Farewells

Several members of our missionary family have recently left us for furlough. Prominent amongst these are Mr. and Mrs. Moyser who are retiring from India after over a third of a century of united service in this land. They sailed on April 8th, with the love and good wishes of all of the missionaries. Mr. Moyser’s parting message is as follows:

"Once again we are breaking camp and moving westward, for a time of service, we trust, in the home land. And so we again have to say 'good-bye.' We wish to thank all of the missionaries for their beautiful gift of the loving cup. It will always remind us of our fellowship together and of your loyal sympathy and support through many years. In saying good-bye to India after 36 and 38 years here you may be sure that we have you all in our hearts, and our hearts' desire for you one and all is that the blessing of the Lord that maketh rich and addeth no sorrow with it may be yours from now till Jesus comes. We shall be glad to hear from you from time to time."
Until July Mr. and Mrs. Moyser's address will be, c/o Mrs Joseph Hydes' Stairfoot, Barnsley, Yorks, England.

During their last visit to Gujarat Mr. and Mrs. Moyser, who have endeared themselves to a very large number of people in India, both Indians and foreigners, were the recipients also of a silver cup presented by the Christians of Gujarat, and of numerous other tokens of the love and good will of those to whom through a number of years Mr. Moyser has been Chairman and leader. We know that they will still have a large sphere of usefulness on behalf of India.

Mr. and Mrs. Carner have found it necessary, because of ill health and for other considerations to take an early furlough, and left on April 16th, via Colombo, for New York. During the past year their ministry has been fruitful, and a score of newly baptised converts in the Amraoti district will follow them with their prayers. We shall miss Mr. Carner's able editing of this little paper, as well as his ministry in many other special departments of our work. We hope and pray that they will find it possible to return to India after a time for further service.

In addition to those mentioned in the last number of this paper, Mr. and Mrs. Brabazon have also sailed, on April 18th, on the same steamer upon which India's great Viceroy, Lord Irwin, left these shores upon completion of his task. These dear friends have given a full term to the guiding and shepherding the churches of the Ahmedabad district. They will have much to tell of God's working amongst the churches of Gujarat.

Transfers. Mr. and Mrs. Ringenberg have taken charge of the Ahmedabad-Mehmedabad District in Gujarat, and Mr. and Mrs. Elmore Eicher have been asked by the Committee to move to Amraoti, where they are undertaking new tasks for the Master.
Touring. The touring season just closed has been an unusual one. India has become volatile in recent months, and the villages are filled with political agitators. Last autumn it was feared that village preaching would be unsafe even if not prohibited. Now as we look back on these months we can praise God that He has not permitted His word to be bound. Missionaries and Indian evangelists have occasionally been howled down or bespattered with dust and manure, or even threatened, and on a few occasions Biblewomen have been treated with indignity. But on the whole, when it was found that our message was not a political one, there has been a friendly and open-hearted hearing given to the Gospel, which is today winning its way, even amidst the present turmoil, as it never has before in this land.

Viramgam Church. Elsewhere in this issue appears a mention of the beautiful little church which has been recently dedicated in Viramgam, built by the people themselves, with much joy and enthusiasm. This marks a distinct step forward in Viramgam, for which we praise the Lord.

Conventions. The beginning of the hot weather, which sees the close of the touring season, is the time for our annual conventions, which are assuming more importance in our work in India. The Indian Christians now eagerly look forward to these times of spiritual refreshing and fellowship. Each year the number of such conventions, some of them very tiny as yet, is increasing. The Gujarat provincial convention was held at Mehedabad during the Hindu Holi (not holy) festival, when Hinduism gives itself over to obscenity and Christians do well to gather for the promotion of holiness. The similar convention for the province of Berar was held at Easter time, and was splendidly attended, and was followed by a profitable conference of delegates from the churches, in which some steps were
taken which it is hoped will prove a blessing to the churches. The Convention for Khandesh followed soon after, and was very largely attended by Christians from neighbouring missions as well as by our own people. All of these conventions, as well as many other local and district gatherings have reached the self-supporting stage, and are consequently of deeper importance spiritually than they have been heretofore. Descriptions of these conferences will be given in more detail in this and later issues.

**Furloughs.** Mr. and Mrs. Kerr, whose furlough is now due, have decided to remain in India for another year's service before going on furlough. They are both quite tired after a full term of service, and we ask prayers on their behalf that the coming year may be one of much blessing for them. We are glad to hear that some who are now at home will be returning shortly. Malkapur station and district are now unoccupied, and Pachora, also without a resident missionary, is being looked after from Jalgaon.

**MERNIBAI**

**Miss T. Wright**

From the time we started to tour last winter, in spite of the political troubles all around us, we found the people of the Mehmedabad District unusually receptive to the gospel message.

In January when we moved camp and pitched our tent in Ghodasar, a native state, we prayed that the Holy Spirit would speak to hearts in that place. A high caste widow came daily to see us. She was often accompanied by a young married woman who was bright, vivacious and winsome. But we soon learned that she was very unhappy because she was childless. The Biblewoman told her the gospel story over and over and she asked many questions. Often she would ask us how many more days we would be
camping there. One day while talking, her eyes filled with tears, she said she had been so helped by listening to the Gospel every day, but she could not read, and who would explain the Bible to her after we were gone? The Bible-woman offered to teach her to read and late at night when all her neighbours were sleeping, she quietly slipped out of the house, across the fields and into our tent. She proved an apt pupil and in a very short time she learned the alphabet and could read simple sentences.

