1917? Please give us more than ever your help, sympathy and prayer.

With only one exception no toys have been provided, or asked for, for the children at Christmas since the war began: it is a time of sacrifice for all and we are quite sure that the children will understand, and know that they are not forgotten. Necessary things have to be kept going and energy is needed for it, but to inspan energy for anything not actually necessary at a time like this is wrong: everybody can and ought to be doing something either to help win the war or to provide for the needs of those who are called on to suffer owing to the war, the wounded, the sick, the homeless—all who are in need. The one exception is for the children who have gone with their parents to live on the lines of South-West Africa: they are all doing very necessary "war work" and in doing it they are called on to "go without" many things they have been used to: those of us who have been up there are conscious of the special claims of the children in South-West Africa. We are grateful to our friends up at Yeoville, some generous Port Elizabeth merchants and others for providing, as far as is possible, a little Christmas cheer for those children in the captured Protectorate.

R. Thornely Jones.

GRAHAMSTOWN DIOCESE.

NAAUWPOORT.

There are only one or two outstanding events to write about this quarter. All Souls' Day passed off very happily. There were more communicants this year than there have been for several years past—a good sign, especially when we remember that the English Church population here is not so large as it was a few years ago. Just after All Souls' Day the Sunday School children held a produce sale to help the Church funds, and after paying all expenses, over £11 was handed over to the Church. The children are to be congratulated on the enthusiasm and hard work they put into it. Talking about the Sunday School, I should like to take this opportunity to write a word or two in appreciation of the help the
teachers have given me. Miss A. Salvesen, as organist and occasional teacher, her sister, Miss S. Salvesen, and Miss Damant, Miss Deverill, Miss Laubmeyer and Ivy Clarke have during the past months been of great assistance, and have done their work in a capable, trustworthy and loyal manner. Grace Orton, the senior girl in the Sunday School, has, too, been of great help as monitor. On the Sundays I am away they take Sunday School themselves.

I think many of us were really sorry to say goodbye to Mrs. Frances. Those who knew her, and her husband, miss them both greatly. Our good wishes go with her. She leaves a real blank behind her. And now we hear that Mr. Craddock and his family are being transferred to Mafeking. They too have been associated with Naauwpoort and All Souls' Church for I believe some 14 years. Mr. Craddock has served as churchwarden, and his daughter for nine years was a member of the choir and has given loyally and ungrudgingly of her best. We shall miss them all, for they have been good friends to many of us, and loyal members of the English Church.

Since I last wrote I have visited HANOVER ROAD (three times), COOKHOUTSE (three times), WILD-FONTEIN, TAAIBOSCH, SHERBORNE and NORVAL'S PONT.

Your prayers are asked for the following who are on active service:—


From Wildfontein: Ernest Blewett (missing), Tom Blewett.

From Taalbosch: Walter Forster.

From Cookhouse: Jack Vincent, Harold Vincent, Driver Montgomery, Fred Harvey.

Also for Eustace Hill (wounded), George Knapp Fisher, Laurie Skey, who are acting as Chaplains in our Army or Navy.

G. A. LEJEUNE.

COOKHOUSE.

Since I last wrote a very successful concert, organised by Mrs. Wise and Mrs. Eve, has been held. The proceeds were given to the Church funds, which were helped considerably. As there are a good many repairs to be done to the church, we shall be glad of generous gifts of money to the Church Fund.

I should like to take this opportunity of saying how much we miss the Vincents. They lived here for many years and were loyal members of the Church. Mr. Vincent acted as churchwarden, and priests-in-charge were always sure of a real welcome and hospitality at the Vincents' home. We wish them all happiness at Cradock, and a speedy and safe return for their two soldier sons, Harold and Jack.

We were all sorry to hear that Mr. Weddell's son had been wounded. We wish him a speedy and complete recovery.

I should also like to take this opportunity of bringing to your notice the good work done by our two present churchwardens, Mr. Eve and Mr. Wise. Their help is, to me, quite invaluable. They do their work quietly, loyally and ungrudgingly, and spare neither time nor trouble where their Church is concerned.

G. A. LEJEUNE.

BLOEMFONTEIN
DIOCESE.

It is just three months since I landed at Capetown. The first place to which I went was BELLEVUE; there we had a Lantern Service, at which a splendid
number of children was present. At MIDDLETON we had an Evening Service and a Celebration of the Holy Eucharist next morning.

At COMMADAGGA we had similar services, and also at SHELDON, BUSHMAN'S RIVER and COERNEY.

On the Sunday services were held at GLENCONNOR and the attendance was good.

At BARROE and MOUNT STEWART we had Evening Prayer, and a Celebration of the Holy Eucharist the following morning.

From Mount Stewart, I went without stopping through Graaff-Reinet to ROSMEAD. I found myself in Rosmead on August 4th: to my surprise and subsequent pleasure I found that it had been arranged for me to take a Special Service on the anniversary of the War. The people turned up splendidly: there must have been about 70 in the Church. In spite of a difficulty with lamps and hymn books, we managed to have an impressive service.

