

# *The India Alliance*



SADHU



**Marathi Area Edition**

**Bulletin 1 - 1957**

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Marathi Area Edition

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**BULLETIN I — 1957**

## Our Most Unforgettable Character

Twenty-nine years ago upon arrival in Akola I was without warning abruptly swept up by a little human whirlwind. Bystanding missionaries explained she claimed to belong to the Eicher family by virtue of once having taken care of an Eicher baby whose mother was very ill. Hence she was welcoming the new relative.

In Nimbuni's case a succession of missionaries became her relatives for she refused to budge from the Akola compound where she had come to live after her school days. As a little famine waif she had been left at the Khamgaon School, but as she developed it became apparent she would always be about ten years old mentally, so she was never married. Since the only space to spare in Akola was a room next to the buffalo shed, she ensconced herself there. She explains with great pride that Jesus' first home was a cattle shed, therefore she should feel honored to live next to one. She keeps her room scrupulously clean. As long as she was able to work she industriously busied herself with whatever there was to do which didn't require much intelligence. The only burden upon her scant reasoning power is daily wrestling with the profound problem as to why her hair can be white when she has never married.

She frequently has an urge to entertain our guests by just walking in unannounced and doing a stilted little jig, snapping her fingers to provide rhythm. Then with a whoop she is off on her pitifully bowed legs as suddenly as she came. It is quite startling to new guests.

A year ago pneumonia nearly claimed her. The nursing project was a community affair. It provided many laughs and much irritation to the volunteer nurses. Recently she began to develop spots and sores and we find she has leprosy. It would require a straight jacket to get her to and keep her in a leprosarium. So it appears Nimbuni will finish her days in the old familiar surroundings and continue to provide us with an opportunity to "draw out our souls to the hungry." Almost every district has its several varieties of Nimbunis, male or female. Hence we all need prayer that the natural exasperation which so easily arises may be replaced with patience and an abundant love from God.

—Alice Eicher

## Souls Touched by the Way

One day an old woman followed us from a village back to camp explaining she wished to hear more. She said, "I have sat in every meeting, night and morning, and have drunk in this sweet nectar. Last night as I sat and listened to the story I had such joy in my soul. The things of earth do not matter. They will all stay here. But I want a place hereafter."

"Is there anything lacking in that!" said the old long-haired sadhu with a shake of his head. He sat in front of the missionaries' tent and looked at a word-picture of himself in the Holy Spirit's description of him given in Romans 1. God is dealing with this heart, and as he came to see us the day we broke camp, he offered the information that he would meet us again at Katepurna annual camp meeting where he plans to come to hear more of the Word of Life.

—Marthena Ransom

Detouring around the village of "So Much" we passed through "Interval" and stopped at a small village where the only Christian was a blind grandmother. How delighted she was to hear God's Word read and to fellowship with us in prayer. It was so little, yet it meant so much.

In another town a young woman, with her baby on her hip, was standing on the edge of the group. One eye was wide open but sightless, the other was only a slit where an eye had been. She was trying to hear the Gospel but people chased her away. I remonstrated, but with a shrug of their shoulders, they replied, "She's only a broken one." A hungry heart denied a little that would have meant so much to her.

One afternoon a widow from one of the many villages scattered through the valley in the hills far from the city visited us in our camp upon the hill. "Oh, yes, we have heard all about your God. But we too have our gods. See the white flag flying from the pole in the center of our village? There is my god."

They were hearing after an interval of six years. We had so little time to give them. How long an interval will there be until they hear again?

—Ruth Schlatter

"In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."

On one morning we were told, "It is no use to hold a meeting here. No one will stand in this blazing sun." How wrong we were for never had we had such a warm reception as that morning when so many sat for an hour to hear the Gospel. Even the preacher got warmed up and made a better appeal than ever before.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days."

It was after many days of patient waiting that I really got an opportunity to present the Gospel fully to a lawyer friend. I had my case well prepared by frequent seed sowing with booklets, tracts, and a New Testament. Others had witnessed, but now the heart was wide open to receive the Gospel story told in simple words.

—Tilman Amstutz

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This is the story of Subi, who was born and raised a Hindu. Forsaking medical attention it was her custom to offer sacrifices to her idols for the healing of her sick children. She had laid four tiny children at the mercies of these idols of stone. Seeing the fourth child die with the disease that had taken her other children, she became discouraged in these gods who were powerless to help her in the times of desperate need.

We were touring in Subi's village when her fifth child fell ill. Disappointed and disheartened with idol worship, she listened as we told about Jesus, the true and living Saviour. Attending our Short Term Bible School in Amraoti, she received concentrated teaching in the Word. She and her husband found Jesus Who saves and heals. At the end of our touring season they came five miles by bullock cart to receive baptism. The chubby little fellow in their arms proved that they had learned through experience as well as teaching that Jesus heals. Matt. 9:29—"According to your faith be it unto you."

