More About "A Village Saint"

By L. E. HARTMAN

Some of God's dealings with her may, on the surface, seem to be hard, but we should recognize that when God finds a soul as utterly devoted to Him as she is, He deals with that one in ways different from the way He uses with the average believer. That is, He seems to be seeking for those who will stand the fire which is necessary to that deep purification to which so few attain. As for her, she is glad of all the chastisements and praises God for them.

She is always quiet and undemonstrative. I think the greatest show of joy I have ever seen her manifest was one time when her married son was sick and had been so for several days. She said to me, "How is it that when the Hindus call me to pray for them God answers at once and heals them? Have I not prayed many times for my son here during the last few days? And still he is not healed." I told her to remember that the Hindus were on the outside and therefore God deals with them on that plane, but because we belong to His household He deals with us as with children. She saw the point at once and her face lighted up and she threw her hands above her head as though she were about to clap her hands and dance for joy, as she said: "Oh! I see it now. He seeks to teach us, doesn't He?"

Her little boy, who is now eleven or twelve years old, had been
very delicate for several years. His legs would swell up and he would get very lame; then, in answer to prayer, they would get better, only to swell up again later. He also got sick very often and once last rainy season, when she was praying and meditating on these things, she suddenly remembered a vow she had made when he was very small. It was to the effect that if God would keep him alive and well until he was seven years old she would give Him five rupees (a little less than two dollars). That may not seem very much to the reader, but to her, whose earnings do not average more than four or five cents a day, giving that amount over and above her regular tithe was no light thing.

She had forgotten her vow and, of course, had not paid it, but when God reminded her of it she promised Him that if He would give her strength and work she would save up the money and pay it as soon as possible. Within a short time she had one rupee saved, but she was very much in need of a new dress.

At that time she was staying in the same village as one of her sisters, who also is a Christian, and she, too, had a rupee. She therefore suggested to her sister that they put their two
The Baptism of Sagunabai's Mother

We believe you will enjoy the article by Mr. Hartman on More about "A Village Saint." Her name has not been mentioned in the previous articles concerning her but you will want to know the name of one who knows the Lord as she does. Her name is Sagunabai. Appropriately enough this name means one who has good qualities or characteristics; God's grace has given them to her and has made her like her name. We now invite your attention to the picture on this page The Baptism of Sagunabai's Mother. Concerning it Mr. Hartman writes, "This is the picture you asked me for, for the last number of THE BULLETIN, but the prints did not come in time. It is the baptism of Sagunabai's mother—according to our way of thinking she is her step-mother, but they don't reckon that way! Sagunabai's mother died when Sagunabai was small and her father married this woman. She is the mother of three women: one was baptized at the Gungshi camp-meeting this hot season; one died, a strong Christian woman, in Shirasda; and the third is the one who came last rainy season through the flood, by faith, in order to get to our short-term Bible School at Anjangaon.

"This old woman's conversion is a good illustration of the effect of a separated, uncompromising life upon those it touches intimately. She was a 'dyed-in-the-wool' idolator and so angry because her daughters had become Christians that she would not listen at all when Mrs. Hartman tried to talk with her about the Lord and her
need of Him. 'I have sacrificed for Sagunabai,' said she, 'and now she holds herself aloof from me. Is that the way a daughter should treat her mother?' This aloofness was simply Sagunabai's refusal to join her mother in any Hindu ceremonies, idol-feasts, etc. And when the daughter who died lay sick, the mother wanted to do some Hindu-worship for her healing, but was hindered because Sagunabai and the other sister (who had just been baptized a few days before) were present. Besides, the one who was dying had still enough life to realize what the mother wanted to do and would not consent to it. What could the old lady do? She came away saying, 'The Christians have killed my daughter.' It would have been easy to say at that time that she had been driven away from the Lord, but about a year and a half later she was converted, and the next time I visited her town it was joy indeed to see her sit in the meeting and eagerly drink in the Word which she had hated so furiously only a few months before. Then a month or two more and the scene shown in the picture (page three) was enacted. Of the two men who are baptizing her, the one to the reader's right is her grandson, Anand (Gladness)." Anand is Sagunabai's son, a bright, promising young preacher of the gospel.