On the Sunday we had services at STORMBERG and again the attendance was good. We went to CYPHERGAT for a very short visit, also calling at CARROLLSTOWN siding.

I was able to be present at the Confirmation held by the Bishop of Grahamstown at Queenstown. There were three candidates from Stormberg, one from Cyphergat and one from Carrickmore.

Leaving the Eastern line for the time I came up into the Free State. We had services at VET RIVER and at THEUNISSEN during the week. On the Sunday I was at LINDLEY ROAD all day.

Going further north, we had services at KOPJES, DOVER, NATAL SPRUIT, MEYERTON, VENTERSBURG ROAD, WELGELEBEN, EENGEVONDEN and BETHANY. At Bethany I must say a word about a Baptism I had there. The baby was only three days old, and the mother was still in bed, but it was an opportunity that could not be allowed to pass. We must have had about fifteen people present at the Service. Everyone who could get there was there, and the Service was most solemn. From Trompsburg Miss Heddy and I walked six miles to Van Zyl's Tank, because there was a baby to be baptized. The great-great-grandmother was present at the service!!! When I left the main line I went on to the Bloemfontein-Moderpoort-Bethlehem. I must say that I was glad to get among the mountains again. The scenery along this stretch of line is really very grand. My first services were held at Sepani. Then I went on to Maseru, the only railway station in Basutoland, after having safely passed the Basutoland customs officer. On the Sunday I had services at Marseilles; in the early morning I walked about four miles up the line to the ganger's house. He had been prepared by the S.S.M. at Modderpoort, but had not had an opportunity to make his Communion before.

I visited TWEESPRUIT and WESTMINSTER, but could not stay for services there; the latter place already has a regular service, and I hope that something will soon be done at Tweespruit. I spent the eve of St. Luke's day and part of the Festival itself at the S.S.M. at Modderpoort. It was most delightful to get away from the Railway and to spend a little time among such pleasant surroundings. I only hope that I may be able to stay a little longer next time I am round that way. I went on through GUMTREE, FICKSBURG and FOURIESBURG, at each place seeing the people at the stations and some of those living near. These three places all have regular services. At Slabberts I had services on the Sunday, and went out to Mr. Hayter's farm in the afternoon. I had expected to get away on the Monday, but found that there were no
trains and so I had to wait until the Tuesday; the time passed so pleasantly that I shall want to make the same mistakes about the trains when next I go round. Just beyond Bethlehem I went to SHERBLOK, KESTELL ROAD, GLEN RENNIE, ABERFELDY, KAALLAAGTE. The vigil of All Saints I spent in Bloemfontein, and on All Saints’ Day I was able to celebrate at St. Michael’s Home; the rest of the day I spent in the train.

Everywhere that I visited in the Free State I was most kindly received, and I look forward to renewing my acquaintance with my friends there.

In closing I must say one word as to why I am now in S.W.A. When I got back to Grahamstown the Head told me that the Rev. E. G. Esdaile was on the sick list, and that the doctor would not at present hear of his return to the South-West. Accordingly I was sent up for the time being.

H. Martyn Harries.

MASHONALAND DIOCESE.

The School, Plumtree,
December 4th.

I am a fixture here till next Monday (with the exception of a flying visit to Tsessebee for Morning Services next Sunday) as I am invigilating for the Cape Matric. and Junior Certificate exams., for which Dunley-Owen, the present head boy of the school, and Albertson are the respective candidates. We are all sorry that this is their last term here—Owen hopes to get a commission, for which he will be well qualified after his long service in the Cadets, and Albertson is going somewhere down south: they are both regular communicants and their influence as prefects has been most excellent. It is the keenness of the boys here over their Confirmation work and their regular habits of Communion—that keeps one going at Plumtree, for the slackness of the surrounding farmers and of the Railway people here is terrible; I am ashamed to confess it, but I believe it is the regularity of opportunities of worship during the past fourteen years that makes the glaring contrast between Church attendance here and at other places on the Line. We had nine candidates from the school at the Confirmation on St. Simon and St. Jude’s Day and Mr. Robertson came in from Figtree: the Bishop was impressed with the earnest spirit of the candidates and he gave a most inspiring and helpful address on the third verse of St. Jude’s Epistle. I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my deep sympathy with the Van Rooyens on the death of their mother in September, just a month after a terrible burning accident: we were able to have a Celebration at the farm on the day after her death, when the four children and their brother-in-law communicated. They are most good about coming in for services, as it means early rising to be here for the 7.30 Celebration: yesterday I was surprised to see “O’boss,” who had had a most tiring day at the fête and a late night with the concert, arriving in good time for the early Service. What a pity the large population in this neighbourhood do not follow this excellent example!

