

THE INDIA ALLIANCE

“For we are labourers together with God”

1 Cor 3: 9



“In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God”

Phil 4: 6

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CHURCH DEVELOPMENT IN GUJARAT

The Annual Mela for all our Gujarati Christians was held from March 13th to 17th at Mehmedabad, and the church so recently put in excellent condition was often filled to the very doors. It is difficult to measure spiritual results so close to the time of the meetings, but we were conscious that God's special anointing for the occasion rested upon each speaker in an unusual degree, and we believe that results from the messages will be realized in the lives of our people in the days to come. The hunger for God manifested in the early morning prayer meetings by both Indian Workers and laymen encouraged our hearts to believe that God was stirring the living flames of spiritual fires within the body of believers. The three days seemed so short and full, and though we did not see the manifested outpouring of the Spirit which our hearts still long for, yet we felt God's real presence in the conviction of sin, and are sure He has been answering and will continue to answer those heart yearnings for His gracious refreshing.

Space forbids more detail, so we pass on from those glowing days of upbuilding messages to our Second Regional Conference on the 17th, when our Church pastors, workers and delegates met to consider the problem of the Church of Jesus Christ in Gujarat. All things are not in proper order yet, but "the future is as bright as the promises of God." A fine body of men had gathered with thoughtful questions and suggestions well in keeping with the fitness of things in the beginning stages of such a far-reaching programme. Many of the questions were not easily answered but were the overflow of active thinking on the programme of establishing the indigenous Church in Gujarat on the eternal Rock. On every hand there were indications of life and our hearts praised God. We hope this Conference will be committed to the oversight of our Indian Brethren in the near future. They are rapidly being adjusted to the idea of responsible leadership.

Although a week has scarcely passed since the Conference its effects are being felt. When from one District came the report that great numbers of the workers and laymen were tithers, and another District showed very excellent totals for their yearly giving, our hearts were filled with joy. These same reports reached the hearts of certain far away village Christians who had fallen short in their giving. They were convicted and shortly afterwards decided, whatever else they did, they would give to the support of their pastor as never before. Herein we see one of the far-reaching possibilities of these Conferences. Once they form this habit and have opportunity of hearing of each other's activities, our entire Church work will be stimulated.

In this Conference eleven Churches were represented who give from one-fourth to the full support of their pastors. There are still a few others who have not yet assumed this responsibility. Let us pray the Lord of the harvest to speedily make full support possible in all of our branches

so that an Indian Committee may be formed to take the oversight of these rapidly developing Indian Churches.

J. F. BRABAZON.

MISSIONARY POTTERS FIND PLASTIC CLAY

"These were the potters, and those that dwelt among plants and hedges; there they dwelt with the king for his work."

These people are not tabulated among the king's mighty men who did exploits, but this brief record tells of their work and where they lived, and many doubtless were the vessels these potters made for royal usage. Their peculiar abodes were perhaps not of the most congenial order, but *there* was the material they needed, so there they lived and worked.

Some of us missionaries somewhat resemble David's potters, who dwell with the King for His work, *where* material for His vessels is found.

The hedges where David's potters dwelt are not described, but India's village-hedges are usually not of the most pleasant kind. No one would say that these dirty, dusty, disease-infested villages and their surroundings are pleasant. Ugly sights, sounds, odours, habits and customs of more especially the poor low caste, are to say the least veritably offensive to one's eyes, ears, and western susceptibilities! But *within* these very villages is the material, so there we potters work.

Six months of the year we missionaries are to be found either encamped within or in close proximity to these villages. Day by day we go the rounds, in and out among high and low seeking amid the unlovely surroundings for hearts who will receive Jesus and become vessels for His glory and use. Cheerfully we plod on, toiling for Him, enduring also as "seeing Him who is invisible."

This season in our Murtizapur district our hearts have been refreshed and encouraged by seventeen persons accepting salvation through faith in Jesus Christ and following Him in baptism. Caste people became stirred up when they learned the purpose of the candidates, and calling a meeting sought by persuasion, bribery, and threat to deter them but they failed. Praise God! Pray with us that each one may be in the hands of the Great Potter "a vessel meet for the Master's use and prepared unto every good work."