The General Assembly of the C. and M. Alliance of India

The Third General Assembly of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in India met in Akola, Berar, July 7th and 8th. Each of the Church Councils sent its commissioners and the assembly was thus fairly representative of the whole Alliance Church in the three provinces of Berar, Gujarat and Khandesh. The meetings were characterized by splendid orderliness and kindly feeling, under the efficient leadership of the Moderator, Mr. K. D. Garrison. The handicap of having to use three languages, English, Gujarati and Marathi, was overcome by the love of Christ, which speaks in all languages. We fain would publish in full the moderator's good report of the work but our little BULLETIN would burst its modest bounds if we attempted that. We content ourselves with a few brief extracts from the report—

"He made His own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock (Ps. 78: 52).

"By the good hand of our Heavenly Father upon us, we meet in the third session of the General Assembly of the Christian and Missionary Alliance of India. During the four years since our first meeting we have had evidence of God's goodness and guidance. . . .
"During these four years the nine Church Councils have worked faithfully and well, and have made progress. The two synods are going steadily forward, and there has come throughout our membership, a clearer understanding of the functions of the synods and appreciation of their ministry. . . .

"A very accurate gauge of the spiritual life of the churches is their giving to the work of the Lord. We are very happy to report that the Rs. 8,921, given during 1935, was Rs. 904 more than in 1934, and Rs. 1,299 more than in 1933. And this in the years when there has been a reduction in the total number of members, as well as during financial hard times in India. . . .

"The per capita giving . . . was Rs. 4-12-9\frac{1}{2} per member last year. . . . Taking into consideration the extreme poverty in India, and the difficulty with which many of our Christians exist, the giving of the Indian Churches is among the best in the Alliance world abroad. . . .

"Last year were held under the direction of each synod, the first prayer conferences for pastors. They were a means of much encouragement and blessing to the pastors. . . .

"The annual local conventions have been held regularly in most places and the Church Councils and Synod melas have been much blessed. . . .

"Every member of this Assembly must be aware of the unusual interest attaching at the moment to the quest of India’s outcasts for a religion that will be more kind to their aspirations than Hinduism. We do not know whither Dr. Ambedkar and other leaders will lead
these people, but we do know that just now the testimony of the Church is of the utmost importance. Thoughtful people of every great religion in India are being forced to examine what each religion offers. Christ is the only one who could say, 'Come unto Me, all ye who are weary and heavy laden . . . take My yoke . . . and ye shall find rest unto your soul.' Let us pray that the Spirit of God will come upon our churches . . . and that from every church and every Christian home may go forth rays of spiritual light and warmth, that will attract many needy souls to our Lord Jesus Christ."

(Continued from page 2)

rupees together and buy a dress for one of them and later, when they were able to get another rupee each gathered up, they could buy another, and thus they would soon each have a new dress. The sister said to her, "You take my rupee and buy the first dress for yourself." Off she went to the market and came home with a new dress, and also a fever. It came on her way home and went so high that for several days she was unconscious part of the time.

Her sister and brother-in-law came and prayed with her mornings and evenings, but she said sometimes she didn't know when they came or went. In her conscious moments God was dealing with her about that rupee and she became willing to continue to wear her old tattered dress if an arrangement could be made about the new one whereby she would get her rupee back.

Next time her sister came to pray with her she told her it was of no use to pray until some such arrangement was made. She said, "You take the dress I bought and agree to return my rupee as soon as you can, so I can give it to God. If you do that He will heal me right now. Just make the test and see," But the sister did not like the new dress very well and so said, "Wait until my husband arrives."

When he came, a satisfactory arrangement was soon made. Then God's saint said: "Now pray," and so they prayed. She told God as soon as she got that rupee back it would be His, and if He would give her the strength she would pay the remaining four as soon as possible. After prayer she told her sister to take her by the hands and help her up. When her sister took her hands she looked to God and said, "Lord, these are not my sister's hands, but Thine. Thou art lifting me to my feet."

