No. 1 January, 1931

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

The Christmas season, with its varied features, such as betrothals, weddings, Christmas trees, Sunday School programmes, church services, special offerings, etc., has come and gone. The missionaries' children are for a couple of months happily settled with their parents, and the Children's Home housekeeper is free from care and anxiety for a brief season.

The beginning of last year was entered into by many with fear and misgiving because of the political unrest all over the land; and while this has continued in a greater or lesser degree in different places all through the year, yet through it all (some disturbances were of an exciting character) God has carried our people in perfect safety, without loss of life or limb, or even property. Praise the Lord!

We enter this year with peace and joy in our hearts, knowing that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord; and while He garrisons us around, He leads beside the still waters even in times of war; and
knowing that our redemption draweth nigh, we can lift up our heads and rejoice when we see SOME things come to pass.

While several of our people are sick, most of our touring parties are out in the district, giving out the living Word of God to thirsty souls. Letters to the office speak of unrest and opposition, and yet they also speak of great interest amongst the people, anxious inquirers, people seeking God, and baptisms in several of our stations.

A number are looking to God for means for their regular furloughs in the spring, and funds are not yet in sight for a number of them; so pray for this, please.

What we need to-day in our Mission is a revival of holiness that will cleanse hearts and lives, set young people on fire to see the salvation of their own people, and give them an urge, nay, a real “woe is me if I do not preach or testify to the mighty power of the God of my Salvation.” Let us think prayerfully of the needs of the work, when we realize that we as an Alliance are responsible for 3,458,000 people, and in 5,074 towns and villages there is not a single professing follower of our Lord Jesus Christ. So let us, one and all, buckle on the whole armour of God and allow nothing to keep us from our assigned tasks as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

W. MOYSER.

“UNTO YOU IS BORN THIS DAY......A SAVIOUR.”

It was Christmas Eve and the entire personnel of the Missionary camp was joyfully astir in preparation for the next day. Graceful boughs from the tamarind tree in the garden of the village priest had been cut fresh and green, and bound securely to the centre pole of our large touring tent, thus forming an ideal Christmas tree for the children.
On this were carefully placed the tangible greetings from our Missionary friends and the remnants of last year's trimmings, and big and little were apparently satisfied with the earnest of a happy Christmas.

But real joy must have an outlet. Ours was found in announcing to the straggling heathen spectators from the near-by village the angel's oft-repeated message, "Unto you is born a Saviour."

For over a month these friendly neighbours, in small or large numbers, had attended our afternoon prayer meeting. Day after day they had sauntered over to the place of meeting; shuffled off their clumsy footwear, and seated themselves in rows on the ground to hear the Story of Love. Several who could read had learned to join in the singing—and now on the eve of the anniversary of the Saviour's birth, wrapped in coarse sheets or blankets as protection against the chill of a cold season evening, they huddle together around the tent door to hear once more through song and story that, "Unto you is born a Saviour."

In absolute silence they listen while our three children in company with the Indian helper's three little girls sing in Gujarati songs of Him—the Incarnate Son of God, who became man in order to effect our redemption from sin. The message from the "mouths of babes" seems to reach their hearts and they nod their heads and mutter, "Yes, He's the only Saviour. He died for all." Poor folks! For them there is no happy Christmas, because they have not found the Christ. They have no song because they know no Saviour. Let us ensure for ourselves and them lasting joy by telling again and again to the heathen world, "Unto you is born a Saviour."

Christmas morning comes. The Missionary family is fast asleep for daybreak is yet a long way off. But Indian associates who labour with us in the Gospel are awake and singing the songs of the Nativity at the tent windows of
their Western co-labourers. In contrast with their heathen countrymen, they not only BELIEVE Jesus Christ became man, but—mysterious truth!—they KNOW He is born in their very own hearts by faith, because our predecessors delivered to them with heart acceptance the angel’s message, "Unto you is born a Saviour."

Wake up, Church of Christ! God has commissioned us—redeemed humanity of this age—as Announcers of the "glad tidings of great joy which shall be to all people." Share your joy with others by proclaiming far and wide, "Unto you is born a Saviour."

JANE E. KERR.

