OUR DEAR FRIENDS,

It is the middle of May, and as we start our letter to you, holiday tasks are the order of the day.

A six week’s complete holiday is more than our girls care for, they weary of having so much time on their hands. So three hours holiday tasks were arranged. Some works have to go on constantly such as cooking, grinding, caring for little children, etc., for these we have got recruits from the needlework department; and very willing workers they have been. The matron in charge of the grain and vegetable stores, and who also oversees the cooking for the girls, says they have done splendid work, laughing and joking all the time, but withal getting through a great deal of work. The youngest recruit has made the vegetable curry which the girls have daily, and very good curry it has been.

Another little company of recruits are freshening up the dormitory used by the children of our former Mukti boys and girls. These children have gone home to their parents for the holidays, so we have to do their spring cleaning for them.

The High School girls for their holiday work, have become book-binders in a simple way. They are preparing most of the exercise books which will be needed for the coming School year. Making our own books is cheaper than buying ruled exercise books, and these things have to be considered.

Our masons, carpenters, field and sanitary workers are taking holidays in turns. Some, if necessary, do a little extra work one week, while their chums have complete holiday, then the next week they have holiday, while their chums come back fresh, and very happily, to their work.

We really have been delighted to see the happy spirit of comradeship in which all have worked, so as to make it possible for everybody to have, at least, one week’s complete holiday.

Several of our senior matrons have spent their holiday at Supa, a village ten miles away. Miss Stroberg who is working at Supa, has had them at her bungalow, and given them a restful happy time.

We sometimes hear about “the romance of foreign missions,” we do not find work out here very romantic, but The Lord does lead us through dark valleys to give us very great joys sometimes.

Last week we found that a large bill for monthly stores for about 250 girls, was in our hands, but the money to pay it was not. The same day our head store matron came saying we should buy grain etc., for the children, and cotton seed for the animals. It was impossible to get these things.

We stated the situation to the workers to be brought before The Lord in prayer, and the next day, Thursday morning, Miss Macdonald, at morning prayers, told the girls how we stood. They read what The Lord says to His people in Matthew 6 about the supply-ing of their needs, and then they had a season of prayer.

That afternoon at 4 o’clock a few little girls came up to Miss Macdonald’s room, “Auntie, has our Father God sent the money yet?” was the eager question from a merry little lassie who is nicknamed Chatterbox. On hearing that He had not, she was a little disappointed, but soon agreed with her matron that they must not be impatient.

Well, the earnest that God had heard and was answering prayer, came Friday morning. A lady out here, who with beautiful regularity sends us a monthly gift, sent her gift, doubled. We thanked God and took courage.

Saturday morning the home mail brought us precious reminders that The Lord was caring for us, through several of His dear children, and one dear friend sent us per, “The Christian” a gift which settled the bill that had troubled us, and enabled us to get grain etc. We do praise God for His faithfulness, and for His Remembrancers the world over.
Sunday evening an old Brahmin widow who has only been a Christian for a few years was sitting on Miss Macdonald's verandah and heard that God had supplied the need. She clasped her hands and said "Hallelujah, Father I thank Thee for sending the money." Monday morning prayer time became a praise meeting. On hearing that God had answered prayer, there was a quick response, "Praise the Lord, Hallelujah." The lesson was taken from Phil. 4. and a praise hymn was sung.

Now you will be wanting to see the work at different angles, according to the reports of which we wrote last month.

Krishnabai will tell us a little about the school work for the past year.

"A Hindu boy was once asked if he knew why a certain feast was kept. "No" was the reply—"we keep it because our forefathers have always kept it, it is our custom." Another boy was asked why they put a certain cord round their necks or wrists. "Don't know" was the reply "only it is our custom and so we do it."

"A Christian girl was asked what "baptism" was, why it was necessary to be baptized etc. The only answer the girl could give was that it was the sign of their religion; that is all she knew about it. Another girl was asked what "regeneration" was. She could give no definite answer at all. I don't think she knew what it was."

"I could cite many more such instances of ignorance, which makes it plain that our Christian girls are just as ignorant of their religious principles as the Hindus are of theirs. They need more education on this line. They are babes in Christ, and they must be taught, like babes, how to put their religious experiences into language. This seems to me the pressing need of Christian schools, and let us pray that it may be met."

