

The India Alliance

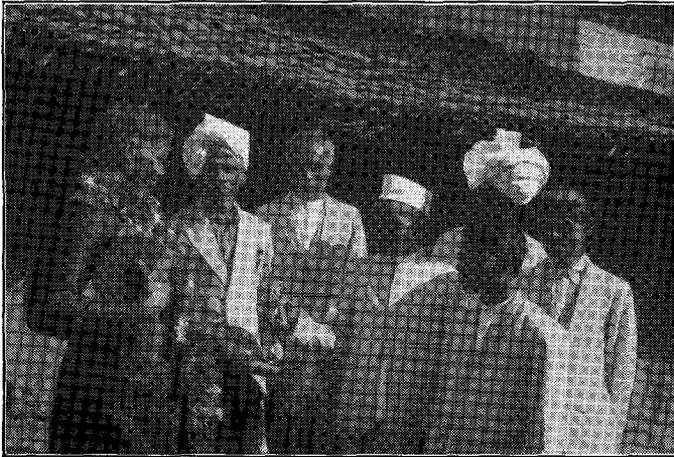
A Bulletin of the India Mission of the Christian and
Missionary Alliance

APRIL

1934

Akalachia

Does the accompanying picture look awkward, as though it had been posed? Well, we confess that it was posed. There was not enough light in the church, so we had to go outside into the bright sunshine. Then, too, the new pastor (he of the many wreaths of flowers) had never before been the recipient of such a gift. The deacons, too, had never before given one like it, so their action was a



bit stiff. And, if the truth must be told, we ourselves had never seen just such an occurrence before, and perhaps we held the camera stiffly.

It was at the ordination of Yohon Gangaram, one of our younger Gujarathi evangelists, as pastor of the church in Akalachia. The commodious building was crowded. Each of our Gujarathi churches had sent a representative to share the joy of the local congregation. The service was dignified and lengthy. The Indian

people do not demand that it be "short and snappy." A minister is ordained but once. Preparation for the service has gone on for many days. So why hurry through it? Better have the fullest enjoyment of the occasion.

And withal there was the sense of the Lord's presence, and we had no desire to hurry through such an hallowed experience.

Yohon (Gujarathi for John) served his apprenticeship as a teacher in the boarding school. Later he became an evangelist, serving in several rather hard fields. About a year ago he was moved to Akalachia, and during the past months God's blessing has been upon his ministry. He has been the unordained pastor there, has taught school on occasions, conducted night school at times, and has organized a band of young drummers and cymbalists, who go with him to other villages, "singing with loud sounding instruments unto the Lord." Then came the revival meetings in Akalachia last winter, under the ministry of Rev. A. I. Garrison, and Brother Yohon was the leader of his people in humbling and contrition before the Lord. And God has blessed the service of His humbled servant. Last Christmas Day was observed with joy as twenty-six persons confessed the Lord before men in baptism.

We thought that the ordination service was over, and that it only remained for the newly ordained minister to pronounce the benediction. But the deacons all went outside the church, and again filed in in a body, and with utmost solemnity presented their pastor with something wrapped in a handkerchief. It proved to be thirty pieces of silver, representing about two months' income for an average family. This was to buy a horse, so that their pastor could visit his various preaching points more readily. It was entirely their own idea, and a good one, we thought. And given out of such poverty!

Again we attempted to close the meeting, but one old farmer arose and demanded that we all say 'Hallelujah.' He reminded us of the time, not so long ago, when the work of the Lord in Akalachia seemed to have come to naught. So many of the converts of famine days had gone back, and so many others had grown cold, that it was seriously proposed by a missionary to tear down the church building and use the materials to build in a more hopeful place. We remembered the time. Others sprang to their feet to unite in praise to God, who has visited and revived His people. "Say hallelujah," insisted the Christian farmer. We said it. "Say it again." He was having a hard time to say all that was in his heart, and we were thus helping him. We said it again.

And today, as we remember, we say it again.

*

*

*

*

*

"None of us Liveth unto Himself." Rom. 14: 7.

Since it is not possible for us to live, nor even to die, without affecting others, how many surprises there will be when all of the unpremeditated and unexpected results of the influence of our actions, for good or for ill, will be laid bare. What different values we shall then place upon things which now seem unimportant.

When the authorities at Washington decided to help American trade abroad, by devaluating the dollar, they were probably correct in supposing that it would be to the benefit of American producers if people in other countries were able to buy American wheat or automobiles with less of their own currency. They probably did not think at all of the effect upon missionary work, when American dollars sent abroad in the interests of the Gospel would have less purchasing power. We are certain that they did not contemplate the reduction of the size of our little INDIA ALLIANCE. But our readers will appreciate the logic of facts. A slenderized dollar will buy and print less paper in India.

THE INDIA ALLIANCE will continue, for we must bear witness to the goodness of God, and the working of His Spirit. Its few pages will be wholly occupied with news of the work in India. We trust that you will enjoy its occasional visits, and we shall be glad to send copies to your friends if you will furnish their addresses.

And if, in its smaller form, the little paper can be read more quickly, may we suggest that the extra moments thus saved be utilized in the best possible way, by lifting your heart in prayer for us and for the spread of the Gospel in India? For, after all, what power is there committed to men whereby to influence others for good to be compared with the power of intercessory prayer?

* * * * *

Comings and Goings

It was a joy to welcome back, from furlough, Mr. and Mrs. Gustafson and family, who reached India on November 13th. They have returned to their former station, Viramgam, where they are in touch with "the regions beyond" to the northward of our present Gujarathi field.

Rev. Raymond H. Smith reached Bombay on January 2nd, and has been stationed at Akola, where he will be kept very busy with numerous activities.

Rev. A. I. Garrison and family have left for furlough. It is their plan to drive by automobile from India across Persia and Iraq, and through the Holy Land to Europe. Meetings are arranged in many

places along the way, and prayer is asked that their ministry will be blessed. Mr. Garrison was mission evangelist, and will be much missed during their furlough.

Misses K. P. Williams and M. Rurey are sailing on March 15th, and will travel via England. Rev. and Mrs. Elmore Eicher will sail on March 23rd, direct to New York, and Miss Blance Conger expects to leave for America toward the end of May. All of these missionaries have earned a good rest, and we commend them to your prayers for a blessed and useful furlough.

* * * * *

News and Notes

Just before Mr. and Mrs. Albert Eicher left Akola to take up their first station appointment, at Jalgaon, a very beautiful ordination service was held at the headquarters bungalow, and Mr. Eicher was solemnly set apart to the Ministry of the Gospel. Rev. A. I. Garrison presided, and all ordained missionaries within reach of Akola took part. The pastor of the Indian church in Akola also assisted in the laying on of hands. Mr. and Mrs. Eicher will attend the Marathi Language School during the hot weather, and take up station work in earnest after the summer.

* * * * *

Matters that Call for Prayer

Brother R. E. Conant and family returned from furlough less than two years ago, and were appointed to important work. During Annual Conference Mr. Conant suffered a complete nervous breakdown, and has had to be in a hospital ever since. Following a special call to prayer, observed in all stations at the same hour, he improved markedly, but shortly afterward suffered a relapse. Please pray for him, and for Mrs. Conant and the four children.

Bitter persecution has broken out against some recently baptised converts in Chalisgaon. They have been deprived of their means of livelihood, and powerful forces have been put in motion to terrorise them. Some have wavered. Some have fled from their homes rather than to deny the Lord. The fight is not against flesh and blood. Pray for them.

This is the first copy of THE INDIA ALLIANCE issued since August, 1933. The Annual Report Number has been omitted. We trust that hereafter it may be sent out regularly.