Among caste people are those who have come very near the Kingdom. Pray that they fail not in taking the next and vital step which will ensure their entrance into the Kingdom.

A Deshmuk came to our tent with four questions which were perplexing him. They were reasonable and essential too, and his request was undoubtedly sincere. At the end of nearly 3 hours, when rising to leave, he expressed deep gratitude for the answers received. On the morrow he came again when we kindly queried, "Have you more questions?" "No! no" replied he, "all your answers of yesterday were truth, and nothing we can say will stand against them!" Then we urged, "Why, oh, why will you not accept Jesus as your Saviour?" And he said seriously and quietly, "To-day it is as though I had taken the first step toward Him." Please pray also for him.

MRS. L. J. CUTLER.

SALAAM SAHIB! SALAAM, MADAM SAHIB!

A holiday spirit, or should I say a spirit of mystery, pervaded the Dholka compound on the morning of March 19th. Mr. and Mrs. Helfers awakened that morning with the realization that that day would end their first term of

service in India, every day of which was spent in the interests of the Dholka Church and Boarding School.

There were still odds and ends to pack and last minute things to attend to, when suddenly at 9-30 a. m. the church bell rang. This was the call for all to assemble at the church for the farewell meeting. As the boys marched thither the many pairs of brown legs moving slowly along the line reminded me of a large centipede! When the last boy entered the church we knew we could hold back no longer.

As soon as Mr. and Mrs. Helfers were seated in the place of honour the boys started singing which was followed by a beautiful, heart-felt prayer by Rev. Bhuder Aju. The letter from the Church extolling all their good deeds was read, the customary garlands were given, and as tokens of the esteem in which they were held by the Church Mr. and Mrs. Helfers were presented with a gold watch chain and lovely silver cup. Whereupon these good folks responded suitably to the letter and the gifts. Now came the boys' turn. They too read a letter telling of love bestowed upon them even though they did receive the spankings they so often needed, and also recalled the good medical care given by Mrs. Helfers during times of sickness. A leather Gujarati Testament was presented to Mrs. Helfers and a Gujarati Bible to Mr. Helfers together with lovely garlands. These gifts were tokens of love from the boys. Again our two friends found themselves called upon for speeches. After prayer, opportunity was given for testimony. The farewell meeting was closed with the hymn "Blest be the tie that binds."

FREDA L. LEWELLEN.

"TACT MEANS TOUCH"

Years ago when preparing for work in India we heard the above words spoken by our beloved Dr. Wilson in the

Gospel Tabernacle, and we never forgot them. Nor do we forget his stately figure, when, after testing the class to see if they caught the thought of his question, "What does Tact mean?" he stepped forward and touched the seat in front of him as he smilingly said, "Tact means touch." Of course we students saw it clearly, but it is quite another thing to put in practice what we do know, especially in a land like India where minds seem to work from a different angle to ours.

A new missionary brimming over with zeal might have asked some one by the wayside, "Has your salvation become?" or entering the compound of a village woman, might have said, "Lady, shall I tell you the story of God?" The former question would scare the man, and the latter would elicit the reply, "Get out of this my compound. We are afraid of you, etc." But there's a chance to learn.

One day, not long since, a couple of us missionaries with an Indian worker went to a village hoping and praying for success, but instead, jeers and cheers from young men who knew how to make a racket to scare a missionary greeted us. However, we didn't scare a little bit, knowing what our commission meant that morning. It was neither smooth nor pleasant work but some did listen and we were repaid. Going towards a quieter spot, we became almost ready to flee discomfited for the cheers and jeers followed us as we sped along. Then the thought came, "Is there a policeman in this village?" and on finding ourselves near to his house we drew the crowd thither. He was a Mohammedan and by using his authority just a little, he soon dispersed the crowd and invited us to a seat on his verandah. He with his friends listened respectfully, evidently pleased to hear a bit about Abraham, David and others whose names he had read in the Koran, but it was another thing to hear from one who had actually been in the place where these great prophets had lived and died.