"THE SAHIB'S SHOW"

"The Sahib’s show has come! The Sahib’s show has come!" Excitedly the children call to one another as we enter town at night with our stereoptican lantern. It is not a very good name to use, but the big word s-t-e-r-o-o-p-t-i-c-a-n has not been translated into Marathi, so we often use the people’s phrase, and send one of our number to tell the quiet town that the Sahib’s show has indeed come. It seems like a dead town, for there are no street lights to lighten the uneven streets, no glowing shop windows to attract passers-by, and no inviting home windows to show a bit of domestic happiness. There are not many lamps in the houses, and closed courtyards hide the few there are, but at the sound of the little organ, white-clad figures emerge here and there, many carrying Dietz lanterns filled with Standard oil, and the sleepy little town seems partly to come to life. Moonlight nights bring better attendance, since the people can see to come, and are not afraid to sit on the ground in the moonlight. It is a pretty sight to watch the ranks of listeners, bathed in the silvery moonlight, take in the message on the screen. The screen has to be well shaded, of course, lest the brilliant Indian moon
drown out the flicker of our carbide generator, but a
friendly wall or an overhanging roof usually offer them-
selves for our purpose.

By the time the lantern has been set up and the light
is going, the students have started singing gospel songs.
When a sufficient crowd has gathered the slides are started,
beginning with a few simple ones of ordinary life that the
people at once comprehend, or some travel scenes. One we
like to show is of the "sacred" river Ganges at Benares, a
very famous place of pilgrimage. Bathing there is supposed
to wash away all sin, but one of their own heathen poets
has said,

"I've been to Benares and Kashi too,
But in my mind there's still ado."

We remind them of this, then tell them that we have
come to show them about Jesus Christ, who alone can give
real heart peace.

If we can visit the town more than once, we divide up
the pictures and show more of the Old Testament scenes
and our Lord's parables. In any event, the Garden of
Eden makes a good starting point, for it shows that there is
no caste, as all have come from one pair; the terrible results
of sin, still visible in the world; and also the promise of
the Saviour, given back there long before any Hindu Vedas
or Shastras were written. Then the fulfilment of the pro-
mise, when the star appeared in the East, and humble
shepherds, just like some who are listening to us, heard the
angelic message and ran to see the Holy Babe in Bethlehem.
It somehow seems very natural out under the Eastern stars.
The Y. M. C. A. in Calcutta publish some slides made in
India. They lack the sheer beauty and fine art of some of
the great paintings of the Life of Christ, but have the
advantage of being in Indian setting, and so appeal to the
village people. The Good Samaritan rides a little horse in
these pictures, and not a donkey. No one rides a donkey
in India unless he wants to be laughed at, so a horse fits
in to this story much better. The Prodigal Son starts off from home dressed in a brilliant crimson coat and with a bright green turban on his head, while a humble cooly follows him with a brass water vessel in his hand and a tin trunk and bedding roll on his head. The old father looks with longing eyes through a beautiful arched courtyard, into which, in due time, hobbles the dishevelled but repentant son, who pulls his ears to show he will never act so again. There are beautiful slides by Copping with correct Oriental setting, but they, alas, are too expensive for most missionaries to buy.

So with song and explanation and application the pictures of the most wonderful life that was ever lived are put before the people. How our hearts yearn, as they gaze upon Christ on the Cross, to imprint this picture in their minds and hearts, for here we have the place and secret of redemption. Not a doing with the hands, or a going with the feet, or a philosophizing with the head, which is religion in India, but hands pierced for our hands, feet nailed to the tree for our wayward feet, a thorn-crowned brow and a riven side, in our stead and for love of us, a quiet grave and a riven tomb that we and they might be free from the fear of death here and hereafter. We can only commit the Sahib’s show to the Lord of the Harvest, as we wend our way back to our tented grove in the night stillness. His Word will not return void, and some who see Him in the slides will also get a spiritual vision of His glorious face.

R. H. Smith.

JUST BEFORE FURLOUGH

We are thankful for the privilege of writing a brief note of praise and thanksgiving just now, as we are looking forward to our first furlough, and anticipating the joy of
being with our mothers and other loved ones again for a little while.

We thank the Lord Jesus from our hearts as we look back and see how He has worked to make us pliable in His hands. We should not have chosen the hard places, but now we can understand a part of His purpose in some of them, though at the time things seemed dark.

We hoped to be the instruments in the Lord's hands to reap souls in this district of Pachora, where the unfailing Word has been sown for so many years. The harvest we looked for has not come yet, but we are full of praise for the few precious lives that have turned from idols to serve the living God and to wait for His Son from heaven.

Two weeks ago we baptized a young couple, and we expect soon to dedicate their two beautiful children to the Lord. The father, Mahadu, was among others who were kept alive and given work by the missionaries during the last famine. He was a lad then. The missionary who was here at the time sent Mahadu to our Alliance boarding school at Akola. The lad stayed there only three months, then ran away and came back home. But in those brief months he learned to sing and pray, his soul was touched, and he began to desire a better life than was the lot of his people—the very lowest of outcasts, town scavengers.

