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**RAMABAI  
MUKTI  
MISSION**



KEDGAON, POONA DISTRICT

*October-December, 1947.*

DEAR FRIENDS,

This copy of the *Prayer Bell* will not reach you until after Christmas, but we want you to know that we shall be remembering you then and send prayers and wishes that it may be a joyous time and the New Year one of blessing, as we wait together for the fulfilment of God's purposes.

We are very grateful for the gifts which are even now arriving for our family, which will all help to make it a happy season once again, and about which we hope to tell you later.

You will rejoice with us over the return of Miss Callan, after several months of travel and deputation work in Britain and America, and also over the arrival of Miss Libbis from New Zealand. They will tell you of their welcome here. We praise God for bringing them to Mukti.

While we offer praise and thanksgiving for the Heavenly Father's loving-kindness in so many ways, we also remember in prayer Mrs. Barratt and her husband, who is seriously ill. Mr. Barratt co-operated in all his wife's efforts for Mukti, and we ask our friends to join in prayer for them in these days of anxiety.

Our sympathy also goes out to Miss Fletcher and her relatives in Australia in the bereavement sustained through the sudden Home-call of her father. Mr. Fletcher was once a missionary in India, and it was a joy to him when his daughter was called to work for the Master in the land he had left.

As gaps are left in the ranks of the active workers, we wonder who will come forward to fill them!

ISABEL CRADDOCK.

## JOY UNSPEAKABLE

*'Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed; for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest' (Josh. 1 : 9).*

This precious promise so often repeated to me has been a rich treasure on the way. Have you ever returned home after a long time and after many hindrances? If so, you will realize how it felt to be returning to Mukti. Delays and hindrances seemed to come on every side. While it was a great privilege to visit Malta, Tobruk, Massawa and Berbera, the quickest boat to India was all that was desired. I trust that through it a lesson in patience has been learned. How much we need it!

The first great surprise was to be greeted on the dock not only by Miss Fletcher but by Miss Libbis from New Zealand, who arrived in Bombay the day before.

The journey from Bombay to Poona was made over night, so we missed the beauties of the Western Ghats. The train jogged along, sometimes whispering and then shouting, 'You're nearly there. You'll soon be there. Back to Mukti! Back to Mukti!' Could one sleep?

Welcome commenced at Poona when Tulshiram smilingly entered the compartment to garland us with fragrant flowers. Crammed in a compartment, meant to hold sixteen, with thirty-four others and luggage in abundance, we left Poona. Seated on a roll of bedding by my side was a delightful Brahmin girl of twenty years of age. We carried on a lively conversation all the way.

Finally the train came to Kedgaon, where there was a general rush for the door. Before I could step down, Prabhakar had placed a second garland around my neck. The men scrambled in to extricate the luggage from the packed compartment. It was good to meet those of whom I had heard so much—Misses Asbery, Stone, Siemens, Terry and McGregor. What a joy to see so many young workers.

Our chariot, the tonga, was adorned with flowers, and the bullocks, with green-painted horns, joined in the 'Welcome'. Along the way there were many old friends to greet. The new wall and buildings being erected are a transformation. Excited groups were waiting around Mukti's open doorway, which was bedecked for the occasion. A little one came forward with another garland. 'Who is she?'

'Hannah.'

A surge of memories of anxious days and nights spent over a scrap of a Bud obliterated all else, as I saw how the Lord had given us Hannah out of the hands of disease and death.

On the other side of the doorway were the twins, Mary and Martha, with another garland and a sweet smile. Then Blossoms and Fruit Garden children pressed forward with outstretched hands to greet me. The questions, 'Who am I?' 'Do you remember me?' 'What is my name?' came from every direction. If only time would stand still! Who is hungry for lunch when there are so many little ones wanting even one word! Champa and Surya, our two young nurses, were quietly waiting to greet and be greeted. They put on the fifth garland! Five garlands are no light weight, but what a weight of love—the token of the love of these dear people to whom the Lord has again brought me, a love to which I pray that I may respond with the love of Christ, that together we may be used to win many to the light.

Bhimabai graciously escorted me to my room, and then we had to run off for lunch. On the way to the dining room many of the women were waiting to greet us.

It is a joy unspeakable to be back here again and strengthened for the fight against the powers of darkness. It is also a great encouragement to know that there are many faithful prayer warriors to help us in the battle.

