RAMABAI MUKTI MISSION

PRAYER BELL

March & April, 1927

TO THE FRIENDS OF MUKTI MISSION,

Greetings in the Name of our Blessed Lord and Saviour!

Old Father Time marches along so rapidly these days that it hardly seems possible that two months have slipped away since last the "Prayer Bell" sent forth its call to prayer. But the calendar reminds us that even the new year is well on its way, so we again send out this little messenger that you may help us to "redeem the time" in India in these last days before the coming of our King. May it also bear Praises to our heavenly Father Who is proving Himself All-sufficient day by day.

The Dispensary.

"Oh in what divers pains they met,
Oh with what joy they went away!"

In writing of our medical work the above lines may often be said to be true. We would like to give our friends some typical days and cases at our dispensary. We have two dispensaries, one for our own girls and women inside Mukti, and one which opens on to the road for outside patients. We praise God for keeping our Mukti family in good health so that there are only minor ailments to be attended to; but at the outside dispensary many and various are the cases which come for help. Our aim, of course, is not only to heal the body, but to care for the souls of those who come as well. So a Bible woman is always in attendance and gives the Gospel to the patients while they are waiting.

Many of the village people are so ignorant of sanitation and general health laws that much disease comes through ignorance. A boy is brought in whose head is one mass of sores, simply through neglect. A girl is brought in badly burned through her clothing catching fire. Her relatives have tried their remedies of mud and soot for three days till the poor creature is in agony.

An unknown man is brought from the railway station and dumped down just outside our door. When the Doctor finds him, he is unconscious and in a few moments is dead. No one knows anything about him, only that he was put out of the train unconscious at our station. This necessitates calling the village Patel who arranges for post mortem and cremation.
Most pathetic and sad are the cases we get of child wives. A girl of eleven years was brought one day by her husband and mother-in-law. She had been cared for in the crude village way. Shortly after she became the mother of a little child, she was put in a rough cart and brought back to her village. Before leaving, however, the husband received a lecture from one of our missionaries who was there. She told him that he could be imprisoned, because by law the girl must be fourteen before she goes to live with her husband. He was old enough to be the girl’s father. There was no sorrow for the child’s suffering. Another expectant mother was brought in a cart which was immediately hurried away to the bazaar. As soon as possible after the baby was born, the husband said she must go back to her village and as there was no cart she must walk. The Doctor begged that she be allowed to remain at least one night. But no, he feared that we would make her a Christian. As he insisted on going away the Doctor made him carry the baby in a basket on his head. This he did as long as we could see him, but probably when out of our sight, he made his wife carry the burden. Both the child wives and widows in this land are often objects of pity and compassion.

At the present time, we are without both Doctor and Nurse. The Doctor went home on furlough and the same week that he left, the Nurse was called home by cable to care for a very sick sister. Miss Brazier, who already had much more than one person’s work, is bravely holding the fort till another Doctor is sent to us. This is an urgent need and we ask you to pray that the Lord will send His appointed one.

Since the cold season came on, we have climbed another rung in St. Peter’s ladder (2 Peter 1:6) and adding “Temperance” or “Total Abstinence” to our activities here. Surrounded as our girls are by Mukti’s protecting walls, they are safe from the temptation to intemperance. In the village of Kedgaon, owing to Pandita Ramabai’s influence, there is no drink shop. When the girls get married or go out into the world for other reasons, they may meet this evil and be tempted, so to be forewarned is to be forearmed. To help us in this work, we have had visits from Miss Campbell, who is President of the W. C. T. U. for all India, and Miss Nalwaker of Poona. Five meetings have been held and about 200 girls signed the total abstinence pledge. Over seventy of our girls are now wearing the “White Ribbon Badge.” All promise to be true and loyal to their pledge. A “Blue Ribbon” Branch was formed among the farm men and boys who attend school.