On the Line south of Bulawayo I have started Services at SYRINGA, TSESSEBEE and GARTH FARM, MARULA: my second visit to Tsessebee ended in disaster as I took a “short cut” from Garth Farm to Marula Siding and, after being hopelessly bushed, reached the farm from the opposite direction three hours after leaving it! It was then a quarter of an hour too late for the mail train, so I had to be content with an early morning trip there the following day to make my apologies. I am giving the Services next Sunday, but I personally wouldn’t
feel much inclined to drive eight or nine miles each way on an ox-wagon after the previous fiasco; however, we shall see. RAMAQUABANE turned out to a man for the last Service, and I was able to get over the following morning, after a Celebration on the Williams’ farm, to the BARALONG STADT for Holy Communion in the little Church. FIGTREE was most encouraging; we had eight communicants, one family drove in 16 miles and one 13 miles, and Ganger Hill of Westaire walked six miles for the Morning Service, which all just shows what people can do if they make up their minds to it.

The WEST NICHOLSON Line trip in October was as enjoyable as ever: the good BUSH TICK folk walked over to the Godwin Mine, where the Intabane Mine population joined them for Evensong, and Holy Communion was celebrated at the Bush Tick. Mr. Barritt was a most attentive host at the Godwin and the Standens on the Bush Tick continued the hospitality they have always shown to the Railway Mission. The FILLABUSI centre on the Fred Mine amply repaid me for the 23 mile ride out there, as we had 10 communicants and 26 at Morning Service, and three adults wished to be prepared for Confirmation: several people walked in from places three and four miles out on a very sultry day. At BALLA-BALLA we had the total population of 10 and the singing was better than ever, which is largely due to the skill of Mrs. Sanderson, who really “leads” on the piano. To SABIWA the Manager of the Long John Mine kindly brought a party in his motor, and I am only sorry that a desperate theological argument over the dinner table made me forget the time and keep them waiting, till gently reminded by the toot of the horn! GWANDA produced 26, which was encouraging after my first experience there when we had the police and three residents. The Head lectured there last week and we had quite a nice Service at the awkward hour of 6 p.m. The new Magistrate, Mr. Yates, has two boys at the school, one of whom, Frank, was confirmed this year: his Scripture knowledge reflects the greatest credit on his teachers—at home and at Gatooma Sunday School. I found on my last trip that Friday-Tuesday was too long for WEST NICHOLSON, but this time the contrast was rather sharp as the train was late arriving and I only had from 7 p.m. to 7.30 a.m. the following morning. I was glad to be able to give Communion to my first ganger candidate—James Louw—before leaving for ESSEXVALE on Saturday. Essexvale was as “churchy” as ever and the experiment of a Children’s Service at The Homestead answered very well: I think the Head enjoyed his week-end there and I know his visit gave very much pleasure—a most helpful sermon on God’s need of each one of us. There was a crowded attendance and a most generous collection at his lecture on the War. There are four farms, the Cattle Inspector’s house, the Police Camp and the hotel at Essexvale: they produced 12 communicants, offertories amounting to £3 9s. 6d. and a collection of £5 9s. 6d.: what do you think of that, only a few weeks after a thorough canvass of the district for the “Our Day Fund”?

Confirmation work in October, forced me to confine my visits on the Northern Line to WANKIE and MALINDI. Wankie was terrific—a steady temperature of 109 deg. in the shade and everyone about as gone in as I was myself: we tried Evensong out of doors, the only drawback being the foul language used by a Christmas beetle who had the misfortune to be caught by one of the dogs of the congregation! The attendance was very small, but I always feel there is a lot of excuse for the inhabitants of that sultry spot: the Railway people have a heavier day on Sunday than at
any other time—on my last visit three specials came through in addition to the ordinary traffic—and the Mine employees often have to work on Sundays. Anyhow Wankie finished me off this time, as I raised a heavy cold and temperature which only left me, in despair, after my midnight ride out to the Matoppos after the Plumtree Confirmation. The Bishop took Plumtree and Francistown for me, so I felt I had a Sunday to spare in November and put in a most enjoyable five days in Johannesburg, spending most of the time with our old Head, who was as genial and cheery as ever, and what more can be said?

Our Services at the Terminus Hotel rather interfere with Sunday trade—and vice-versa—so we held them this time at the Dousetts, they kindly sending in a cart which brought out Engine-driver Field and the Guard of my beloved Plumtree “Coffee-Pot” Motor Train. I want, however, to get the loan of the billiard room for Christmas Services.

My Christmas programme is a full one and I only hope the rains won’t prevent me carrying it out.

Excuse the length of this letter, but these three-hour papers give one a lot of time for scribbling. Only let me wish all readers a happy New Year and may 1917 bring Peace once more.

Ralph S. Seacome.

PRETORIA DIOCESE.

Waterval Boven, Eastern Transvaal, December 12, 1916.

My dear Editor,

The work on this Section piles up so quickly that it is no easy matter to sit down and write even one’s quarterly letter for Light for the Line. Still somehow it must be done, more especially as there is a good deal to record this time.

First of all come the Confirmations which were just about to be held when I sent in my last letter. The first one took place at RAYTON on Sept. 14th, and nine candidates were presented in the Schoolroom there where we hold our Services. Two were from Rayton itself, four from HATHERLY, two from BRONKHORSTSPRUIT and one from PREMIER MINE.

