Warming the Prayer Drums
The Morning Watch in an Ancient Indian Fortress

By Lauren Carner

“I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the fortress and will watch to see what he will say unto me” (Hab. 2: 1). “But watch ye at every season, making supplication” (Luke 21: 36). “My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will keep watch” (Psalm 5: 3) (A.R.V.).

On the commanding eminence of a precipitous peak overlooking Western India's narrow, coastal plain to the west, and her wooded mountains and deep canyons to the east, are the age-defying ramparts of the ancient fortress of Pratapagad, the “Fort of Glorious Exploits.” Half way down the mountain on a small plateau, surmounting a high spur of the same peak, is an ornate Moslem tomb which marks the revered spot where, in ancient times, a great Muhammadan general was killed in a hand-to-hand struggle of mortal combat with a famous Hindu prince. Following the conflict, the Moslem's
head was severed from his body, and removed to Pratapgad where it was buried in the lofty battlemented bastion—called Abdulla’s (or Afjul’s) Tower, in honour of the general—which rises immediately above the site of the struggle where his tomb is now located. Overlooking both the tower and the tomb, and within the fortress walls, is the temple of Bhawani, the goddess to whom the Hindu prince had prayed before proceeding on the desperate mission of that momentous morning long ago.

On one occasion last hot season I spent the night on the concrete porch of the drum tower which fronts this temple of Bhawani. Early next morning, before the light of dawn had pierced the thick mists which had drifted up through the valleys from the sea, the stillness of that hour was invaded by the long, weird cry of, “Allaha Ho Akbar, arbi ashado Allayelahaa ill Allaha, asahado anna Mahumud Rasullulaha, hylilla sullaha hylilla, hyayal laphlaha, Allaha Ho Akbar,
etc., etc.” (God is great! There is no other God! I testify that Mohammed is his prophet! Come for prayer! come for your good! God is greater than all! No one else is worthy to be worshipped!). The attendant at the Moslem tomb was calling the “faithful” to morning prayer. Shortly following, as if in defiant answer, the steady staccato and deep, rhythmic beat of the Hindu prayer drums at Bhawani’s temple reverberated through the mountains. Morning by morning—in the penetrating chill of the cold season, in the still warmth of the hot season, in the torrential down-pour of the rainy season—year in and year out, the devotees of the false prophet and the pagan goddess thus faithfully keep their morning watch.

When the drums had ceased their beating that morning I briefly told the story of Christ’s redeeming love to one of the Hindu watchmen, as we sat together by the little fire that was kept burning in the drum-tower to protect the drums from the penetrating dampness of
the long night, so that they might sound true at the time of the morning watch.

O saint of God, in sin’s long night, when “the love of many shall wax cold,” attend daily to thy morning watch, and by the means of grace keep warm the prayer drum of thine heart that it may ever sound true, and that its steady beat may reverberate to the Throne of Grace in prevailing intercessions which shall release the powers of heaven in salvation to those who continue in futile repetitions to pray to strange gods and in the name of false prophets!
"But Remember, We Are Bound"

By Miss Harriet Beardslee

While travelling in a third class railway coach a short time ago, a missionary was suddenly startled by something moving at her feet. On investigation she found a poorly clad, half-starved woman lying under the bench on which she was sitting. When questioned as to the reason for her being there, she said she was too sick to sit up and she just wanted to be quiet. The missionary was about to offer her sympathy and make further inquiries as to the possibility of helping her when the ticket inspector appeared in the doorway and began searching the compartment. The woman was discovered and ordered to move out of her hiding place. Not being able to produce a ticket, she was rudely pushed out of the compartment. She had tried to steal a ride, but was foiled in the attempt. The train pulled out of the station leaving a poor, dejected woman on the platform.

This incident afforded the missionary a splendid opportunity of presenting the gospel to the dozen other women who were her fellow passengers. She began by telling them how Jesus Christ had paid, not only her own but their passage to heaven. The story of Calvary brought tears to the eyes of some and quietness pervaded the compartment as she tried to show them the utter impossibility of entering heaven without the ticket which every one of them could have if they would accept it on Christ's own terms.

At first some seemed very indifferent and plainly showed that they were not interested. They tried to divert attention and change the trend of the conversation, but others wanted to hear and insisted on their being quiet.