"Since the school year opened in June, there have been some changes in the University curriculum. The students now have the option of using the vernacular as a medium for answering the papers in History and Sanskrit. This is a great improvement on the past, as it will save a lot of time and labour on the part of the students. The school here has availed itself of this option, and is trying to use the extra time for English and Mathematics, both seem to be great stumbling blocks to Indian students."

"The school would do much better if it could secure the help of a trained English lady for teaching English in the High School. That is one of the suggestions from the University for the improvement of English as a subject. It would be worth while if the same lady could teach domestic science, plain sewing, drawing and singing as well. Let us pray that some such be called of God to this work if it is His will."

"Every Friday we have what we call a general assembly for half an hour, instead of the regular Scripture lesson, when all of us come together, teachers as well as pupils. Each class has some special item prepared for the occasion, a dialogue, a hymn, a song, a story, or some Scripture portion learnt by heart. No books are to be used for these exercises, and so whatever is learnt must be well learnt."

"Christian and Hindu pupils take part in these. The exercises are both in English and Marathi, so there is great interest. At first, the High School boys, though very bold at other times, were very shy and almost speechless when their turn came, but once for all the ice is broken, and now they take part just as freely as the others."

"Do pray for all these that they may come to know and love the Good Shepherd."

"The number of students in the High School is 25 boys, 32 girls. In the Primary 36 boys, 135 girls."

"Out of these 61 boys and 15 girls are Day Scholars, mostly Hindus, and they are getting the Gospel message every day."

"We sent four girls up for the Vernacular Final examination last October, three were successful, and now two are taking Teachers Training, the third will D. V. go this year."

"Two already in training, passed their Second year's examination this year, and one of them is now taking her third year's course."

"During the year 23 Hindu boys and 10 girls have gone through the school, staying from seven and a half months to one year, and we had the privilege of giving them the Word of God."
"My Word shall not return unto me void" saith The Lord, and so we go on hammering and praying day by day, leaving the results to God our Father.

"Pray for us that we all may be found faithful when He comes."

We are sure that you will pray for all these children, for the Hindu ones, and too for our own children that they may recommend the Gospel of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord.

Now Miss Macgregor's report of the Bible class and Village work will interest you and give you further food for prayer.

"In 1903 Miss Abrams opened a Bible school in Mukti. For many years it went on in various stages, taught by successive teachers."

"For some 3 years it has been closed, but on January 11th 1926 it was re-opened in the form of a Bible Class."

There are 16 students enrolled, some of whom will probably prove backward; and 5 listeners who wish to gain all the knowledge of the Bible they can, but are not likely to take the exams. (One has no arms, and 3 are blind)."

"At present only one subject is being taken, i.e., The Pentateuch. It is a matter for prayer that God may, in time, provide a teacher who can give her whole time to Bible School work."

"During the year 1925 some 60 odd villages have been visited, and several short duration excursions have been made to Patas, Hingangaon, and Nahouri, from which centres the villages surrounding have been visited."

"In the daily routine some of the near villages have had as many as 16 visits, and the Bazaar (weekly market) here, and at Yevat, a village 6 miles away, have had regular preaching."

"A few yatra places (places of pilgrimage), have afforded opportunity to bring us in contact with people from distant parts."

"Also to the Kartak Yatra at Pandharpur a band of 9 went to reinforce the faithful workers there. This gave great joy and encouragement to the Mukti girls, who with the P.I.V. Mission ladies have laboured there for many years. Several of these 9 went to Pandharpur for the first time, and as they saw the alleys, where years ago their beloved Mother, Pandita Ramabai, had walked as a Hindu worshipper, their hearts were deeply stirred, and they looked upon the multitudes with some of the compassion of Jesus."

"Two women are set free for Gospel work. These act as leaders to take out the younger and less experienced girls who get leave from work occasionally."

"Sundays and holidays have given opportunities of sending out volunteers from teachers and other workers. The bands for excursions have, with few exceptions, been voluntary. For this a very special note of praise is due, and also, for the sweet, earnest, simple, sound messages of some, and the service of song which they are, by His grace, enabled to bring to Him who is worthy to receive."

Our letter is getting very long, so we will hold over Miss Macgregor's report of the printing department for another month.

We get good news of Miss Hastie and our other fellow workers, all seem the better for the cool breezes, and resting time.

Thank you for all your loving thought, please continue to hold us up in prayer as The Lord brings us to your remembrance.

Yours in The Lord Jesus,
per. pro. M. LISSA HASTIE

M. W.

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