There we presented the objective, Jesus the Messiah, Greatest of all Prophets; Great David's Greater Son. We soon forgot the yelling of the first crowd, when a young man who had waited patiently now pressed his plea that we follow him to a place outside the village where there was a weaving shop. Spinning wheel and hand loom we had known from childhood, and the Irish linen garment we wore gave the point of contact as they listened in detail to how it was manufactured, from the growing flax on up to the finished web. They listened to the other Story, because of the hand loom and flax story.

Still our young friend waited for his chance. At last he very graciously led us on to the other weaving place where were a dozen or so young men at their spinning wheels. These were headed by a middle-aged gentleman who like the others, stripped to the waist, sat spinning the thread to be used on the hand looms in the next room.

He told us to remove our shoes and enter which we declined to do. Then he ordered a rug to be spread outside the threshold of the room, so down we sat and breathed easy, because, oh, well just because we knew the Lord was with us. We could never tell you, dear readers, what the next hour or two meant. Their breakfast bell rang *but* they wanted to hear it all, even the prayer offered by one of the missionaries. Then followed the drink of water, yes, and milk too, and the bit of bread we felt we dare not refuse, the salaams and the invitation to come again. Ah, yes, they were *touched* and we knew also that the missionaries had the touch from the God-ward end without which the human touch would be useless.

Whisper! They were Gāndhiites or may be Arya Sāmajists, who often listen so as to be better able to oppose. But what cared we? The spot was touched, Hallelujah! and they got His message. Never mind their motive. The Holy Spirit's motive was pure. So was ours. For the time being we leave them and pray.

Will not you, dear reader, help us and them as you with us touch God for dear India, and for the many individuals who are hungry for His touch through us?

MARTHA RAMSEY.

TWO LITTLE INDIAN GIRLS

One of these little girls of whom I am about to tell you is a little child wife about eleven or possibly twelve years of age. Her husband, who is several years older than she is, attended a Roman Catholic school for some years, and when he returned home he found to his surprise that his father and blind mother had become earnest Christians. He began going with them to meetings with the result that he too found the Saviour and again and again begged to be baptized. This privilege, however, was denied him, as his wife was not saved, and some time ago it had been decided not to baptize one of a married couple until the other was ready also to be baptized, for we had learned through some sad experiences that "a house divided against itself cannot stand."

This young man, however, not only continued to make progress in his Christian life but decided to yield himself fully to God for His service, and is now preparing to enter the Bible Training School. His little wife, who was still living with her heathen parents in their village, according to custom was sent to spend some time at the home of her mother-in-law.

Little Lakshmi was very happy here because of the love and kind treatment she received, so different from what it would have been had she entered the home of a heathen mother-in-law. Here she too heard about Jesus, was taught to sing hymns and taken to meetings, so in a very short time she decided that she wanted to become a Christian.

Perhaps you can imagine the joy of the whole family and especially of the young husband when his little wife accompanied him to the tank where together they were baptized.

But now how could little Lakshmi return to her people where she would defile them and their home? The answer is, she was never obliged to go back, for God wonderfully answered prayer on her behalf. When we told her father what had taken place and that his little daughter also wanted to go to school, he at once consented saying, "It is all right. Take her. What a splendid young man is her husband! Where would I get such a good son-in-law, perhaps through him I too shall become a Christian." We learned that the young man had visited him several times and had talked to him of Jesus, but we believe his life told more than what he said.

But what about little girl number two? Her name is Yeshudi, and her age about the same as Lakshmi's; but she lived in quite another village with her parents and little sister. Her father who was supposed to be a Christian was a very indolent man often going off leaving his wife and children to do for themselves. So little Yeshudi had to go to the fields to pick cotton and do anything she could to fill her stomach, as the Indians say. Her life was anything but an easy one. Sometimes she would clean the cooking utensils for some friendly Hindu neighbours who, in turn, would give her something to eat. Yeshudi, however, had learned to love the story of Jesus. She took great delight in singing hymns although she was the only little Christian girl in her village.

While camping out in the district one day we learned to our horror that Yeshudi's father was planning to marry her to a Hindu. At once we began to pray earnestly that God would deliver little Yeshudi while we lost no time in getting out to her village. How thankful we were when we found her father was home as we could not have taken her without his consent.