—Laird Stengele

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What exuberant joy there is in seeing one of the redeemed grow in grace and show evidence of following the Lord in the minute things of life! The life of Sagunabai is a living testimony to God's saving power and leading in the heart of an illiterate village woman.

Sagunabai's most recent experience with her Lord has spoken to all our hearts. While going to her present assignment as chaperon of a group of young women serving the

Lord in a small village she fell and broke her arm. Thinking it a bad sprain she waited eighteen days before an X-ray revealed her true condition. When told she was to have her bone pulled into place she looked up and asked, "Don't we have the Lord Who made us? He can mend even broken bones, can't He?" Yes, He can. The doctor carefully re-examined the picture. He felt resetting the bone would be unnecessary. In the eighteen days the new bone had been forming and setting quite satisfactorily. So he made only a plaster of paris splint as a support for her arm. The Lord had heard the prayers of His child. Sagunabai went on her way sure again of God's healing hand upon her.

—C. Herbert Dyke, Jr.

Pray for these hungry souls. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled."



WOMEN CARRYING WATER JARS ON THEIR HEADS

### The School at Work

To the first grade children seated on their mats the day by day learning and memorizing means work. Still another lesson which is hard to learn is working together. Big sister taking advantage of little sister, bringing tears and the need for discipline. There is joy, too, as the girls form lines passing chopped wood, carrying grains and other supplies to the storeroom.

The greatest work is that which God desires to do in the heart of each child. The rough jewels sent to us need cutting and polishing by the Master Workman. We have 148 such jewels. What God has done in shaping these lives would fill pages.

Sushila came to us as a jewel in the rough. She has been a real problem to us, making it necessary to discipline her severely. She came to me this morning saying, "Auntie, I was such a naughty girl when I came to school, but haven't I changed and been a good girl." So it has been in many hearts. This work has been done because He has been faithful, and you have prayed and given. Pray for the work and workers at Khangaon that each might be used to bring about the patterns He desires for each life.

—Ann Droppa

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## Literature Work

### Miss Jasper Writes from the Akola Book Depot

Religious leaders from all sections of India are directing their attention to a subject that is of vital importance to the life of the Christians and the work of the Church. The need is that of producing and distributing good Christian reading material and Bible helps in large quantities. These must be in attractive form, well illustrated, and priced within range of the majority.

In a country where the literacy movement is being pushed with vigor and where resources are limited, the demand increases and the problem becomes more acute with each succeeding month. The Church is awake to the need, and steps are being taken in the right direction, but the solution still lies in the days ahead.

—Gladys Jasper

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### Miss Derr Writes from Poona

Mr. Thorat, a young man working for Government, has been translating "Teaching the Word of Truth" in his spare time and is now putting in all his vacation time to finish it.

Mr. Modak has been working on the translation of "Let's Ask St. Paul."

"Ascending Way," a sweet little book written by a Christian mother in Ceylon, telling how she taught her own boys to love prayer, to forgive and also how parents should culti-

vate their own spiritual lives, will soon be ready for distribution. I am sure it will be a great help to our Christians.

Dr. Billy Graham's book "Into Light" will be a great help to our evangelists and to our lay workers. This is a book on Bible studies for Counsellors.

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### Mr. and Mrs. Schelander Write from Poona

We have the privilege of living in the cultural capital of thirty million Marathi speaking people. Here is the seat of the University of Maharashtra, and from here circulate the most influential newspapers and periodicals in the Marathi language. It is also a great military center. Visiting VIPs from abroad are almost always brought here to see the National Army Training School, among other things. In the short time we have been here Poona has welcomed B. and K. and Co. from Russia, King Ibn Saud of Arabia, the Emperor of Ethiopia, the President of Syria, and the two Lamas from Tibet, besides others.

But we don't spend much time watching the great ones of the earth, although almost invariably their motorcades pass our front door. We are living in Poona to be better able to help our good friends in the Ramabai Mukti Mission in preparing a new edition of the Marathi translation of the Bible that the great and learned Pandita completed just before her death in 1922. Several of us have been working together to revise its often overly-literal wording, and to secure a greater uniformity in renderings of certain words and expressions. This we think she herself would have done had she lived long enough. April 1958 is the centenary of her birth. We hope the new Bible will be ready by then. Please pray for us as we work to that end.

—Fred and Edna Schelander

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### Prayer and Praise

Pray for the Hindu children who attend the Khamgaon Girls' School and the Akola Boys' School as day scholars.

Pray for the older boys and girls who live in the Akola and Khamgaon boarding schools respectively but attend high schools in the town. The temptations are many but the opportunities for witness are also great.

Pray for the Workers Summer School to be held in August. This is an annual three-week session of Bible refresher courses and practical studies. God's servants especially need always to be upheld in prayer.

Praise God for blessing in Village Christian Short-Term Schools held in April. Pray for the calling out of lay workers from among these who attend.

Praise God for His care of the missionaries' children in this past school year, and pray for their continued spiritual growth as well.

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