Not Counted

In one Mohammedan village I asked how many had died of the relapsing fever. One man said, "Eighty."
Another said, "No, about a hundred and fifty."
The first again said, "No, not more than eighty."
The second answered, "If you count them all, there were a hundred and fifty."
"Oh, of course," said the first, "if you count the women and children."
—H. J. Strickland.

"OCCUPY TILL I COME"
MISSIONARY DIRECTORY, 1933

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East Khandesh

A great, wide fertile valley between two rolling mountain ranges, Kholdesh or “the Lowlands.” That is what this district was called by the Hindus in olden times before the conquering Mohammedans took possession and changing two letters, made it “Khandesh,” or “Land of the Muhammadan Khan Tribe.”

Khandesh was once a stronghold of Buddhism before that religion was crushed out by the Brahmins and pushed eastward into Burmah and China. In the sides of the mountains which flank our valley on the south are the famous Ellora and Ajanta temples. These are chiselled out of the solid rock of the mountains. The main auditoriums are several stories high, with carvings of all sizes, paintings and idols that must have required many years for the monks to cut from the solid rock. These temples have stood for over two thousand years, silent witnesses of the godless and fatalistic religion of Buddha. The great pillars and rafters have provided a resting place for the countless bats that swarmed through the temple halls, until just a few years ago when the government installed screening to exclude these pests for the convenience of tourists.
But the Brahmins also laid on the backs of the people loads that were too heavy for them to bear. In place of these temples, thousands of idol shrines have been built everywhere, under green trees and on the river banks. We have just returned from preaching the Gospel in a large Hindu religious fair where ten thousand people stooped to worship one of these idols, and to press on their foreheads some of the ashes of the sacred fire before the altar.

But the Hindu people, a million of them in this valley, do not spend much of their time at idol shrines; nor do the Mohammedans, of whom there are a hundred thousand, seem to pay much attention to their prayers. There is a keen struggle for existence among the poor, and for added riches among the wealthy. Men are spending long hours ploughing in the fields for six cents a day, working hard to lay up grain for the summer months, when there is no work at all to be had.

We leave the temples, and look at the fields, great expanses of rich black soil, which produce more cotton per acre than the surrounding country. Millet, peanuts and wheat are also raised here in abundance. Home-made butter (I will not describe the method used) is shipped from here to Bombay, the great coastal city, while bananas and oranges are sent by the carload to the farthest parts of northern and western India.

While most of the valley is given to agriculture, industries have their place. One hundred and twenty-five cotton ginning factories are spreading their fine, white dust, like snow, over the nearby houses and yards. Five or six large cotton cloth weaving mills are turning out millions of yards of all kinds of cotton cloth, until it is not now so common to see naked children in the streets of the larger towns.

A good railway system runs through the length of the valley, a
hundred miles, and then on east across the country to Calcutta. Also several branch lines carry people and produce in various directions. A flourishing bus traffic has lately sprung up. It is surprising to know that twice as many people ride in trains in India as in the United States. The passenger trains have four classes of accommodation, and our Alliance missionaries usually travel in the cheapest class, where one can go a hundred miles for fifty cents. Besides economy, another advantage of this class is that we are able to get into closer contact with the Hindu people. To appreciate this, you would have to accompany us sometime when we are sitting on a long bench in a coach intended to seat fifty, but there are already twice that number inside, with their trunks and bundles, while more people are pressing in through the doors and windows.

The seasons are very regular here. The weather reporter seems to have easy work. June to September—“rain to-morrow”; October to January—“cool and fair to-morrow;” February to May—“rising temperature to-morrow.” (Maximum 118° in the shade.)

We have a few fairly good roads, but these have two disadvantages—unbridged rivers, and toll stations that collect nearly two cents for every mile travelled. Many of the country roads are beyond description. Deep ruts, rivers without bridges, long sharp thorns that pierce the tires, loose sand, and boulders are some of the obstacles. But why look at the dark side? Here we are, the car is packed, pick and shovel for road repairs, a folding cot, a box of provisions, and a bag of Gospels and tracts—our Gospel team is off in a cloud of white dust to preach the glorious Gospel, telling of a Saviour who also bore the sins of East Khandesh on Calvary’s cross.

Roger Conant.
Mission Work at a Railway Centre

Bhusawal, an important railway junction of the Great Indian Peninsular Railroad of Western India, is a place of varied activities. The outstanding attraction, with its source of much interest, is the large and busy railway depot which is in a constant whirl of incoming and out-going trains, shunting engines, excited passengers, and numerous boisterous coolies vying with each other for work. There are clean, spacious waiting and refreshment rooms on the station platform provided for the 1st and 2nd class passengers. A large and open waiting room in the further rear part of the depot, affords a shelter for the great mob of 3rd class Indian passengers.

To the missionary, passing through or stopping off on a long train journey, the Mission House, located near the depot, provides a convenient place of physical rest and spiritual fellowship with the resident missionaries.