Dear Christ, move on before  
Ah may I follow where  
Thy feet have trod  
And find mid life's perplexities  
The golden pathway of the will of God.

JANET CALLAN.

*'Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory' (1 Pet. 1: 8).*

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### A PRAYER REQUEST

The touring season is here. Four Bible-women, two of our blind girls, and Miss Amstutz have gone to Supa. From there they will travel to Hindu festival centres, day after day faithfully sowing the seed of the Word of God. We are asking you to pray very earnestly for souls to be born into His Kingdom. Pray . . . pray . . . pray!

## 'HE LEADETH ME'

A delicate tracery of spires and domes, arched gateways, and buildings against a rose-tinted sky, the harsh cry of birds, the tinkling of bells, and shrill voices speaking in a strange tongue—this was India as I first saw her from the deck of the *Atlantis*. As I watched the day break over Bombay, I wondered what the future held, so much to learn and so much to give. Like a benediction the words of Paul came to me, 'Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God'.

As I stepped down from the train at Kedgaon, what a joyful welcome awaited me. I was 'at home' from that moment. As we jogged along the road to Mukti in a gaily decorated bullock tonga, the triumphal procession halted now and again to greet smiling groups of Indian women thronging around us.

At length we reached the gates of Mukti. 'Salaam, Moushie,' and two little brown hands placed a garland of golden chrysanthemums around my neck. As I passed down the reception line, a jumble of eager little hands clasped mine in greeting. For a moment a mist of tears blurred my vision of the dear little Buds and Blossoms, but they were tears of joy. At last I had reached the place of His appointment, and my heart was overflowing with praise and joy.

The morning reading for that day in Daily Light expressed so perfectly all I wanted to say: 'He led them on safely. . . . Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. . . . I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy.' Thus I entered the gates of Mukti with thanksgiving, looking forward to the days of service which lie ahead, with this prayer in my heart:

'O teach me, Lord, that I may teach  
The precious things Thou dost impart,  
And wing my words that they may reach  
The hidden depths of many a heart.

'O fill me with Thy fulness, Lord,  
Until my very heart o'erflow  
In kindling thought and glowing word,  
Thy love to tell, Thy praise to show.'

KATHLYN HOLMES-LIBBIS.

## THE GOD OF LITTLE CHILDREN

*'Before they call, I will answer'* (Isa. 65: 24)

The missionary of the Blossoms sat with her head bowed on her arms, grim desperation in her heart. Out of twenty-five little girls, only six were left in the compound. She reached for a pencil and began to write of the ache and fear in her heart. These are the words that seemed to write themselves:

### Will Guni Get Pneumonia Next Year?

'She was a happy little girl, bonny and gay. Her brown eyes always were the first to light up with joy, her laugh among the first to ripple with happiness, and her feet the fleetest to run in play. Sadguni was her name. First into mischief and first into church, adults and children both laughed and prayed with this little girl affectionately known to everyone as Guni.

'One day little Guni stood with her brown arms outstretched to the sky, face uplifted to the silvery rain-drops. How good they felt—cool and wet when everything else was dry and hot. Guni led the others in evading the eye of the matron, that they might splash in the delightful mud puddles outside. But the matron was faithful, and even Guni could not evade her for long. But nothing daunts Guni, and she soon found there were mud puddles right inside their house—nice, big, splashy ones, and the silvery rain was splashing right down through the roof. It was almost as good as outdoors. Guni was happy. Not many people get to have the rain come right inside and make puddles to play in all over the floor! Again the matron watched, and scolded, and pulled little girls squealing with delight out of puddles.

'Night time came. Right between the puddles they slept—all twenty-five little girls, Indian fashion on the earthen floor. But one little girl was left out. All the dry spots were taken, and there was no place for her to sleep. With the ingenuity of childhood, she climbed underneath the matron's bed, and slept peacefully as the rain dripped all around. Another day of rain and puddles, another day, a whole week. Everything became damp and cold and clammy. The little girls began to cough, deep bronchial coughs. Measles came, and in its wake followed pneumonia. One after another the smiles left the little faces as fever came. Guni lay quiet and still. Her brown eyes, that used to light up with joy at the sight of the

missionary, did not so much as open when the missionary called her name.