One young woman was just returning to her husband after having spent some days with her own parents. She had been weeping from the time she took her seat in the train, but she finally dried her tears and began to listen. When she had the opportunity she said, "Even if what you say is true, it can't help us. My husband belongs to the Aryan Samaj (a Hindu Society) and he would never let me join the Jesus people. He would be angry if he knew I
had listened to you today. I heard this same story when I was a
child, but my parents would never let me read your books. My
grandmother beat me one day for following a sahib who came to our
village and told this story. No, no, this story is not for us.”

Another very attractive, well-dressed young woman ventured to
say, “We must do as we have been taught. There is no other
way for us.”

A third one joined in the conversation by saying, with a haughty
air, that she was perfectly satisfied with the Hindu religion and she
fully expected to reach Nirvana (Hindu heaven). She said she was
paying her own fare and had no need of Jesus Christ to pay for her.
She had already made several pilgrimages to their holy shrines and
had even built one temple herself. Surely that would give her
plenty of merit.

The missionary’s heart was burdened. As she left the train she
said to one dear woman who had listened so attentively and had such
a hungry look in her eyes, “I am going to pray for you, bai (woman),
and ask my God to show you the true way.” She made no response but the woman sitting by her side said, “Pray for me, too, but remember, we are bound.”

As the missionary stepped out on to the station platform her own eyes were blinded with tears. The train sped on, bearing those precious women farther on into the darkness, with no ticket for eternal life. But those last words, “We are bound,” rang in her ears for days. Would to God that you dear praying people at home could understand just all that those words mean. India’s multitudes are verily bound hand and feet in the meshes of Satan. Can we count on your prayers to help set them free?

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**The Ramabai Marathi Bible**

Probably the only version of the Bible in the history of the world translated wholly by a woman, is the Marathi Bible translated by the late Pandita Ramabai, founder of the Ramabai Mukti Mission. This great woman’s aim in this splendid work was to give to the 20,000,000 Marathi-speaking people a version of God’s Word in clear, simple language which they *all* could understand when they read it, or heard it read. That she succeeded no one will deny who has read any of this version. Some of the later and more pretentious versions of the Bible in Marathi are so full of Sanskrit words that the poor Indian Christians who do not know the polysyllabic Sanskrit language are often baffled by the terms used. And so are the poor missionaries, unless they are Sanskrit scholars, or have a Sanskrit lexicon by them. The “Ramabai Bible” is good Marathi and with a mild revision will be unequalled. That it needs such a revision, all familiar with it will concede. The spelling in places, especially in the case of proper names, is sometimes awkward; Greek terms are occasionally introduced into the text which should be replaced with simple Marathi terms, and in a few instances, a clearer and more-faithful-to-the-original Marathi term should be found. When this is done it will be a “people’s version” without a peer.
Such a revision is being undertaken. Miss Hastie, for many years a colleague of Pandita Ramabai herself, and since the Pandita’s death, also, a constant source of blessing and strength to the Mukti Mission, has inaugurated this task and hopes to have the New Testament in its revised form, in attractive binding, out, early in 1939.

For the accomplishing of this, she and Miss Wells, Superintendent of the Ramabai Mukti Mission, have secured the service, part time, of a committee of missionaries and laymen who are lovers of God’s Word and who appreciate the value of giving it to the people in the kind of language the people can understand. Let us pray that God’s blessing may be upon the members of this committee. On this page we give a picture of some of the members, with a note concerning it in the explanation of the pictures.
Concerning Our Pictures