The resident missionaries also have an opportunity of rendering a helping hand to the unfortunate Indians or Anglo-Indians who are obliged to stop their journey at Bhusawal because of financial embarrassment. Although unable often to do much in a financial way, the missionary usually finds an opportunity of showing them their spiritual needs and thus a more lasting help is rendered.

Besides a large and varied community of Indians who find employment on the railroad, or in its big workshop, or shunting yard, there is also a community of over five hundred Europeans and Anglo-Indians. These occupy official positions in railway or telegraph offices here, or serve on the railway as drivers and guards (conductors). Realising the spiritual needs of these people located in Bhusawal, the Alliance Mission has had an English Church here for many years, it being the only one of its kind on our
India Field. As its membership is comprised wholly of Railroad and Telegraph people, who are often transferred from one place to another, this Church has proved a great blessing in spreading the glorious Gospel message in many parts of India. Upon taking over the work here, on our arrival from furlough last October, we have found many encouraging evidences of God's blessing and power among this people.

The Indian Christian and Missionary Alliance Church here has a membership of sixty or more believers. Our Mission also has two primary schools, sponsored with financial aid from the Railway and Government, in two differ-
ent parts of the town. With the help of the seven Indian Christian teachers, these schools afford an opportunity for Christian truths and Scriptures to be taught to over two hundred and fifty children, most of whom are Hindus or Mohammedans. The annual regional conference, which was held lately, brought added spiritual blessing and zeal to our Indian brethren and sisters. An entirely new feature was introduced at this time, in the forming of a procession made up of fifty or more delegates from the various Church groups of Khandesh. Each group displayed a banner on which a Scripture verse was inscribed in large letters. Under the able leadership of Professor Satralker of Poona, a visiting Indian evangelist, the procession marched through the business section of the town chanting hymns with the sound of cymbals in true oriental manner. This aroused much interest amongst the Hindu and Moslem people and crowds gathered on the streets to witness this unique demonstration of Christian zeal. It was felt by many that it was a great success and for the glory of God in Bhusawal.

Yours, in His glad service,

ERNEST CROCKER.

Sounds of an East Kandesh Village

Camped just across from an ordinary village we hear the ripple of water as it flows. In the dirty puddles along the bank of the stream are the village ducks quacking their own music as they fish for their breakfast.

In the very early hours of the morning the many roosters of the village begin to crow and arouse us from our sleep. Soon sounds of loud singing, with its quavers, semi-quavers, and semi-demi-quavers begin. It is the song of the women grind-
ing at their mills in the early dawn. A woman sits at one side of the mill and another at the other side, each holding the stick that turns the mill. They drop the grain, by handfuls in the centre, to come out nicely ground flour for the morning meal. Crows in the trees know it is time for them to flit, so their cawing grows louder as they prepare to take their flight for the day. All the village dogs add their barkings to the chorus. Sounds from the benighted worshippers before their idols of wood and stone cause our hearts to ache, for well we know demons are behind the idols. And we lift our hearts to Him who commissioned us for “Power with God and with man to prevail.” We are up and out and we make our way through the streets and
lanes on the look-out for a place to begin giving the message in song and in story as opportunity shows itself.

Noon comes, and another sound is heard. Slap! Bang! Just the village women washing their clothes, beating them on stones by the stream. There is a knack in every bang as there is in the way they spread their garments of several yards' length on the ground to dry.

We seldom miss going to the noisy school where the children study aloud. We are usually met with a welcome and a chair—the only chair in the school for the children sit on the floor. The schoolmaster may not be favourable to our message, but he is polite. After a song, a Bible story and a prayer, we give the children picture cards with a Bible text on them. These are eagerly grasped by the children, as they march by us saying “salaam” and we leave with a smile and a Hallelujah in our hearts.

In the hubbub on market day we, too, show our work. We pace in and out amongst the stalls, with a handful of Scripture portions for sale at one cent each, we tell them what the books contain and the wagging of the head one way or the other tells us whether it is a sale or not.
From our camp at eventide, another sound floats in the air from the village. It is the weeping of those who have no hope! One of the family has just died, and oh! how this sound makes our hearts burn with deepened desire to keep on giving out the Story of Love!

Did I hear some reader say he thought India had heard the Gospel? It is true some have been gathered out but the need is still tremendous. India’s need is not to polish up Hinduism or any other “ism,” but to “call out a people for His name.”

Hear ye the sound of village India. Let God make it real to you.

MARTHA RAMSEY

Installing the New Pastor

The congregation of the little church in Chalisgaon had been in eager anticipation of a coming event. The church building had been whitewashed. The windows and door had been freshly painted. Inside, the people had adorned the walls with mottoes which they had made; and from the offerings of the women’s meetings a new bit of matting for the pulpit platform and in front of the altar rail had been bought. How proudly they surveyed it all. “Never has our church looked so nice,” said one.

