



RAMABAI MUKTI MISSION

PRAYER BELL

KEDGAON, POONA DISTRICT, INDIA

January-February-March, 1941

OUR DEAR FELLOW WORKERS,

We would wish you each one the Lord's blessing and a closer intimacy with Him each day as He tarries. It may be that we will see Him face to face ere long. And His reign of peace will be ushered in.

The nations as well as individuals are in God's crucible at present, but the promise still holds good, 'When He hath tried me I shall come forth as gold' (Job 23:10). Gold tried in the fire, beaten gold, but with wondrous powers of showing forth His beauty. May He give to each one the grace that endures to the end, that endures as seeing Him, and He, seeing something of Himself in us.

You will notice that in these days of restriction and difficulties, the PRAYER BELL will now be issued quarterly instead of monthly.

Our evangelistic band, with Nurse Callan, is out at Supa, where they are having splendid opportunities of giving the Gospel message and much encouragement. Before going to Supa they went to a big Hindu festival of which the following is an account :

'How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?'

Rom. 10: 14, 15.

Hark! The eleventh hour has struck! The time is flying past! Soon the Bridegroom will appear! What joy! But what of the millions still in darkness? Must they continue in their aimless search for heart peace? Must they perish? No! Hallelujah! By His grace we'll gird on the full armour. In His Name we'll set at nought the forces of the enemy of souls! Let us take up the challenge! We stand behind the Captain who has never lost a battle! Let us describe how we attacked an enemy stronghold nearby.

On Monday, September 2nd, we set off by car for a place called Bhuleshwar; it is about ten miles from Mukti; a huge old temple set high on a hill. Every year at this time there is a big *yatra* here. The road to the next village was fairly smooth running; but after that our poor old car had to go into many positions; sometimes through fields, river beds, around thorny bushes, avoiding boulders in all directions. It was a hair-raising experience; and to make it more colourful the road was a seething mass of humanity. Some were going on foot towards the hill; others were returning. Bullock carts, full to overflowing, bicycles, a couple of buses; all were endeavouring to make their way along this narrow strip of road resembling a switchback with its ups and downs, its curves and twists. Praise God! We arrived safely at the foot of the hill, which, from a distance, resembled a large beehive with all the little bees swarming up its sides. The temple stood out distinct with its dome-shaped roof; and all were scrambling upwards to that sacred spot (?) to get a glimpse of the god. Some were trying to run most of the way breathlessly repeating the name of their god. We set off up the hill, which was no light task as the sun was rising higher and higher and peeping through the clouds. As we ascended the wind began to blow us about a bit. We were grateful for the breeze; but as we were sometimes on ridges with a sheer drop on either side, we had to keep a firm step. With a few rests for a breather, and taking every opportunity to show friendliness and tell of the Friend of friends the top was reached. After having a breathing space we went to spy out the land and get an opportunity of telling these lost sheep of the Shepherd who was seeking for them. Near the temple we took our stand, soon to be interrupted by a group of Brahmins who at the Name of Jesus with uplifted sticks ran in rage amongst the people shouting, 'Do not listen to them! You are

Hindus. What have you to do with them? Victory to Hinduism!' etc., etc. These brought responses from the people who yelled as of one accord. It was not hard then to visualise the crowd who cried, 'Away with Him! Crucify Him,' or those Ephesians crying, 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians'. The power of the enemy was mighty; but Hallelujah! we stood in the power of the Almighty God, and pleading the power and protection of the precious Blood we sang, then passed along. We were marked people but being on the King's business at His command the Good News had to be proclaimed. Amongst every group who listened these tools of the enemy caused uproar; once even pushing children on top of us as we sat telling the Story to some women. Through their uproar they often brought around us crowds of at least three hundred or so at a time; and the Word of God went forth in no uncertain sound.

On the hill-top there was only one tree under which one could take shelter from the burning sun and this shade our opposers appropriated, throwing banana skins at our women who were sitting there. However the Lord gave grace to take it all joyfully. While they were eating a fine opportunity was obtained to give out the Word to a large crowd. Then food had to be taken out in the open with the sun and wind beating upon us, but the Lord protected.

After midday all the village processions began. One after another they laboured up the steep hillside with huge water vessels in a wooden frame, having a long pole draped with red and black rags fixed in front. On reaching the top a young boy was placed on top and eight or ten men carried this frame to the temple where with the water they washed the gods. It took at least one and a half hours dancing around the balcony of the temple before they got inside, and all the time these poor little boys were clinging to the poles. Then these huge vessels were brought out, and placing them on the ground the villagers danced around. Truly one can sense the grip of the enemy in it all.

At the foot of the hill the different villages had bullock races. Two bullocks draw a cart in which people sit, and they make the poor animals race to their utmost ounce of energy. As the result of this one poor bullock dropped down dead on the road.

There was desire in the hearts of many to hear about the Lord Jesus, and to buy the Gospel portions; but, oh! that look of fear which appeared on their faces as these educated Brahmins told them to move off! The grip of caste! It is a clutch of the enemy of souls!

At times there would be at least five thousand people on the hill top; and continually by four or five roads people were ascending and descending. What were we five women amongst that crowd? It seemed like a drop in the ocean!

Praise God for those who in spite of the endeavours of these men bought Gospel portions and put them in their pockets, promising to read them. Pray for these educated Brahmins that they may not continue to harden their hearts against the Lord; but that they might see their need of Salvation and be born again.

Pray that the Lord may put the burden of these souls on India's sons and daughters who are His.

Pray that the Lord will send forth labourers into this His harvest field.

Work for the night is coming!

Let us ask, 'What is my duty in this? Is it to pray? Is it to go? Is it to give?

Make haste before it is too late! The King's Business requireth haste!

JANET CALLAN.

From the same pen comes a short report of life at Supa.

Yesterday we went to a village where a gardener's festival was going on. It really was awful. There would be well over three thousand people; they said five hundred goats were killed, and in the temple, besides these offerings, Rs. 500 were given. They had dancing girls, wrestling, etc. To see the people come along stretching all their length on the ground at every second or third step was heartbreaking, but Praise God! many listened to the Word and asked questions really showing their interest. A few gospels were sold, but the majority could not read. About 46 came to the meeting in our bungalow on Sunday morning.

Pray much for these people in out of the way villages. How are they to know the way of Salvation, unless some one tells it to them?

‘O send forth Thy light.’

Yours in His Keeping,
JULIA WOODWARD,
M. LISSA HASTIE.

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If we can learn to steal away
Some little part of every day,
And leaving every earthly care,
Spend quiet time with God in prayer;
If we can bow our heads and pray,
Then listen for what God would say,
What shining happiness He'll share
With us! And as we meet Him there
He'll teach us how to live, that men,
Seeing our joy, will seek again
The Christ! We'll radiate such peace
That they will search and never cease
Their quest until they too shall find
Peace through the Saviour of mankind.

—Edna M. Shaver

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