Grateful thanks are due to many members of the Rayton congregation for all their kind help, not only in arranging the room so carefully and tastefully and thereby contributing to the reverence and impressiveness of the Service, but also for most kindly providing tea for us all afterwards. The Rayton Scouts, each of whom I know must have far exceeded his minimum of “one good turn” on that particular day, were here, there and everywhere giving their cheery help as only Scouts can. Many thanks to them too!

After the Confirmation the Bishop solemnly dedicated the Troop’s new flag presented by Mr. and Mrs. Fogwill.

It is rather a far cry from Rayton to NELSPRUIT where the next Confirmation took place, two candidates being presented here from ALKMAAR, a small place in the vicinity.

Next the Bishop visited KOMATIPOORT, the frontier township in the far eastern corner near Portuguese territory, and for the first time in its history a Confirmation took place here. On arriving, however, we found my solitary candidate in this place so unwell that he could not leave his bed, so the Bishop had to confirm him privately. It was a great disappointment both to him and to us that we could not have a public service, but under the circumstances it was impossible. Though the opportunity of witnessing publicly to one’s faith may not always come in the way we plan, yet, as events in connection with this particular case have clearly shown, it
always does come in some other and perhaps even more helpful and definite way.

Leaving the Low Country behind us we retraced our steps up the Delagoa Bay Line towards the cooler regions of the High Veld and at WATERVAL BOVEN the Bishop confirmed three more candidates on Sept. 27th.

Finally, within the last few days a Confirmation has been held at Pretoria Cathedral when another Railway Mission candidate from KOEDOESPOORT was presented, bringing the total number of those confirmed from this section during the year up to sixteen.

Turning from Confirmations to items of general news the first thing to mention (and with great regret) is that Miss Holmes, who has since April been doing such admirable work among the women and children of the High and Middle Veld districts is to leave this section for the Free State, which is at present practically without any workers.

I am hoping that her removal may be only temporary as the loss is a very serious one, involving as it does the halving of all the Sunday School work, not to speak of the loss of her valuable help with Confirmation candidates and in many other ways.

Talking of High Veld Sunday Schools naturally turns one's thoughts to another loss we have sustained in the departure of Miss Parkins from WATERVAL BOVEN after three years' faithful work cheerfully given in connection with the Sunday School there. She and Mrs. Russell between them have loyally week by week kept the Sunday School work going and it is good to notice that the children attending show a steady increase in numbers. A presentation was made to Miss Parkins by the children a few days before she went away as a mark of esteem and a small token of gratitude for the work she has done among them.

Congregations are keeping up well and in several instances steadily increasing. Waterval Boven is at present an exception owing not only to the fact that among the men at the Front are several who were most regular at the Services, but also to the fact that many other hitherto regular attenders have seldom had a Sunday free from work lately owing to the great scarcity of men on the running staff due to the numerous enlistments.

Besides Boven, Services have been held once, twice or more times at MACHADODORP, DALMANUTHA, PAN, BRONKHORSTSPRUIT, RAYTON, HATHERLY, KINROSS, ELAND'S RIVER, ALKMAAR, DUIVELSKLOOF, ELANDSHOEK, DELMAS, ELOFF, BONNEFOI, CROWN DOUGLAS and MALELANE, while places visited without Services include WONDERFONTEIN, DULSTROOM, SILVERTON, KOEDOESPOORT, WILGE RIVER, NELSPRUIT, KOMATIPOORT, TZANEEN, RAMADIEPE and BRANDBOONTJES.

Again this quarter our sympathy goes out to those who are suffering bereavement. This time the blow has fallen on Mrs. and Miss Schuch at SILVERTON, two most devoted helpers of the Railway Mission, who now mourn the loss of a husband and father. After years of suffering, however, the knowledge that that bitter time has gone by for him, that "the former things are passed away" and all things are become new will most certainly do much to soothe the pain of separation in the hearts of the wife and daughter who nursed him so devotedly to the end.

I have left myself very little space to speak of other events: of the Synod at Pretoria in October for instance, when we really did seem to get to the root of many of our failures, more especially during the splendid discussions in the Town Hall in which so
many devoted laymen and lay women took part and in which we clergy were assuredly helped to "see ourselves as others see us"!

Or again to turn from civilised to wilder scenes, I have left myself hardly any space to touch upon my Bush Country journeys though, of course, they had necessarily to take place in order to reach such districts as DUIVELSKLOOF, RAMADIEPE and BRANDBOONTJES (the latter one of the places in the far north-east which have only lately made their appearance on the map).

But indeed the Bush Country is beginning to be very unkind now that summer (the rainy season) has really arrived. Leaving the question of fever to one side, there is an excess of water and heat which is very trying. And I have lately suffered from both. The flooded Crocodile River a week or two ago made persistent efforts to sweep me away as I waded backwards and forwards through its waters trying to find a shallow place through which I might carry my bicycle and heavy knapsack (total weight about 70lb.). But the flood was so great that to struggle through that rushing torrent even unencumbered was a pretty stiff task, as I soon found out. To have tried to carry my things across would certainly have meant complete disaster (and incidentally, great rejoicings among the crocodiles further down!) and so for the time being I had reluctantly to give up my objective, which was a small white community about 15 miles away on the other side of the river.