A Rainy-Season Sunset. India’s twilights on the plains are very short but the sunsets, especially toward the close of the rainy season when the clouds are beginning to break, as when this picture was taken, are beautiful beyond telling. This picture was taken at the artificial lake which is the water-supply for the city of Akola. The Fortress of Pratapgarh shows the southern section of the fortress of this name, with the temple of Bhawani in the foreground. (See Mr. Lauren Carner’s article on “Warming the Prayer Drums.”) “A part of the drum tower is to be seen immediately left of the two pillars.” Abdul-la’s Tower.—Of this Mr. Carner writes, “At the far end of the fortifications, overlooking the misty valley, is the bastion in which the Moslem general’s head was buried. Away below the tower, on the extreme right of the picture, can be seen a small white building, surmounting the dark spur of the mountain. This building is the Moslem’s tomb.” The Tomb of the Moslem General—looks more like a “bungalow” than a tomb but the tomb is here enclosed. Reading from left to right the three standing before the doorway are, “an American missionary, a Moslem attendant at the tomb, and a Brahmin pundit” (teacher) who accompanied the missionaries on this expedition. The Ramabai Bible Revision Committee shows most of the revision committee who are working on the New Testament of the Ramabai version of the Marathi Bible. Read the brief article concerning this, on another page. Beginning at the left of the picture and moving around the circle clockwise, the names of the members of the committee are Rev. Shau D. Bower, an Alliance pastor; Krishnabai, a faithful and efficient teacher, since Ramabai’s time, at Mukti Mission; Rev. A. I. Garrison; Rev. Fred W. Schelander and Rev. Lauren Carner. Mr. Tilak, son of the late Rev. N. V. Tilak, India’s Christian poet, was at this table, too, but his picture did not “take” because he happened to be back of Mr. Carner. Mr. Tilak is a Christian lawyer and it was at his home in the city of Nasik that this session of the committee took place.
Who Will Take Her Place?

To some, Saratoga Springs, New York, is noted for its spas, while others think of it as a sporting center, but to our dear friend and colleague, Eva Margaret King, it was the dearest spot on earth, for there she met Christ.

Attracted by singing, Miss King entered the Alliance Hall, where Rev. Howard Miller was preaching, and during that service she had a vision of Christ which completely changed her life. That night she yielded herself to the Master, experiencing great peace and joy which lasted all through the years, until she whispered "Jesus," and passed into His presence.

After graduating from the Missionary Institute at Nyack, New York, Miss King worked for some time in the south at the Elida Homes for Children and this seemed to be a preparation for her future life's work, as she was appointed after arrival in this country, to the Girls' School at Kaira. Here she laboured for two terms, sparing no effort to mould the young lives entrusted to her. Her zealousness and desire to have the children know Christ and accept Him as their Saviour was evidenced as she dealt with them at home and in the Junior Church Services.

Especially was Miss King used of God in the organizing and carrying on of the Primary and the Junior Divisions of the Sunday
School. Children having completed the course found no difficulty whatever in successfully keeping up with the work in the higher departments, and the teachers of the upper divisions were oft-times agreeably surprised at the thoroughness of their training and at their ability to quote accurately whole chapters of the Bible.

Miss King loved the children and they loved her. How tenderly she mothered the tiny tots—especially the orphans! Her eyes would fill with tears as she told us of the sufferings these unwanted children endured before they came to her. With materials sent out from home she made “go-to-meeting-frocks” for them, and on Sunday mornings they would troop into her office to don these and to have their hair combed and bright ribbons tied on. How happy she made them! One little orphan weepingly remarked as she saw her packing her trunks to leave for furlough, “Who will tie on our ribbons after the Missisahib leaves?”

A few days after Miss King had gone, this same mite said, with her large brown eyes overflowing with tears, “I don’t like to look at the Missisahib’s bungalow now, for it seems so empty and lonely.”

This expresses our sentiments since we heard the news that “King Missisahib,” as the girls called her, had been transferred to higher service. For her it is “far better,” but for us who are left there is the heartache for the loss of a true friend and co-worker.

Our comfort is in the assurance that it is only until He comes and we sincerely hope and pray that God will call some one to take up and carry on the work she has laid down.

CARL AND RUTH GUSTAFSON.

“Live for God”

On the 26th of September, Rev. E. R. Carner, Chairman of our Mission, wired the sad news of the sudden death of Miss Eva M. King. To Rev. and Mrs. C. A. Gustafson, Miss King’s co-workers, it was a terrible wound, and to every member of the Dholka Church it was cause for keen sorrow. Miss King’s death was a great loss to
the Dholka Church, and to the Girls’ Hostel, as she was never weary of seeking the interest and good of both these beloved institutions, serving with devoutness and faithfulness at all times. She was a real mother to the girls, showing a spirit of Christlikeness and humility to every girl in her charge. Her unselfish and frank spirit was an inspiration to all, and any who knew Miss King realized that she lived for and with God.