The day arrived. The chairman had come by the midnight train. Others came by the very early morning train and the whole congregation was in full force and regalia for the great event in their church—the ordination of the man whom they had called to be their pastor.

Doulat Rao Bonsode had been reared in a Christian home and considered himself a Christian, but was led to a definite knowledge
of the Lord Jesus as his personal Saviour, through the ministry of one of our missionaries, who is now in glory. Doulat Rao had graduated from our Nargaon Bible Training School and since then has proved himself a worthy servant of the Lord.

The services of the day began. In the morning a message was given on Acts 27:25—"Be ye of good cheer. . . . I believe God.” A word picture was given of a willing servant through whom God could fulfil His promises, even against the devices of the adversary.

In the afternoon, the chairman gave the charge to the new pastor. The message was from I Tim. 4:16—"Take heed.” The pastor was admonished to “take heed” to himself personally, to his home, to his doctrine, and to his dependence upon the Holy Spirit. After which Doulat Rao Bonsode was set apart by the laying on of hands.

Mr. Conant gave the charge to the congregation, in a message on the subject, “Take my yoke upon you.” An apt illustration was used in which the pastor was shown as trying to draw a heavy cart in which sat the whole congregation instead of pushing. This amused the people and must have made the desired impression.

When the people were questioned as to their willingness to contribute to the support of the pastor there was a hearty assent. The small neighbouring church in Pachora also offered to help in his support in return for his occasional ministry there.

At the close of a blessed Communion Service, the new pastor pronounced the Benediction and for the little church in Chalisgaon a very happy day was brought to a close.

Katherine P. Williams
East Khandesh
Retrospect and Prospect

The C. and M. Alliance were practically pioneers in opening up the province of East Khandesh. It is true that in Bhusawal the Scottish Mission had established a day school and placed an Indian preacher fifty-two years ago, but it was left to our own missionaries, in the early nineties, to actually plant Mission stations and begin aggressive evangelistic work in the towns and villages.

What tales of heroism those hard, dark, thrilling years could tell! On nearly every station silent tombstones still speak to those who have an ear to hear, and bear eloquent testimony to the cost of planting the Gospel banner in this province. Behind the little stone church in Chalisgaon lies the grave of Mr. Lenth, who, in his manhood’s early prime, was smitten by sunstroke while placing the bell in the belfry, the finishing touch to the church his hands had lovingly laboured to build. The villagers in Pachora district still speak of “the white saint”—Andrew Johnson, who lived so simply among them for a quarter of a century. In Jalgaon, stones, hurled by a howling mob caused the death of Mr. Herron, while the lovely cemetery in Bhusawal also holds its missionary dead “till Jesus comes.”

Do you ask the result of all this sacrifice, the visible fruit from a generation of seed sowing? Little by little our society turned over sections of the province to other evangelical Missions seeking a field of labour (mainly the Scandinavian Alliance), until at present we are responsible for only four counties, with a total approximate population of well over 500,000. These four counties have seen the Gospel messengers, often on foot, for years in ox-carts, and in more recent times in God-given auto-
mobiles, faithfully offering the Bread of Life year after year. Today a Christian community of about four hundred souls distributed in less than a dozen groups, does not seem much and no one feels more ashamed of this record than do we Khandesh missionaries. But we know that God has said, “He that goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.” And we do know that seed has been sown in Khandesh with weeping, and therefore we know, too, that the harvest will—must—assuredly come. Though it tarry we will wait for it. “He is faithful that promised”; will you not help by praying for East Khandesh? FRED. W. SCHELANDER.

Notes of Praise

For Mrs. Cutler’s recovery after severe illness. Friends will rejoice to know that Mrs. Cutler’s strength is returning.

For the manifest working of the Holy Spirit in many groups and in individuals in the various districts and in a very genuine work of grace in some of the Churches where repentance and restitution have been brought about through the ministry of the Word.

For sacrificial giving accompanied by much joy in the lives of our poor village Christians in Berar.

For the spirit of revival that has been manifested during series of meetings in seventeen centres in Gujarat. There has been deep conviction and frank confession of sin. In a few instances God’s spirit suddenly came upon the congregations resulting in all crying out to God in union for cleansing, forgiveness and for the anointing of His spirit.
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Pray for

1. The continuation of revival fire in Gujarat, and in places not yet so touched.

2. The bangari people of Pachora, East Kandesh, who have turned to the Lord, that they may have courage to be baptized. The few who have been so touched are the first of their caste to accept the Lord.

3. Miss C. Bjoland, who has gone on furlough and is visiting relatives in Norway, *en route* to America.

4. Miss E. Wells, who has recently returned to the work in India.

5. Mr. and Mrs. F. C. Schelander and two small children who have gone on furlough. That they may be refreshed in body, and have a ministry while in the homeland.