The boy's parents went to another province and there they married him to a Hindu girl. Now, after ten or twelve years, they have returned. I was drawn to Mahadu when I first talked with him. He has been taking his stand openly as a believer in Christ. Then, during our last revival services, he came to Christ definitely and, with his wife, found peace in believing in our Saviour. The Sunday before Christmas was a day of rejoicing. We baptized Mahadu and his wife in the river in the centre of the town. A large crowd of Hindus and Mohammedans came near to see the ceremony.
As we look at these two redeemed souls we realize afresh that the Word of God will perform that whereunto it is sent, and we are encouraged to keep on and on, seeking to persuade men to repent and believe the gospel that is so precious to us.

ROGER CONANT.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR IN VIRAMGAM

On New Year's Day we were privileged to be present at the laying of the corner-stone of the new church which is being built at Viramgam, without any expense to the Mission, by the little company of Christians which has been gathered together by the faithful efforts of our Viramgam missionaries.

The meeting which preceded the laying of the corner-stone was one of the most impressive we have had the opportunity of attending in Gujarat. After a brief message on the church and its relation to the church building, the New Year's offering and pledge were taken. It had much the same atmosphere as a Missionary Convention at home. The giving was cheerful and sacrificial and the garage in which the meeting was held rang with song. From the children's annas (two cents), and the widow's ten rupees ($3.33), to the glad offering of the Church Secretary's wife of fifty rupees, there was the spirit of glad, cheerful giving unto the Lord. When that offering was made the Secretary's joy knew no bounds and he broke forth in song, "Count your many blessings." Another young lady, who has recently obtained an appointment as school-teacher, pledged her first month's salary. As the spirit of blessing rose a widow, who had but a short time before lost her husband, arose with tears and praise and pledged ten rupees. One hardly knows how she can earn that much over and above her daily expenses, for the bread-winner in that home has gone to glory, but her faith is anchored in
the Great Provider who never fails. He will provide. The total amount of the New Year's Day offering, was three hundred and eleven rupees.

In the corner-stone was placed, along with a Gujarati Bible, a book prepared by the Secretary, containing all the names of the members, Church Council members, and a little history of the preparation for the building of this house of worship for the Living God. It also contained a statement to the effect that when the church was completed the flock would continue to give and undertake the full support of their own Pastor. Thus another self-supporting church comes into view in Gujarat.

At this same meeting a goldsmith who had been converted and baptised in Mehumdabad a few months ago, was taken into the Viramgam church. Now let us unite in prayer and praise, that as in the days of the early church, “the Lord will add daily to the church such as are being saved.”

Surely this is an auspicious beginning of the New Year for Viramgam and let us believe together that the good work will go on and result in the most fruitful year in the history of Viramgam Station.

JAS. AND RUTH BRABAZON.

NEWS ITEMS

Mrs. Conant, who has been almost to the gates of death, is again restored to her normal health. We are thankful.

Praise the Lord for the manifest blessing which has attended many of the touring parties, and for the goodly number of baptisms. Pray for the candidates for baptism and for deeper conviction upon those who are thinking seriously of taking Christ as their Saviour.
Rev. Shau Bower, after more than five years of faithful service as pastor of the Akola church, goes this spring to work as pastor of the Ramabai Mukti Mission Church. Rev. Shrawan Meshramkar is transferred from Mukti to Jalgaon. Pray for these brethren.

There is a new homekeeper in Chandur to be helpmeet for Brother Fletcher. The Lord bless Mrs. Fletcher.

Praise the Lord for the churches that are to take over wholly or in part the support of their pastors during the present year.

Rev. and Mrs. Elmore Eicher will take charge of the Malkapur Station and District when Rev. and Mrs. Crocker leave for furlough. The Lord bless and use them in this great field.

The passage money for those whose furlough is due this spring is not yet on hand. Remember this need in prayer.

The Children's Home in Ootacamund is badly in need of new flooring.

Mrs. Moyser has just passed the seventieth milestone of her life and nearly forty of these years have been given to India. The Lord bless Sister Moyser.

The Lord is blessing and using Brother A. I. Garrison in his work as Mission Evangelist. Let us stand with Brother and Sister Garrison in faith and prayer. Souls are being saved. Many more will be saved as God's servants trust Him to work.

The editor will appreciate it if the missionaries on tour will send in, soon, the happenings that are likely to be of interest and blessing to our readers.