



RAMABAI MUKTI MISSION

PRAYER BELL

KEDGAON, POONA DISTRICT,

June—July, 1943.

DEAR FELLOW HELPERS,

We trust that the somewhat novel letters this time will stimulate Praise and Prayer and Intercession. Though we are separated far from each other, it is so good that we can have fellowship together in our Lord Jesus Christ. Once again we worship and adore Him that He has shown Himself to be 'The God that doeth wonders!'

A worker went right up to the pearly gates; we all thought she was entering in, but the Lord sent her back. Another worker was on the Hills at the Language School, and had her home in a 'chupper' (grass hut) when it caught on fire ~~and she caught fire,~~ and she lost nearly everything she possessed. The two Indian girls who were with her lost their all, too. It was wonderful the shower of giving begotten of this, and the love and sympathy shown by the missionaries round. We do so thank our Father that the lives were saved. For the loss of the things which cannot be replaced we feel sad, but we pray that we may get to the place where God can reveal something of His purposes in all these happenings.

Some workers are already on the hills for rest; others will be preparing to go shortly.

Miss Woodward and Miss Callan are staying through all the

heat; and we know His sufficient grace will be supplied, and trust they will have a holiday later.

Miss Wells has been led back to live in Mukti, and it does look like old times to see her walking about.

We have heard nothing of Miss Craddock and Miss Bowen for some months, so we can only go on praying for them that they may be led into all the Will of God.

As far as we know, Misses Amstutz and Terry, while they are interned, are being kindly treated.

Food prices are still going higher and higher, both for people and cattle. The following by Miss Schrag will tell you a very little of the difficulty. It has entailed many weary days of journeying here and there, far and near, for Mr. Eicher in his search for fodder for our animals.

Miss Schrag writes: "The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth."—1 Kings 17: 14. We do praise the Lord for the wonderful way in which He has provided for every need in the management of the farm at Mukti.

'As most of you have undoubtedly read in the papers, these are famine days in Indja. The rainfall here is always very meagre, but during the last two years there has been the worst drought in twenty-five years. Because of the shortage of water, the wells upon which the farmers depend for their crops are drying up, and the farmers are unable to raise their usual amount of grain and fodder. Many of the good farmers did not even sow their fields this year. On our Mission property there are twelve wells. The water level in all of these, with the exception of one, has gone down noticeably; and owing to this shortage of water our own fields have produced this year only one-third of what was produced last year. You can easily understand the effect of such a drought on the production of food for our large family of girls and women. It is also difficult to obtain sufficient grain and fodder for the large herd of cattle. In order that you may have some idea of the difficulties we face in providing for

the animals, we give here the figures which represent the amount spent for fodder during the last three years: 1940-41, Rs. 2287, or \$ 695.00; 1941-42, Rs. 3711-7-0 or \$ 1128.00; and 1942-43, Rs. 11,778-12-3, or \$ 3580.00; and even these figures do not include all the grains that are needed. It is cause for praise that in these difficult days the milk production has increased noticeably, and our wee motherless babies have had wholesome, nourishing milk.

‘Among the farm labourers, we have cause to rejoice concerning Kisan Master, the splendid gardener whom the Lord has sent to us as a real answer to prayer. He has only recently been converted, but is a bright witness for the Lord. As he does his work, he testifies to his helpers, who are Hindu men. One of these, Dagardu Dada, is open to the Gospel. He is reading the Bible with Kisan, and we request your prayers that this young lad will have the courage of his convictions and come out bravely for the Lord. We would also request prayer for Limbu Dada, who, in spite of the fact that he is a Hindu, is a most faithful worker. We believe he would make a stalwart Christian and his stepping out of heathenism might give others courage to follow.’

Mrs. Phillips writes about Bartimi Sadan: ‘Everything is “good” in our compound these days,’ exclaimed Priti one morning. ‘We had Sumati (Good Mind) come to us this October, and now Sugandi (Good Fragrance) has come.

‘Sumati was sent to us by a neighbouring mission. Her story is most pathetic. Life in her heathen home was very difficult. Upon this poor little ten year old child was heaped the blame for all misfortune. One day this poor, blind child, by mistake, took her sister’s food. The mother, in anger, seized the food, saying, “Good food is not for you blind girl. Eat this stale bread. You do no work for us.” But Sumati did work hard carrying heavy vessels of water from the river and cleaning the dirty pots and pans. Glad to be relieved of the heavy responsibility of caring for a blind child, the Hindu parents

consented to the plea of the missionary to send the child to a blind school. However, since the school is a Christian one, the parents have renounced their child. The mother said to her before she left, "Of course if anyone asks me where my blind girl has gone I will not tell them; I will say she has died". We cannot understand how the family could bear to part with this dear little child; but in this we see the love and care of the tender Shepherd who has brought this one to us. Already she has found a place in the hearts of young and old. She loves the singing of songs about the Lord Jesus, takes delight in hearing the Scriptures read and prays so sweetly.

'Sugandi is an older woman with just as pathetic a story. For years she had worked to support her blind husband, and now she too has gone blind, is penniless and unable to do anything for herself. Here appreciation of her new home in Mukti is touching. How glad we are that the forsaken and helpless have a ready welcome and a place they can call "home" in Mukti!'

And now we have a word from Bhimabai, who writes about Char-Bhag Compound: 'You will wonder at the funny name, but it is a Marathi word which means "Four Compounds."' During Pandita Ramabai's days, when we had about 2,000 girls and women in Mukti, these compounds were separate. Then, when the number became less, the remaining girls were brought into one division, but separate dormitories were given to different groups. Those women are getting old now, but their spirit is still young. Some work in the fields, some cook, some hand bricks and mortar to the masons as they build and repair, and others still do beautiful fine needlework. So they are the working class of Mukti. Every evening, when I go to see them I feel happy to sit with them. We have prayer, and sing, and remember all the dear ones abroad who are praying for Mukti and all the work carried on for the Lord.

'The roof of Char Bhag is in a most dilapidated condition. They often get headaches through the sun coming through the

holes in the roof; but it is so hard to get timber these days, and the prices are soaring until things are three times the usual price. May this terrible war stop soon! They call me Bai, and they say, "Bai, when are we going to get a proper roof?" Do remember these women at the Throne of Grace.

'There are six young girls of teenage. These six are mentally deficient, poor things! Their names are Nirmala, Mina, Lois, Premila, Lizzie and Ambie. Nirmala is the brightest amongst the lot. She is learning to take care of babies. The others do their little bits too. Premila is called "Pamoo" and she and Ambie are attending the Baptismal Class. Do pray for these two especially, that they may know the Saviour. Two others are learning cooking; Lois is not much good at any kind of work, so she helps to sweep Mukti, along with other feeble-minded girls.

'Through God's grace Mukti has turned many useless cases into living channels. Hence we are not going to be discouraged. One day we shall see even these mentally defective ones settled down happily in His kingdom.

'We thank you, dear prayer warriors, for helping us in many ways. One day "We shall reap if we faint not".

'Yours in Him,

'Bhimabai Harishchandra'.

'Therefore, let us not be weary in well-doing . . .' 'Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that . . . by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf.'

We thank our God upon every remembrance of you.

Yours in blessed partnership,

J. WOODWARD

M. L. HASTIE

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[The names of our representatives overseas, will be found overleaf.]

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