RAMABAI MUKTI MISSION

PRAYER BELL

January and February, 1930.

OUR BELOVED FELLOW WORKERS AND PRAYER HELPERS:

We wish you all a very blessed New Year, may you each day, as the Lord tarries, be enabled by His Holy Spirit to fulfil all He plans for you. May we walk on with Himself, and so get to know Him in the walking that our hearts will burn within us, and may we be so filled with love and devotion to Him that He will be able to depend on us.

The word that rings through me for the New Year is 'Prepare.' Is it that the Lord is coming very soon, and we need to 'prepare' for Him? Are we ready? 'Prepare your hearts unto the Lord.'—1 Sam. 7:3. How much we are told about this.—2 Chron. 35:4. 'Prepare yourselves'—v.6. 'Prepare your brethren.' Have we done all we can so that those all round us will be prepared? Then, out in the regions beyond, where there is so little done. Oh how many are not prepared. Have we each done our 'bit' in praying, in giving, in helping, so that our brethren and sisters shall be prepared? May the Lord stir every child of His during these last days to 'Prepare your brethren.'

To this end we are seeking to distribute Bibles and Testaments and Gospels and Tracts in every possible way, through many channels; the urge of God is upon us, to get the way of Salvation made known far and near.

A letter lies before me just now from a missionary, who says, 'I go on furlough soon, and I would like to put a Bible in every home here; can you send some?'

How glad we are to help in this. Last mail the Scripture Gift Mission delighted us with a parcel of English New Testaments. These are eagerly read by the educated class, and often after reading one they write and say, 'We want a whole Bible.'

Our girls are hard at work printing Marathi Gospels. Many of these are sold at the different festivals, where thousands and thousands of people gather; many will take a Gospel for a penny, and many are given free.

We raise our 'Ebenezer' to the Lord for all He hath privileged us to do along this line. May He help us to do more.

A few Sundays ago, fifteen babies—not-wanted ones—were dedicated to the Lord. They all looked so sweet in their white frocks, and they were so taken up with the wonderment of it all that they forgot to cry. Bible-women in the making—we hope so.

Pray for our Bible-women who are out in the different districts now. Also for the bands that go out to camp in the villages here. You will enjoy the following account from Miss Whitley:
'We are just back from camp, and we do indeed praise the Lord for His presence with us during the time we were out.

'We started off in grand style by motor, which took us within a mile of our camping ground, then we changed our mode of travelling, and from that time the strong, burden-bearing bullocks took us over rivers and rough rocky roads. It is true they are very slow, but they can go over roads which would mean ruin to a car, so we are very thankful to have the animals and a tonga.

'We made the round of the villages which were visited last year, and we certainly could not complain of the welcome we got. A few times we had just one or two hungry souls listening, as we sought to lift up Jesus Christ, the Propitiation for the whole world, but more often we would have quite large companies of men, with women in the background, and children all over the place, and oh, how they listened. As in every congregation, they listened in different ways; some, who had a pretty good knowledge of their own religion, would listen very critically, and, with questions and remarks, they had nothing to say for their idols of wood and stone, and readily agreed that there is one God; but, between the one God and sinful man that there is only one Mediator, Jesus Christ, to this they object—they want to go to God via Ram, Vithoba, Tukaram, or some other of their deities.

'We were glad for the Word of the Lord Jesus, 'If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.'—John 7:17. They were willing to take New Testaments and Gospels, and we begged them to test the Scriptures; their books may contain many beautiful thoughts and precepts, but they provide no power to live them out.

'Others listened casually, but in every group there would be some who listened wistfully, and with a mental belief in the messages.

'They want salvation and purity, but to come out for the Lord Jesus Christ means a great deal. As one man said, "I do believe, but if I come to the Lord Jesus Christ what about my family, they will have nothing to do with me." Another said, "I do believe Jesus is the true Saviour, but if I come to Him I will never be able to arrange a marriage for my younger brother."

'Oh, dear friends, do please help us pray down a Calvary victory over the god of this world, who has blinded their minds, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine into them.

'In some villages, for which we had prayed specially, we noticed a decided difference—a greater thoughtfulness and seriousness.