At the time Miss King was leaving Dholka for furlough, early last spring, the Dholka Church and the Girls’ and Boys’ hostels united in a farewell service. Little did any of us then think that this was the last time we would see our dear friend in this world. Most of the members of our Dholka Christian Community, including the children of the Girls’ and Boys’ schools, went to the railway station to see Miss King off, and to this company of friends and well-wishers, our beloved sister’s last words were, “Live for God.”

The Dholka Church and the children and workers in our Boys’ and Girls’ hostels and Boarding schools extend to Miss King’s relatives their sincere condolences, in their mutual loss of one of God’s chosen ones. “She being dead yet speaketh.”

Sincerely,

PASTOR AND CONGREGATION OF THE DHOLKA CHURCH,
AND THE BOYS AND GIRLS OF THE BOARDING
SCHOOLS AND HOSTELS, DHOLKA.

News and Notes

The excessive rains of the past season have resulted in more than usual illness among India’s always afflicted people. There have been epidemics of cholera, typhoid fever and malaria in many places. The suffering of the poor makes our hearts long for the return of “The King’s Son.” “For He shall deliver the needy when he crieth the poor also, and him that hath no helper” (Ps. 72: 12).

God’s great goodness has kept nearly all of our missionaries well in the midst of surrounding sickness. He has sustained those
who have suffered from malaria and at present, so far as we know, no one is ill. Mr. E. F. Eicher had a severe attack of malaria fever but is well on the way to health again, for which we are thankful.

We have joy in reporting that our new missionaries have done well in the study of Marathi. Miss Davies and Mrs. Gerald Carner both passed well in the first year's examination and, within the year, Gerald passed both his examinations, getting "honours" in the second one.

Early on Monday morning, October 17th, a "new recruit" whose name is Laura Jane, arrived at the home of the Rev. and Mrs. Gerald L. Carner. No need to tell you that Gerald is a "proud papa" or that Sara thinks this "little missionary" about the finest she has ever seen. Even "ye editor" and his dear wife are excited about her, because her coming entitles them to the venerable names, "Grandpa" and "Grandma!" In our excitement we do not forget that this lovely little girl is just another manifestation of the grace and goodness of our Heavenly Father, which have followed us all the days of our lives.

We are glad to welcome back into our thin ranks Mr. and Mrs. S. Kerr and Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Ringenberg. Mr. and Mrs. Kerr have been absent from India for several years and it is good to have them in our midst once more. India has changed considerably since they left, but we believe they will soon feel at home in the wide field of service which awaits them and we solicit the prayers of our friends at home for them, and for Mr. and Mrs. Ringenberg who have been on furlough since the spring of 1937.

And now, "last but not least", comes this "stop press" item—"Ann is delighted with the arrival of David Albert, on November 2nd, 1938. So are we!" Signed, Artimese and Bert Eicher. We congratulate Ann and her parents in their new happiness.
**MISSIONARY DIRECTORY, 1938**

*Headquarters: AKOLA, BERAR*

*Chairman: REV. E. R. CARNER*

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  - Vacant

- **Viramgam**
  - REV. AND MRS. J. S. RINGENBERG
    - Children's Home

- **Ootacamund, S. India**
  - MISS E. LOTHAHAN
  - MISS AGNETE HANSEN
    - Rest Home

- **Lonavla, Poona District**
  - Vacant

- **Kedgaon, Poona District**
  - (Ramabai Mukti Mission)
  - MISS EUNICE WELLS

- **ON FURLough**
  - REV. AND MRS. K. D. GARRISON
  - MISS MYRA WING
  - MISS BERNICE STEED
  - REV. AND MRS. O. H. LAPP
  - MISS JULIA DERR
  - REV. AND MRS. O. G. SCHLATTER
  - REV. AND MRS. AUGUST HELFERS
  - MISS ANNA LITTLE
  - MISS EMMA A. KRATER

- **RETIRED IN INDIA**
  - MRS. MARTHA RAMSEY, Akola
  - REV. C. W. SCHELANDER, Anjangaon
  - MISS CORA HANSEN, Dholka
  - REV. AND MRS. L. J. CUTLER, Murtizapur
  - MISS HELEN C. BUSHFIELD, Jalgaon