But at least water on a hot day is cool and refreshing whereas about pure unadulterated heat there seems no redeeming feature. At least so I thought after doing nearly 40 miles on one particularly broiling day last month in the Selati country, tramping with the heavy pack on my back most of the distance while most of the remainder was accomplished on a pump trolley, a weird-looking three-wheeled affair on the line which you work with your arms. Even five minutes of this exercise on a cold winter's morning at home would put one in a fine glow, but hours of it in the middle of an East African summer day is simply indescribable, especially as every now and then the monstrosity would persist in running off the rails and I had to get off and laboriously lift it on again.

But the Selati always has its compensations to any lover of Nature, and it was not long before my labours were forgotten in the sight of and the chance of photographing herds of sable and roan antelope, koodoo, impala, bush buck and ostriches roaming in their native wild as they have done ever since Creation.

Yours very sincerely,

Vernon Rossborough.

N. RHODESIA AND THE CONGO.

It has been a great blow to learn that at the last moment the priest who was to have taken over this section in February, finds himself unable to come. It is too early yet to know definitely what arrangements will be made, but I think there need be no fear at any rate that things will have to be dropped up here: somebody will carry it on.

As it happens, this disappointment comes at a critical time: when we have just undertaken further responsibilities in the Congo, and the Church scheme at Broken Hill has taken definite shape.

After this year, 1916, the priest who works this section will say goodbye to WANKIE, and the railway generally south of the Zambesi, and work solely north, under the one Bishop. One leaves Wankie with mixed feelings: people have always been most kind to me, and I regret the parting; but
Wankie has another side, and the reception is too warm to be pleasant sometimes!

The population at VICTORIA FALLS is very small just now—no visitors, no workmen—but I rather expect to be there for Christmas Day, and hold services; after which I suppose my responsibilities here will also cease.

During the last three months, most of my time and most of the important happenings seem to have been claimed by Broken Hill and further north.

At BROKEN HILL, apart from the usual monthly Services, which have been well attended, we have elected a strong Church Committee, with Mr. Teagle kindly acting as Secretary; and at a meeting, at which the Bishop was present, the site for the Church was approved, and the first steps taken for the raising of necessary funds. I hope to be able to report satisfactory progress soon. The Bishop started the fund with £6100 raised from home, which is very encouraging; and many other donations or promises are forthcoming.

We are all glad that Mr. Hewett, the S.M., has got the better of his serious illness.

As usual, Broken Hill again did wonders for the Red Cross this quarter: its total contributions are well over £1,000.

Further north, I have had quite a busy time at BWANA MKUBWA, where there is now a considerable population, and a fair number of communicants. There is generally a good attendance at Church. The recent outstanding event was the wedding of Mr. J. Morris and Miss Abernethy, which took place at the hotel. The surroundings of the wedding were unique in my experience, and everything was a reverent as it was suitable. For Church we had a large cool structure, made of poles covered with leaves, with platform, and altar, and everything complete, including vestry. Quite thirty people were present, and all went well. We wish them every happiness. The wedding was succeeded in the afternoon and evening by a Red Cross fête, and fancy dress ball, auction, etc., which was most successful, and kept us busy till the small hours.

At NDOLA, next day, the Christening ceremony of Mr. and Mrs. Cholmeley's little daughter took place, and was equally impressive. Their verandah was beautifully decorated, and an ivory font, made and carved by Mr. Cholmeley himself, and mounted on a base of native teak, was used for the occasion. This again was unique in my experience. Quite a large number were present, including Dr. Storrs from Broken Hill, who was godfather. It was a privilege to take part in two such services as these.

During October I spent over a fortnight in the Congo, and made the trip through to Railhead. At TSHILONGO Mr. Deane, of Pauling's, kindly put me up, and got me a pass over the construction line for the 75 kilometres to railhead. I found about a dozen British people at Tshilongo, and two only at the present terminus; the gangers, contractors, etc., being mainly Greeks and Italians. It was a most interesting trip up, passing over the great plateau. The rails cease on a high embankment, where a valley is not yet bridged, but the earthworks, etc., continue many miles the other side. The English element up here is very small, and frequent visits would be unnecessary as well as difficult. But I was able to baptize Mr. Pilkington's child before returning, and possibly a Service might be held at Tshilongo another time.

Coming back, I spent a Sunday at KAMBOVE, and had a most delightful time. The men turned up well to Service this time, and we had a congregation of thirty at night, with a splendid collection. I also celebrated
at the Vennings for three communicants, and had one baptism to take. Mr. Lewin again was most hospitable, and the tennis very keen and enjoyable.