One evening her face was glowing when she came into the tent, she said, "Oh, I had such a wonderful experience today! I had worked hard and was very hungry. After my husband had eaten, just as I was dishing up the rice left for me, I saw a starving dog. You told me that if we but give a cup of water in the name of Jesus we shall be blessed. So in the name of Jesus I gave the rice to the poor dog. Even though I was hungry I was happy, and while I was sitting there a neighbour came in with a lardva (an Indian sweet ball) and told me she felt an urge to give me that lardva, Then how my heart rejoiced, I knew that Jesus had sent it." After her evening lesson she asked many questions and we felt that she was very near the Kingdom. But the enemy of souls knew too that she was near the Kingdom, and she was slipping from his grasp. That very night some one saw her enter our tent. Her husband was informed and they threatened to put him out of caste if he did not punish Mernibai. The next day she did not come. Then her neighbour came and told us she had seen Mernibai's husband beating her. Some time later I saw the husband and asked him about it. He said he knew his wife had been coming to the tent and if no one else had heard about it he would not have objected, but now all the caste people were stirred up and if she continued to come to see us, he would be put out of caste. I asked if he had not seen a change for the better in her since she had heard about Jesus? He admitted he had, but assured
me he could not stand alone against caste rules. It would mean the loss of home, people, position and everything that makes life worth while. How our hearts ached for Mernibai!

A few days later when we broke up camp and were leaving we were happily surprised to see Mernibai and her husband. He allowed her to come with him to say, “Goodbye” to us. As we drove away in our little two-wheeled cart, I looked back and saw Mernibai shading her eyes from the sun with one hand, and with the other wiping the fast falling tears as she gazed longingly after our receding cart. I was reminded of how she had dreaded the loneliness after our departure. Her touch with us had brought her in contact with Jesus, but just as the receding cart meant separation for her, from us, so the iron rules of CASTE were separating her from the living Christ. Truly caste is the strongest armor that Satan has in the land of India.

A SOJOURN IN GUJARAT

A. I. Garrison

Each one of the five special meetings we attended in Gujarat in February and March was different from the rest.

The first one, at the Alliance Girls’ School at Kaira, was characterized by quiet, heart-searching prayer, with some confession of sin.

The next series was at the small Christian village of Shantipur (Peace-town). The local attendance was small, but was largely increased toward the end from nearby communities, particularly Ahmedabad. Here there seemed two distinct elements; those with a triumphant prayer spirit, and others evidently in spiritual need.

Third came the representative, Annual Alliance Conference for Gujarat at Mehdedabad. All Alliance mission-
aries in Gujarat, with most of their constituencies, and several missionaries from the Marathi area were in attendance. Brother Moyser spoke on, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." The evident characteristic of this convention was a general hunger for revival. The early morning prayer meetings were well attended.

The next meetings were at the Boys' School at Dholka. This very refreshing season was characterized by much confession of sin and restitution of stolen goods. You who are praying for revival, would have rejoiced with us to see the tears of repentance, and the pointed, personal confessions, naming the very sins which had been committed, going and to those concerned to humbly ask forgiveness. Mr. Lewellen, who is in charge, returned from some of the meetings with his pockets bulging with returned stolen goods. An outpouring of the Spirit seemed very near at Dholka.

The closing convention of the series was held in the new church at Viramgam. For thirty-three years since this station was opened, its meetings have been held in bungalow, garage, or whatever place seemed most convenient. Brother and Sister Gustafson, who have been in charge there for several years, have earnestly worked and prayed for a church building for the small but growing assembly. In the last two years a surprisingly large offering has been collected for church building. Most of it came from the small and poor local Christian community. The church, seating on the floor about 200, looked very pretty as we first saw it with its new, red, Mangalore tiles, freshly painted woodwork, and picturesque portico. We learned that Brother and Sister Gustafson had remained up half the previous night personally helping the little band of faithful church members to finish the building in time for the appointed dedication day, Thursday, March 19th.
The doors of the church had been tied together with red ribbon, on which was suspended a card inscribed in Gujarati, "I am the Door; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved." In the afternoon of the day of dedication, the members and visitors, headed by Brother and Sister Moyser, proceeded with songs of praise to the church. Ceremoniously Brother Moyser cut the ribbon declaring the church open for the proclamation of the Truth, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Christians filed in, men on one side, and women on the other, filling over half of the building. Boys from the nearby Government school filled the rest of the space to overflowing.

One of the older Indian brethren, who had a large part in the building of the church, opened the service with a prayer of dedication, after which Brother Moyser preached on 11 Chron. 29: 27; "When the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also." At the close of the address, a report of the monies received to date toward the building was made by Mr. Dayabhai, the secretary-treasurer of the church. He reported that the entire cost of the building would probably amount to Rs. 4,000. That the cost would have been much more had it not been for the free labour so cheerfully given by the local membership. Over three thousand rupees had come in a short time, and it was hoped to clear off the remainder very soon. When the special offering was taken about 500 Rs. came in cash and pledges.

The meetings, which followed in the new church the three days following, gave promise of a new day of blessing in Viramgam, which for so long has stood almost fruitless. Several caste men have been lately baptized; they attended the services and took part. The beginning of a new day when numbers of caste people turn to God, was, we felt, the most significant characteristic of the meetings at Viramgam.