When we made known our errand and told him we would assume the support of his little girl, for we felt this was our only hope of getting her, we were not surprised that he consented to let her go for we had prayed all the way there. Truly our God is faithful, and how we did thank Him when we had her safely seated in the car after a tearful good-bye to her mother, for we told them we must take her at once.

We hurried back to the camp where lived the blind woman whose little daughter-in-law was also joyfully preparing to go to school, and here these two little Indian girls had an opportunity to get acquainted with each other which made it much easier for them when about a week later we took them to our Girls' Boarding School where everybody and everything were new and strange to them.

After spending a day or two at the school we left feeling so happy that these two little Indian girls were safely sheltered there, where, instead of seeing and hearing the evils of a heathen village, they would learn to know and love the Lord Jesus as well as to read and write, sew and cook and be fitted to properly manage a Christian home.

Of course Lakshmi will be a preacher's wife, so please pray for her and Yeshudi too, that when the time comes for them to leave school they will go out to lead other little Indian girls to Jesus.

KATHERINE P. WILLIAMS.

NEWS ITEMS

Mr. and Mrs. Lapp and Mr. Schelander having completed three and four terms respectively of service in Berar, sailed for furlough last month. Pray that these tired workers might have all the rest they require and be speedily returned to us in the fullness of the Gospel of Christ with every need supplied.

Baby number four was born to Mr. and Mrs. Conant on February 16. The little new comer weighed $9\frac{3}{4}$ lbs. at birth and has been named Keren Bernice. May she be a real help to her parents in attracting the heathen of Pachora to the true Light of the world.

Two months ago Mr. and Mrs. Moyser took over the management of our Alliance Rest Home in Lonavla, and will remain there with others of our Missionaries during the hot season.

Sanand District Conference was held in the new church at Ashapur from April 9-13. The immediate results of these days of very real fellowship with our blessed Lord and one another were attested to in spontaneous outbursts of praise and prayer which continued until long after midnight on the last day of the meetings. On Sunday both sacraments of the New Testament were observed. In the morning a big crowd of believers surrounded the Lord's table and in loving remembrance of Him partook of the emblems of His broken body and shed blood. In the afternoon Mr. Kerr immersed fourteen young people (second generation Christians) in the Sabarnati river while the audience on one bank sang praises to the Lamb that was slain, and the heathen on the opposite bank looked on in awe and wonder. All the glory belongs to Him, our matchless, omnipotent Christ.

Our readers will rejoice to know that the typhoid and tubercular cases for whom we requested prayer in our last issue, are now in the great mercy of God practically well again. Rev. Nathalal Makan testifies to a touch from God that cut short the natural course of typhoid fever and raised him up for the ministry entrusted to him; and Lalla Munsha, who was diagnosed as beyond hope, is also on his feet again. Keep on praying and praising God!

Encouraging news comes from the pastorate recently entrusted to Rev. Ramabhai Durla. Chiman Balla, a young

Christian farmer of Vasna, has volunteered to accompany Ramabhai whenever possible on his preaching trips amongst the heathen, and about two weeks ago ten out-castes from that vicinity attended the church service and expressed their desire to become Christians and be baptized.

Our Mission Evangelist, Rev. A. I. Garrison, will (D. V.) speak at three Missionary Conventions to be held in the Nilgiri Hills, South India, during the hot season. Missionaries from all parts of India and of different denominations attend these Conventions seeking more light and life to be imparted to those "that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death."

The annual exodus from the scorching heat of the plains has commenced and most of our missionaries with thick bedding rolls and tightly packed tin trunks are moving towards the hills of Kashmir, Landour, Ootacamund, Chikalda and Lonavla. We all need physical and spiritual refreshing. Pray for us as well as for our work and workers left for the time being without missionary supervision. Pray for our young missionaries at present studying Marathi in the Language School at Mahableshwar.

"Please, Saheb, don't record this ten rupee note with my regular offerings. It is a special gift of gratitude for God's mercy in healing me." Thus requested Rama Suva, a white-haired Christian farmer, who upon his recovery from the very gates of death had returned to give God thanks. "Where are the nine?"

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