'In one, a young cobbler, who last season listened well, then turned off to argue and laugh, this season, listened with hunger and yearning to the end. As we were speaking, a young woman came along, somewhat irate, as her shoes, left to be mended, were not ready. "Why don't you get on with your work?" "Oh I must listen to this message." "Well, listen and work at the same time." "I cannot, I must put all my mind on the message, they come so very seldom," was the dialogue that went on, and, as we prayed with and for them, there was a solemn hush, and we knew that the Spirit of God was brooding over that place. This young man wanted a Marathi Bible, last year we had given one to the schoolmaster of this village, and he read five chapters to this young man, and he had found them so beautiful and wonderful he wanted a Bible of his own. We were glad we had one to give him, especially as the schoolmaster was being transferred to another village.
Near this place, as we were having our mid-day meal, a young man sat and watched us, then, to our amazement, asked for food (we Christians are outcasts, and to eat our food means to break caste). We gave him all we had left, and later met him at the patel's (village headman) house. He is weak-minded and a little lame, his parents are wealthy, but the patel said, “They will not have anything to do with him, and they stone him away from the house.”

Last year, in the village of N—a little sick girl had been prayed for, and here the common people crowded around us, and greeted us so very warmly. The little girl was quite well, and three different families had someone sick for whom they wanted prayer. We brought them to the Lord one by one, and we believe that He will meet them and prove to them that He is a living, prayer-hearing and answering God.

Dear friends, do please pray more and more for these people, and for all of us as we live amongst them and seek to bring them to Jesus Christ. Some of them are yearning to come, and we are yearning to bring them, yet there seems a gulf which we cannot bridge. We are so very impotent, but our Lord is Omnipotent, so let us pray, for “Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, Amen and Amen”; and “Other sheep have I which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd.”

Miss Lundgren lets you see into a little of the house-keeping for the workers.

Perhaps you would like to hear a little about the culinary department in Mukti. I am sure you do not know how we bake our cakes, for we do make cakes here. Did you ever wonder? I’ll tell you how I have been baking them for the past year. It is just one year since I arrived in Mukti. We have a tin-lined, heavy, wooden box, with two wire shelves in it and a tight door. We set a charcoal stove in the bottom and the cake on the shelf. You can imagine that the heat would not be evenly distributed. Our cakes used to get burned on the bottom and never brown on the top. I finally hit upon the plan to put some empty tins on the top shelf, to keep the heat down to brown the top of the cake, and then put some under it to keep it from burning on the bottom. That helped some; then we got some pieces of tin cut for that purpose. Yes, “necessity is the mother of invention.” Another way is to make the charcoal stove as hot as we can, then put an empty aluminum pan on it, and a smaller one, containing the cake, inside that, put the lid on and some hot coal on top. The rim of the smaller pan rests on the edge of the larger one, so that it does not touch the bottom, and serves like a double boiler without water. Would you imagine you could bake a cake in that way? We do, and it would surprise you how nice it turns out, providing everything goes well.

But now, for this month before Christmas, we have the loan of a Coleman camp stove from America, a real two-burner gasoline or petrol stove, with oven attached. What a joy to bake in it, and what a lovely, clean, quick fire to cook on, especially when everyone is busy and you want something done in a hurry. How we wish we had one all our own!

There is a time when we can fast and sacrifice for the Lord in our eating; doubtless a good many of us have done it, and it is not unknown in Mukti, but in a tropical climate like
India, where everything tends to sap one’s strength and even take your appetite away, it seems to be a part of the wisdom which God offers to give us freely for the asking to study to keep our bodies strong and healthy. We find that not only is plenty of the most nourishing food we can get necessary, but also a good variety, and some appetizing things are needed to tempt the appetites of those that are well-nigh lost. It is not easy to keep the body fit for the best work when you have no appetite for food. We praise the Lord that He supplies all our needs, and doubtless it is through the sacrifices of many of our friends and readers. We think of some in particular. We appreciate it all, and thank you. May the Lord, who supplies all your and our needs, pour back upon you “Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over,” according to His promise.'

FRANCES LUNDDRNN.

We praise the Lord that Miss Amstutz passed her second Marathi examination in October. Now she has no longer that burden to bear. She has already been out in camp seeking to give the Gospel and make use of the language, which will grow in the using.

Miss Tillett passed in all but one subject, and (D.V.) takes that again in February.

Miss Lundgren sits for her first examination in February (D.V.).

These two sisters would be glad of prayer help. Will you take them on your hearts and pray them through?

There is great commotion in the country over the Marriage Bill, which comes into force April 1st, 1930. Everywhere they are rushing weddings. In one Province alone there are said to be 2,000 being pushed before the age limit takes place. Two days ago, in the newspaper there was a petition concerning a child of six years and a man of sixty years. Poor little children, they know no childhood.

The signs all round us are very ominous, so we need much prayer. We count on you.

Yours in His Name,

Ramabai Ikutt Mission,
Kedgaon,
Poona Dist., India.

ECNICE WELLS,
M. LISSA HASTIE.