The Master's coming draweth near
The Son of Man will soon appear,
His Kingdom is at hand.
But ere that glorious day can be
This Gospel of the Kingdom we
Must preach in every land.'

—A. B. Simpson.

Headquarters: AKOLA, BERAR, INDIA
The Dawn

I am a person who naturally likes to sleep in the morning, and I sometimes suspect that Mrs. Auer would enjoy the same privilege. But since we are still going to the villages with the now antiquated bullock 'tonga' we find early rising necessary. So in the morning the persistent call of my alarm clock is followed by rousing the rest of the camp, and we drink our tea by lamplight. And as I stood one morning watching the sky, I saw the beautiful Southern Cross—four brilliant stars in the perfect form of a Cross. All about was darkness; only outlines of the trees showing dimly in the starlight. Then, as I watched and prayed, over in the East a soft glow appeared, to increase to a burning orange light, followed soon by the rising of the sun. And as I watched, the Lord spoke comfortably to my heart by these symbols He has placed in the heavens. We have spent the last six weeks in camp just across two fields from a heathen village. The people have been unusually friendly, and so we have been able to get closer to them than is usually our privilege. No matter when we have gone into town, we have found a friendly welcome and have been greeted with invitations to sit on their verandahs and sing for them and tell them the Gospel story. I never have been able to acquire a reputation as a singer among my own people, but here they seem to enjoy hearing us! But
as we have gone, the sights we have seen and the stories we have heard have burdened and sickened our hearts, as we have had a 'close-up' of conditions in a heathen town.

The town of Nandra itself looks like any other Indian village. It has filthy roads, leading into narrow, muddy, winding streets, flanked on either side by shapeless mud houses. In the early morning the men squat around tiny fires and gossip, the children run about with unkempt hair and often eyes half-closed with pus; while here and there people are scrubbing their teeth or performing their morning ablutions on the front doorsteps, and the bullocks, buffaloes and goats share the path with us as we come into town. As we go along we exchange greetings with the women, and in this way have come to know many of them personally. One kind-hearted potter woman is delighted because we noticed her curly-headed little grandson, and so became our friend as we inquired after the beautiful little fellow each day. She is anxious just now over her daughter, who is dreadfully ill with fever, and she told me two days ago of how she was suffering, and a lump came in my throat as I saw the expression of helpless sorrow on her face as she told us about it. On another day we wandered up a side street, and had a meeting with some farmer women. One was nearly blind, the eyes of a second were in dreadful condition, and the children, too, seemed suffering with some awful eye disease. She listened while I told her how God answered prayer for my mother and healed her. Then she said, 'We have taken the name of your God, too; but He hasn't helped us.' The old, blind woman spoke up and said, 'Good reason why. You can't serve the One God and all your idols, too.' And then she gave her the Gospel message as clearly as we could have. We had a long talk with her, and she told us she had heard our message a month earlier, and since then had prayed only to Jesus. I said, 'Grandmother, you may not see with
these eyes, but God has given you spiritual sight.’ Then we went on
to hear more tales of sin, too awful to tell, of sickness and suffering, of
souls, bound hand and foot by fear of caste, of their idols, of persecution
if they dared to say they believed the truth. So it went on day after
day. They accepted us gladly, but they dared not accept our Lord,
who waited in our midst ready to save them.

So that morning, as I watched the rising sun, the Lord comforted
my heart. The tale I have told is not new to us in India. For years
we have borne a daily burden of sights and tales we were often
helpless to prevent or remedy. This is the real burden of missionary
work for us—that we must go on into the night of heathenism;
knowing we have the remedy for the ills and yet finding only a
few here and there who dare come out and let the light of the Gospel
dispel the awful darkness in their lives. But we have laboured
on. And we follow others who have toiled through this heathen night,
upholding the Cross, just as the Southern Cross stood a symbol in the
sky that morning. Shall not God’s Son bring light and a new day to
India and many from among our people here be saved to become a
part of the Bride of Christ, and prepared for that great day when He
shall return? Ps. 30: 5 says, ‘Weeping may endure for a night, but joy
cometh in the morning.’ And I believe He will yet give us the joy of
seeing the light of salvation shine in the faces of Hindus, brought out
of the awful night of Hinduism by the message of the Cross.

But our task is not easy. Daily hindrances arise to hold us back.
And always caste and idolatry stand like impassable barriers. But our
God has conquered every foe, and has never failed when we go forward
praying and believing. Friends, we beseech you at home to tarry and
to toil with us in prayer, that the power of darkness may be broken
here in India and many turn to the Lord and be saved. We praise
God for every soul saved, but our hearts yearn for the multitudes.
Mhaispur Out-station

I am writing this from the verandah of the little out-station at Mhaispur, a small village 17 miles from Amraoti. The road to this village is now new metal, except half a mile of ordinary country road. It can be reached by car almost any time during the year. Thus making it possible for a missionary to keep in touch with the workers and Christians in this section. There are eight market places, from two to four miles from this center, where evangelistic work can go on. During the week daily meetings can be held in these market places, and the people reached within a radius of ten miles very conveniently. This out-station gives us abundant opportunity for bountiful seed sowing. ‘He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.’—2 Cor. 9:6.
There is probably no other out-station in the Mission more centrally located for evangelistic work, although there is the disadvantage of a scarcity of water.

During the past ten years a goodly number of people have been baptized in several villages about here, and some in Mhaispur itself. Only an exceptional one of these baptized believers can read or write. And so a most important part of the work is to verbally instruct these new converts in the Word of God. On account of this the out-station at Mhaispur became a necessity, workers from here go regularly to the homes of new Christians and teach them. Several times a year the Christians and inquirers gather for two or three days of prayer and united meetings. We praise God for the memories of these meetings. Here God has drawn near and blessed the simple faith of those who reached out to touch Him—some for salvation, some for healing, some for help to overcome bad habits.