We would ask prayer for many Indian Christians who are being led into temptation and sin through the drink habit which is a growing evil in this land, bringing reproach on the Name they profess to love and obey. Also pray that our girls, as they go outside our walls, may do all they can to “Rescue the perishing”, lift up the fallen, and tell them of Jesus, the Mighty to save. A Branch of the W. C. T. U. has now been formed at Mukti, with an Indian Lady as President. May our girls get on the “whole armour” that they may be able to “stand against the wiles of the devil, and having done all to stand.”

Another sad evil which needs putting right, is the custom among Indian women to drug their babies with opium to make them sleep and keep them from crying. Many of the little baby girls which are brought to us have had opium given to them. As they do not get it
here, the struggle is great for them to get over the craving for it. They sometimes die and are usually stunted in growth. We would ask you to pray that this evil may be done away with.

Miss Berkin

Christmas at Mukti.

"Joy to the world, The Lord has come!"

It is safe to say that this song echoed and re-echoed round the world on that day of all the year. It has been sung in every clime, in every tongue in which God’s Word has been given. Both young and old have joined in the sweet refrain. But I wonder if anywhere in all the world if more emphasis was placed on the JOY than in Mukti.

How could there be joy here? Think of the Great Gift that was given by our Heavenly Father many centuries ago for the salvation of our Mukti girls. "Mukti" means "Salvation." Think of the God-given Friends of Mukti in many parts of the world who have poured in Christmas gifts, money, greetings, and most of all have upheld us in prayer! Even poor harassed China, in such great need herself, sent in her contribution. We would indeed be ungrateful people if we were not joyful. We would join with the Psalmist in saying, "Blessed be the Lord who daily loadeth us with benefits."

The long looked-forward-to today had come at last. Not the "rosy-fingered-dawn" heralded this day, but carols which rang out as sweet and clear in the quietness of the early hour as those which fell on the shepherd’s ears that first glad Christmas Morn. Long before daylight, even the tiniest tots were astir and exchanging the usual greetings. Each worker, upon arising, found her verandah decorated with coloured paper chains and pendants, which were the work of some loving little hands. These thoughtful little touches are the Missionaries’ compensation for the days of toil and planning that had gone before.

In the morning there was the gathering in the Church for the worship of Him whose birth we were commemorating. What a sight it is to see the hundreds of girls and women filing from their various compounds into the House of God! How quaint the little girls look in their ankle-length frocks! Yet the great display of colour is surely indicative of youth. As we look into the faces of the great company seated on the floor, we praise God that so many are safe within the fold. But we are saddened as we think of the multitude of India’s women who know nothing of the only Saviour. In one Hindu temple alone two thousand widows gather for five hours a day to repeat the names of their gods.

The Christmas message was brought to us by Rev. W. W. Bruere who has come to us for twenty-five years for this ministry. He again told us the story that grows sweeter each year. At the close of the service is the distribution of gifts. I am sure the distant donors would have felt amply repaid if they had seen the faces light up as each received her gift. It was hard to tell who beamed most—Miss Wells who distributed the gifts or the recipients.

In the afternoon a meeting was held outside for the people of the surrounding villages. About 1500 people listened to the Gospel at our door. May the Word have fallen on good ground. Sweets were again distributed.
We want with grateful hearts to thank each circle and individual for the gifts of money and the parcels which came for Christmas. Many have been received since also, but their contents will be very acceptable and useful during the year. We appreciate your work and labour of love and thus are satisfied that we are workers together with God. At the "reward day" we will share and share alike in this blessed service for Him who said, "In as much as ye have done it unto the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

Pray on, dear Friends, God answers prayer. He supplies ALL our needs and they are many. The need of more labourers is imperative. Most of us who are here are getting on in years, and there is an urgent need of fresh young lives, just human lives consecrated to Him, who can touch other lives and turn them to God and His Christ.

Yours in His Name,

EUMICK WELLS
Secretary.

Ramabai Mukti Mission, 
Kadpaon, 
Poona District, India.