After this, I put in a week at ELISABETHVILLE, and had the usual Services on Sunday. The communicants, I'm glad to say, keep up their numbers well, but the attendance at the Consulate Service is falling off considerably. I hope the regular Monthly Service on a fixed Sunday will help people to come better. The Evening Service at LULRUNBASHI was quite refreshing, and I hope it has taken a new lease of life. It means a long walk and a lot of trouble for myself and Mr. Gray, who so kindly comes to play for me; and a good attendance makes it worth while. There is no outstanding event to report: the Church Council has started on its way, and, as I said at the beginning, it looks as though our side of the bargain would be the hardest to fulfil! We greatly need that new priest.

Coming down further south, I have put in my usual Sundays at LUSAKA, though I clashed with the Wesleyan minister on one occasion, and on another had no lights for the Evening Service through failing to give the hotel sufficient notice! However, these little things are all in a day's work. There are quite a nice number of communicants here now, and Confirmation candidates as well. The Sunday School progresses nicely under Mrs. Baxter.

KAFUE is very empty just now, a great contrast to the picnic days! All the farmers are busy on their farms, and there is no time for frivolity. I have held no Service here recently for that reason, nor at MAZABUKA. I looked in at MAQOYE one day, and saw Mr. and Mrs. Venning—almost the sole inhabitants!

I am just in the act of paying my visit to KALOMO. It was not to be expected that we should have such a turn-out as last time: but the Services were very satisfactory, as usual. The Celebration was held at the Boma, this time, in case of rain or great heat. The rain also allowed us to have Sunday School and Mattins at the station. Miss Bayley's work in the Sunday School and with the children generally is of the greatest value. At present I have spent some extra days here, chiefly owing to the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Goslin, partly owing to Confirmation work, and partly to the fact that my coach has not yet turned up from the repair shops at Bulawayo. Till it arrives, I am more or less stranded!

My plans for the future are all extremely vague, and must remain so till we can get some definite news from home about the new man we hope for. Your prayers are asked for God's guidance for the Mission in this time of difficulty.

S.W. AFRICA.

Grahamstown,
December 4, 1916.

My dear Editor,

I concluded my last letter at Walvis Bay, by saying that I was looking forward to meeting the Head at Karibib. I had a Baptism at SWAKOPMUND, and spent a Sunday at KARIBIB, and then unfortunately "crocked up," as the saying goes, and when the Head did arrive was quite incapable of touring the Narrow Gauge Line, or indeed of carrying out any of the joint programme I had arranged, which was a great disappointment for me. The military doctor at Karibib ordered me out of S.W. for a month's rest, a period extended by further medical opinion. I am sorry indeed to desert my friends on the railway in S.W. for so long a time, but am glad to think there is another Chaplain (Mr. Harries) relieving me. I am to spend about two
months at St. Saviour's, East London, just filling a gap by taking services, and I hope that after that I shall once again be fit for work on the line.

I must not forget to mention the very successful Lantern Lecture at Karibib, given by the Head. The War pictures were greatly appreciated, as at all other places in S.W. where they were exhibited. If there had been more time, requests from other places for the lecture could have been satisfied.

I have very much enjoyed the quiet time of rest at the Kowie, and the great kindness of Dr. Schloesser, the Rector of Port Alfred, in looking after me so long. He is a true friend of the Railway Mission.

Yours sincerely,
E. G. K. Esdaile.

WOMEN'S WORK.

GRAHAMSTOWN DIOCESE.

Miss Beckwith's many friends along her Section will have missed her sadly this quarter. But we must look upon her absence as a bit of sacrifice for the good cause in which she is working.

It is not possible for a new worker to fill her place at all adequately, but I have been visiting the places where the need seemed most urgent and have been able to carry on so as to keep things going until her return.

I found some very keen children at many of the small centres. Stormberg deserves special mention: the children there are particularly attentive and eager. I thoroughly enjoyed the class I held there. Mrs. Roberts may justly be congratulated upon her work with the boys and girls at that camp.

At TYLDEN there is another excellent school and Miss Cameron's children are keen and very intelligent. At TOISE RIVER there is another Railway school also excellently conducted, and at CONWAY and FISH RIVER.

I have been singularly struck by the work of the teachers in the small places along my Section. The bare surroundings and very poor conditions in some cases seem so depressing, but in no instance did I find any teacher slacking off because of this. All make the best of what is given and excellent teaching and good order prevail even in most unpromising environment.

At MIDDLETON Mr. and Mrs. Wadmore gave me a hearty welcome. Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert were confirmed at Cradock on November 19th. Mr. Martyn Harries baptised their first baby a short time before. They are moving to the Transvaal and we hope they will not be out of reach of Church Services.

The sympathy of all at Rosmead and many friends at Cradock was extended to Mrs. Houston, whose husband, Charles Houston, died of pneumonia at Cradock hospital in November, after a very brief illness.

At Cradock, Rosmead and Naauwpoort the G.F.S. candidates and members are working at various things for soldiers. At every station there is steady and substantial work for the War funds. We extend our sincere sympathy to Mr. and Mrs. Jameson, of Rosmead, whose son Humphrey is reported "missing," and to Mr. and Mrs. Spence of Cradock, whose son Arthur is suffering from shell-shock.