We ask your prayers that this place, given and built in answer to prayer, may prove a Bethel to many more. That here souls may learn to know not only His name, but the power of it; that the part of His bride which is to come from this drab corner of the Master’s vineyard may be gathered out, and make herself ready for that great day when we shall see Him face to face. Pray also for five families under instruction for baptism in Mhaispur, and eight families in nearby villages.

O. H. LAPP.

‘Seed Time’

A little boy once said, ‘I’d like to be a missionary on furlough.’ I have proven that it is nice to be home on furlough, but, after all, there is no place quite so sweet as God’s appointed place of service, and so I am glad to again ‘put my hand to the plow’ in this land of great need.
Looking at the work of the farmers in India, one marvels at their great patience. How they labour with their primitive tools, in the often rocky soil, which seems specially to be under the curse of thorns and briers. Beasts, birds and insects conspire against them. They suffer great losses, yet they sow again and again in hope of harvest. The bearer of the Precious Seed finds heathenism a thorn-infested, rocky soil, yet he is sure of harvest, and the Lord of the Harvest has promised that His Word would not return unto Him void.

The earnest of the harvest sometimes comes from some very unexpected corner of the field. The Gospel car was following the winding cart tracks, while its occupants were all alert to discover the branch road that leads to the town designated for that day. A passer-by pointed out the town to us, but a search revealed no road. Undaunted, however, across the fields we went until a thorn hedge obstructed our path. A detour brought us to the edge of a steep precipice, where there was a footpath leading to the town. All was in quietness. There was not the usual crowd of curious boys swarming about the car, no dogs yelped out a questionable welcome, no group of men warming themselves around a fire of stubble, no shy women peering out from behind walls. One lone man met us with 'There is no one here.' We were not surprised by this, as we are often told this when face to face with a large group of people. We alighted, and started down the streets. There was not a sign of life anywhere. The mud walls of the houses were collapsed. The excessive rains of the past year had caused the devastation. We were in a deserted village! Our long trip was in vain!

But was it in vain? On the far side of the town we at last found two women, squatted before the remains of a miserable hut. Was it worth while to stop for only two? Yes, our Lord stopped at the well for only one woman. Could we not stop for two? In their humble
way they showed hospitality, by spreading a ragged piece of coarse sacking on the ground for us to sit upon. How they listened as they heard the Gospel. The older woman, with a wag of her head and an approving grunt, gave assent to each point in the message, and at the close admitted her need of a Saviour, but when asked to give up her idol she was not willing. The tiny square of tin, upon which was the impression of a hideous god, held too much charm for her to relinquish at once. Like many others, she was willing to add Jesus to her category of gods, but to give Him the only place was asking too much. The younger woman, Savitrabai, was quiet through the whole message, but we saw tears in her eyes as the sufferings of Christ for her salvation were portrayed. We saw that she was drinking in every word, as the thirsty land drinks in the first rain of the season. She was at once ready to acknowledge Him as her Saviour, and as we taught her she prayed to Him for the forgiveness of her sins. ‘The Light has come into my soul,’ were her simple words. Our hearts rejoiced as we saw the light which had come into her heart shine out from her face. ‘God brought you just in time,’ she said, ‘we were just about to leave for the fields when you came. What if you had come too late!’ How grateful we were that the Lord of the Harvest had brought us to this ‘good ground’ before it was too late. May we count upon you to put a wall of prayer around this tender plant, that it may grow and bear fruit. Pray, too, that the Light may yet penetrate the heart of the older woman.
NOTES

*Lillian Margaret Amstutz*, born November 11, 1931, has become the fourth member of the happy Amstutz quartette.

Little Marjorie Helfers has had a sweet answer to her prayer. The wee sister, for whom she had been praying, arrived February 14, 1932. And has received the name *Aileen Dorothea Helfers*.

Another new name has been added to our list since last *India Alliance* was sent out—*Murial May Schelander*, born November 6, 1931.

We are glad to welcome the three new little girls into our circle.

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*Mrs. Fred Schelander* has recently had a very painful illness, but is well again. *Mr. Fred Schelander* also has recovered from pneumonia. We thank God for the deliverances He has given to this family, including little *Wesley*, who has had measles. ‘He is strong to deliver those who put their trust in Him.’

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The homeward bound boats have recently been taking some of our number from India. *Miss Tamar Wright* has gone to her home in Ohio, U.S.A.

*Miss E. Wells*, who was in charge of the Ramabai Mukti Mission, where she was much appreciated and beloved, has also left for a well-earned furlough.

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*Rev. and Mrs. C. Gustafson*, with their daughter, Elizabeth, and their sons Charles and Ronald, have also left for furlough. Mr. Gustafson has recently been bereaved of his mother, and Mrs. Gustafson of her father. The return home will bring mingled sorrow and joy.
Rev. and Mrs. S. Kerr, their daughter Marion, and sons John and William, have gone to Ireland, but will go on to America later. Mrs. Kerr, although a busy mother and missionary, has for several years done the work of getting together the material for our INDIA ALLIANCE. We trust you may get acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Kerr while they are in the homeland.

We shall miss our friends, but we wish them a happy time of rest and a soon return.

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This is the time of the year when the distant villages of our districts are reached from camping centers. Favorable reports have reached us from all parts of the field, and the Gospel messengers have had little hindrance, in spite of the political unrest. For this we acknowledge the good hand of our God.