'A missionary doctor came from a neighbouring city. He examined little Guni. Her pulse was 160. He shook his head. 'Pneumonia.' From bed to bed he went to other little girls whose pulses were 160. Carefully he prescribed the treatment, carefully it was followed. Slowly the fever came down. Several days passed before Guni showed any recognition of the missionary she loved. She still lies quiet and still, but Guni is going to live. After a few more weeks all the little Blossoms will be home from the hospital. They will be a little thinner, and will have a little less strength with which to grow up in India. What will happen when the monsoon comes next year? Will the damp and the cold and the sleeping between the puddles mean pneumonia again? Would Guni live through another case? Perhaps she would not have had pneumonia this year if measles had not come, but measles came. What will come next year?

'I asked today how much it would cost to fix the roof. The answer was Rs. 300. Where in all the world was there a person who would care to give Rs. 300 to such an unromantic thing as repairing an old roof? Lord, somewhere in all the world let someone care enough, that Guni might not get pneumonia next year.'

The very next morning after the missionary wrote this, the Rs. 300 came in the mail, and the missionary knew the Lord was saying, 'Before they call, I will answer'. As she stood looking at the money, she thought of the hundreds of other little girls in Mukti sleeping between mud puddles because of leaky roofs. Were there others, she wondered, who would care enough to protect the children from the damp and the rain and the cold of the monsoon? The Lord had answered for Guni. She felt He would answer for the others.

CAROL TERRY.

'Up to me sweet childhood looketh,  
Heart and mind and soul awake;  
Teach me of Thy ways, O Father,  
For sweet childhood's precious sake.  
In their young hearts, soft and tender,  
Guide my hand good seed to sow,  
That its blossoming may praise Thee  
Wheresoever they may go.'

## A KING'S DAUGHTER

*'The king's daughter is all glorious within.'* (Psa. 45: 13)

The discarded wife sat alone in the corner of the room. Her head was down, her heart was sore. She looked furtively at the new wife. The new one was younger and prettier than she, and now the husband had nothing but abuse for the one who had been his wife for many years. She would not tell him her secret. Carefully she planned how she would run away.

The baby girl was born at Mukti. Quietly and steadily she grew, a child of pleasant manners and good character. Her teachers encouraged her at school, but she was slow to learn. When the other girls her age passed, she failed. She was given another year to try again for her final examinations, but again she failed. The other girls went on to higher training, but Champa remained behind. Bitterness sprang up in her heart and coloured all her thoughts, until the sweet child who had accepted Christ as Saviour was choked by the roots of bitterness. She sulked, she refused to work, she would not take proper care of herself. She became a problem to all who had to do with her. Love she rejected, scolding she ignored, reasoning was of no avail.

Evangelistic meetings were being held at Mukti but she refused to attend. Alone she sat at home and sulked, sulked because she had failed, sulked because she could not go on to train for a nurse or a teacher, sulked because there was no future for a girl who had failed.

At the close of the meetings, the missionary spoke to her of the blessing she had missed by not attending the services. More sulks were the only visible results, but the Spirit was working. She took down her Bible and began to read, she began to pray, to weep and to sing. Other girls gathered around her, and the Holy Spirit wooed unto Himself the hearts and lives of those girls. The next day Champa was a new girl. There was the joy of the Lord in her heart and a song on her lips.

Twin baby girls came to Mukti and Miss Callan needed someone especially to care for them. She looked at the now joyful Champa and entrusted to her care Mary and Martha. Faithfully Champa watched over her charges, diligently she cared for them. As the days passed, more children were entrusted to her care. She was taken to work in the dispensary and proved to be worthy of the

trust placed in her. The day came when Champa was sent off for nurse's training. She studied long, hard hours to compete with girls who had had more education than she, and now her reward has come. Champa passed her midwifery examination with the highest grades in all of Bombay Presidency.

The Medical Superintendent of the Training School for Nurses wrote that Champa 'has given excellent service, taking responsibility well and being cheerful and efficient and dependable in all her work. She is an asset to Hospital Staff'.

She is at Mukti now working in our hospital. This week she said to the missionary who had prayed over her and placed faith in her, 'I know now why God let me fail in school here at Mukti. He wanted to bring me unto Himself, to take me through training depending on Him to help me through, and to bring me back to Mukti to serve Him here for His honour and glory.'

To a God who knows best how to deal with His children, we offer praise and prayer for Champa.

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We wish to express appreciation for gifts amounting to £2-0-0 from readers of *The Christian*.

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