Miss Beckwith asks me to say that she sends her best wishes at this season to all her friends along the Line.

May this Christmas be the last one we spend in war, and the New Year bring, if God will, a glorious and lasting Peace.

A. Burt.

At COOKHOUSE Social held in October towards the new Church carpet, a very good programme was arranged; the hall was packed, and the audience enthusiastic. The result (over £9) has purchased the new floor cloth and leaves a margin for other pressing
repairs. I am very thankful to all who so kindly helped.

At ALICEDALE I was unfortunately absent when the Red Cross Committee had their Children's Fancy Dress Dance. I am told it was a really charming affair and with the Social on the following night realised £14. It is wonderful what can be done by an energetic committee, and the Misses Munro, Linde, Pearce and Harvey, who form it, are to be congratulated. To turn to a smaller matter, quite a good number of pillow cases and handkerchiefs done there were sent to Mrs. Chew for the German East hospitals. My journeyings this month took me down all the branch lines as I was the lucky possessor of the coach. From the Kowie to Great Brak and up the Avontuur Line all in one month gave me my record mileage, 1,446 miles. I think almost every place had the Magic Lantern in connection with the Bible readings, so now the children should be able to read with more interest. At KLIPPLAAT we had a Lantern Entertainment and made 13/- for Trafalgar Day fund, which was made up at other places to £1 10s.

I am up in Bloemfontein now, so in case there is anybody to whom I did not say goodbye, I say it now; and I hope we may meet sometimes when you come this way for holidays or I go south for mine.

P. GLASIER.

PRETORIA DIOCESE.

Just a year ago I was saying goodbye to the Colony and looking forward to starting work in the Transvaal. After a very happy year here I have to say goodbye to the Transvaal this time and migrate to the Free State, where I am to have the difficult job of following Miss Watson. We shall all there look forward to good news of her and hope to see her back again in Africa when she is fit. In the meantime I can only say how sorry I am to leave all my Transvaal friends, and thank them most sincerely for all their kindness to me during the year. I hope those who have undertaken the weekly war prayers will keep them up, for indeed they are more and more needful. My very best wishes to all friends for Christmastide and the coming year.

G. E. HOLMES.

BLOEMFONTEIN DIOCESE.

My letter this time—and the last time as a member of the Railway Mission Staff—must be a goodbye one, though I hope when I am living at Fouriesburg I may still see a great many of my Railway friends and shall always be glad to hear from or about them. Moreover I am delighted to think that Miss Holmes, who has for so long worked on the Railway Mission, is now taking over my Section, and I shall look forward very much to her visits to me, and to hearing from her about old friends and places.

By the time this number of Light for the Line is circulated I shall, I hope, be in England, or very nearly there, and though my Christmas and New Year will probably be spent on the water, I shall not be forgetting to wish the best of good wishes to all my friends, Railway and otherwise, in the O.F.S., and I feel sure that many of them will remember me. So I say goodbye, or rather au revoir, with very happy hopes of future meetings.

M. E. WATSON.
among you had been better and more faithfully done.
I leave the more happily knowing my work falls into Miss Glasier's capable and experienced hands; and I know you will all give her a very warm welcome. It is good to know that we may hope for an occasional visit from our new Chaplain, Mr. Martyn Harries; I had a very happy month in September with him through my section, and some of us will never forget the Baptism and Communion Services in which we were privileged to take part.

Of course no goodbyes are free from sadness, and solemn thoughts come to us all at these changes in our lives. I think, in these days, when there is so much suffering around us, we need to dwell much on the thought of the Infinite Love which surrounds and sustains each one of us; and to bear constantly in mind that "Whatever else may go the Love of God abides."

So I want to say goodbye in its fullest, deepest sense of "God be with you," and to thank you all very, very much.

C. MAUD HEDDY.

CHILDREN'S PAGE.
My dear Children,
During the past four months I have been travelling about on Miss Beckwith's Section, and one of the chief pleasures of doing this has been that of getting to know some of you. Now I feel that I am able to picture you in your houses and to understand what you do and see every day. This makes it easier for me to help some of you and I am quite glad Canon Thornely Jones has let me do this bit of work so that I have been able to find out what life on the Railway is like and just in what way I can do something for those of you who need it. You can always ask me anything and be sure I will help you if I can.

This year the Railway Mission has no toys to send to you. You will quite understand why this is. People are all doing and giving all they can for the Red Cross and other War Funds, and I am sure you are all willing to go without toys so that the soldiers who are suffering to keep our Empire safe may have all the things they need.

Next year we hope all nations may be able to enjoy a peaceful Christmas once more.

Your sincere friend,
THE EDITOR.

BAPTISMS.

At Cookhouse:
Nov. 11—Jessie Elsie Read.

At Sherborne:
July 14—Frances Mona Nicholas.