She got to her feet healed and was up and around all the rest of the day, and she said she did not even get tired. Next day she went to work.
Look at the Pictures

Sagunabai, "A Village Saint" appeared in The Bulletin once before this, but not with the "saint's" name. Sagunabai is in very truth "a woman who has good qualities"—the literal meaning of the name. Now look at the Baptism of Sagunabai's Mother, read the article under the same title and learn once more that it pays to be true to God. Meal-time at Anjangaon Sabha shows part of the people who gathered at the last annual convention in Mr. Hartman's district. The fellowship in Christ on such occasions is of the kind which confirms Paul's statement that, "Ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3: 28). Anjangaon Sabha is of the same group, now listening to Mr. Hartman as he dispenses "the Living Bread which came down from heaven." The Old Temple at Mungshi, was built, it is believed, before Christ became man. It tells the sad, weary story of man's sin-darkened heart in his vain, fruitless homage paid to images of creatures. Back of the sad and glad story which these pictures tell, put your sympathy, sacrifice, and believing prayer and thus have a part in hastening that bright coming day when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord" (Isa. 11: 9).

Items

Those whose privilege it was to teach our Indian workers in the Summer School, feel that the time thus spent was profitable to all concerned. It is joy indeed to pass on the great truths of God's Word to those who will "be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2: 2).

Honour to whom honour is due. "By reason of his thorough knowledge of the language, Mr. A. C. Eicher was appointed by the Bombay Representative Christian Council Language School and Examination Board, to serve as Superintendent of the Marathi Language School at Mahabelshwar, during the last hot season."

In order to accommodate as many of our Marathi workers as possible, the dates of the Prayer Conference were changed to August 7th and 8th. The following important subjects were discussed and prayed over to the lasting edification, we trust, of all present: The Needs-Be of Preaching the Gospel, introduced by Mr. Garrison; The Necessary Qualifications of the Preacher, introduced by Mr. Smith; The Preacher's Home and its Relation to the People, introduced by Mr. Cutler; The Preacher's Ultimate Object, introduced by Mr. E. F. Eicher; What to Teach New Christians, introduced by Mr. F. W. Schelander; The Preacher's Message, introduced by Mr. E. R. Carner.

One of the urgent needs of our work in India is more preachers
of the gospel. Will God's children who read these lines beseech the Lord of the harvest that this need may be supplied?

Sorrow has invaded three of the homes of our Marathi workers recently. In each case it was the wife and mother in the home who was taken. Pray for the comfort of Mr. Nicholas Tayade, Mr. Louis Aglave and Mr. Samuel Kokane and for their motherless children.

It is planned to hold the Annual Conference of our missionaries from October 28th to November 4th. Let all who love the Lord and His work pray with us for a great outpouring of His grace upon this gathering.

By the time this copy of The Bulletin is in the hands of our friends in America we hope and expect that the following missionaries on furlough will be on their way back to India: Mr. and Mrs. A. I. Garrison, accompanied by Margaret and John; Miss Harriet Beardslee and Miss Faith Cutler. Mrs. L. J. Cutler, mother of Miss Cutler, and now on the retirement list, expects also to return to India to spend her remaining years, if Jesus tarry, in the land where she has laboured so long for our Lord.

Miss Charlotte Rutherford, who has given many years of service to India, expects to go on furlough, this fall. Miss Rutherford is retiring at the end of a year's furlough and will make her home with her people, in Australia.

Marathi Proverbs

"If the thread be broke to the God on high,
To the gods below in vain we cry."

"Use the cane, rat-tat,
Knowledge comes, pitter-pat."

"Serve the devil in the time of ease.
In the time of trouble, fall on your knees."

"God is here, before thy face,
Thou has surely missed the place."

"Between the ear and the eye,
Four fingers lie."

"Where thou may be
Is the East to me."

"A guest of two houses dies of hunger."

"To try the rice,
One grain will suffice."

—Contributed by R. H. Smith.

When does the day begin in India?
Answer: The Christian says at midnight; the Hindu says at dawn, and the Moslem says at sunset.