At Nauwpoort:
Sep. 24—Constance Iola Harper.
Oct. 1—Lionel Barnes Webb.
Oct. 21—Charles Frederic Baird.
Nov. 17—Alfred Amos Sydney Willett.
Nov. 19—Matthew Hughes.
Daniel Henry Hughes.
Florence Ivy Hughes.
Agnes Matilda Hughes.

At Swakopmund:
Sep. 12—Gwendoline Eugene Nielsen.

At Tshilongo, Congo Beige:

At Kambove:

At Wankie:
Nov. 19—Elizabeth Margaret Parsons.

At Nelspruit:
Sep. 25—Sarah Johanna Susanna Kestell.

At Tweedraai, near Kinross:
Sep. 30—Blanch Elizabeth Susanna Robson.

At Machadodorp:
Oct. 8—Gordon Patrick Fox.

At Nelspruit:
Oct. 9—Arthur Percival Poley.
Doreen Pearl Currie.

At Duivelskloof:
Nov. 5—Marie Mercia Promnitz.

At Ramadiepe:
Nov. 6—Marguerite Mary Phyllis Beatty Burman.

At Tzaneen:
Nov. 7—Amelia Giftie Good.

At Delmas:
Nov. 19—Maria Cathrina Engelbrecht.

At Waterval Boven:
Nov. 26—Frederick Donald Linton.
Iris Ada Linton.
Sheila Winifred Geddes.
At Eland's River:
Dec. 2—Edgar Cyril Newham.
At Waterval Boven:
Dec. 7—Reginald Louie Taylor.

MARRIAGE.
Nov. 28—Arthur George Morris and Gertrude Jemima Abernethy.

CONFIRMATIONS.
By the Lord Bishop of Pretoria.
At Bayton:
Frances Madoline Oakley.
Eileen Gladys Day.
Lilian Edwina Strike.
Alida Elspeth Patterson.
Louisa Higgins.
Ivy May James.
Mary Cookesley Penberthy.
Enid Kidd.
Hilda Moore.
At Nelspruit:
Gideon George Pienaar.
Cornelia Letitia Maud Pienaar.
At Komatipoort:
Edward Henry Bowen.
At Waterval Boven:
Albert William Wilson.
Gladyis Louise Harrison.
Mildred Violet Harrison.

COLLECTIONS AND DONATIONS.
Karibib, 13/9; Garub, 10/-; Tsumis, 5/-.
Lusaka, £1/18/6; Wankie, £3/16/6; Broken Hill, £3/16/6; Ndola, £1/2/6; Bwana-Mkubwa, £2/10/6; Kambove, £6; Elisabethville, £4/9/6; Kalomo, £2/8/6.
Fees and offerings, £3/15/.-.

DIocese of Pretoria.
From September 11th to December 10th.
Waterval Boven, £4/13/8; Machadodorp, £1/19/.-; Kinross, £1/12/1; Hatherley, £1/19/9; Pan, 8/3; Bronkhorstpruit, £1/10/7; Rayton, 15/4; Elandshoek, 13/6; Duivelskloof, 11/6; Dalmanutha, 7/7; Eloff, 9/3; Delmas, £1/10/7; Bonnefoi, 7/9; Eland's River, 4/9; Crown Douglas, £1/6/6; Malelane, 17/6.
Donations and offerings, £9/9/3.
Machadodorp Stenatution Fund, £3/7/6.
Light for the Line, 7/6.

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NORTHERN RHODESIA.
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INTERCESSIONS.

Your prayers are asked:—

That God will guide those who are responsible for the future of the Railway Mission.

For past and present members of our staff who offered their services in the war:—Eustace Hill (wounded); George Knapp Fisher, chaplain to H.M.S. Chatham; Arthur Austin.

O God, who lookest down in thy fatherly love upon the nations of the earth, assuage the pains of warfare, restore the sick and wounded, relieve those that are in anxiety, comfort the bereaved, and in Thy mercy forgive the sins of all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer in Time of War.

O most mighty God and merciful Father, Whose never-failing Providence ordereth all things both in Heaven and earth, we Thy humble servants commend to Thy Fatherly care all who are at this time engaged in warfare. Let Thy holy angels succour and defend our soldiers and sailors. Watch over and comfort all who are near and dear to us. Have pity on the sick, the wounded, and the dying. Guide and direct the Government of our country. Give success to our arms; and grant in Thy own good time, that peace may be established on a firm and righteous foundation, for Thy glory and the furtherance of Thy kingdom; through Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Advocate. Amen.

(Bp of St. Andrew's.)

For the National Mission.

Our Father, we want to do more for thee. We have done too little in the past. Shew us what more we can do. May our lives draw others nearer to thee. Bless the Mission to the Nation. We are in sore trouble. Help us to turn to thee; for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

For our Country.

O Thou who hast said, If ye shall ask anything in my Name I will do it, hear our prayers for our country. Many of us have forgotten thee and never worship thee or pray, and we want to come back to thee. Set us right where we are wrong. We want to love thee more. Give us grace to know thee better, to love thee more, and to work our best for thy sake. Amen.
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