The India Alliance
A BULLETIN OF THE INDIA MISSION OF THE
CHRISTIAN AND MISSIONARY ALLIANCE

"Other sheep I have . . . . them also I must bring."

APRIL—JUNE 1939

Miss Agnete Hansen
A HAPPY FAMILY
A Great Change

By E. F. EICHER, Amraoti District

Much has been said and much written about the political, social and religious hopes of the down-trodden millions comprising the depressed classes in India. Leaders of these classes have advocated various remedies to extricate themselves from their hopelessness. The seemingly most popular suggested remedy being a mass change of religion. The idea of a change of religion as held by these leaders has been social rather than experimental. They have failed to take note of the fact that without a change of heart, a change of religion will mean little or nothing.

However, the unsettled condition of this mass of humanity has opened avenues of approach for presenting the gospel to these millions. The presentation of a crucified and risen Saviour, who is the central vitalizing Factor of Christianity, without whom Christians would be no better off than adherents of other religions, is having a tremendous appeal to these down-trodden, heartsick, weary people.
Without any apparent transitional period from the former indifference to the gospel message, we found a sudden change to a great spiritual hunger in many villages of our district. We are having calls from many groups of Mahars, asking for religious instruction, and at the same time begging to be baptized. The harvest appears ripe, and our labourers are but few in comparison with the need of the hour. The move in these parts started in Anjangaon district and from there it is radiating to the adjoining districts.

Last Christmas we were quite taken by surprise when a group of about forty people, big and little, came and camped at our bungalow, demanding that we make them Christians! As we had had no former contact with any of these people, we were, to say the least, amazed and somewhat suspicious of the motives of so many coming so suddenly and being so insistent on being baptized. After they had been two days with us, we sent the group back to their village with a promise to visit them and give them more teaching. During the following three months the Indian pastor and evangelists visited these people from time to time, teaching them and encouraging them in their new faith and trust in Jesus Christ.
The time came for these enquirers to be baptized, and at their own request we went to the riverside in full view of their village, where they publicly acknowledged Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. The day of the baptismal service was the chief day of the very ardently observed Hindu festival, “Shimga.” Throughout the Mahar quarters of this village, Shimga meant nothing now. Instead of throwing filth and heaping abuse on each other, there was quiet and order. Instead of fires burning the “Holi,” there was a group of happy people singing praises to Jesus Christ and fellowshipping together in Christian worship.

Please pray much for these new babes in Christ, as much is being done to distress them because of their new found Faith.

Please also pray with us that God will raise up a sufficient corps of teachers to shepherd these flocks, as most of the groups are illiterate.

As God has worked in the group mentioned, He is working in other groups. Praise His Name.

The key to the missionary message is the remissionary aspect of Christ’s life, not His kindness and His goodness, and His revealing of the Fatherhood of God; the great limitless significance is that He is the propitiation for our sins. The missionary message is not patriotic, it is irrespective of nations and of individuals, it is for the whole world. When the Holy Ghost comes in He does not consider my predilections, He brings me into union with the Lord Jesus. —OSWALD CHAMBERS, IN My Utmost for His Highest.

A missionary is one who is wedded to the charter of his Lord and Master; he is not to proclaim his own point of view, but to proclaim the Lamb of God. It is easier to belong to a coterie which tells what Jesus Christ has done for me, easier to become a devotee to Divine healing, or to a special type of sanctification, or to the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Paul did not say — “Woe is unto me if I do not preach what Christ has done for me”, but — “Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel!” This is the gospel — “The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!” —OSWALD CHAMBERS.
Wanted—Evangelists

By JANE E. KERR, Mehmadabad

Progress in the Church and dearth of evangelistic effort in the surrounding heathen districts—these two, seemingly conflicting impressions of our work in Gujarat, gripped us very definitely upon our return to the field after an absence of nearly seven years.

Marked advance in the line of Indian Church control and maintenance is sensed everywhere we go. Large and small companies of believers are proud to be designated as a “church”, each with its own duly ordained pastor, elders and leaders for the different departments of the work. Where, in the “old days”, the missionary reigned and ruled supreme, now, the Indian pastor plus his corps of helpers exert authority in all matters pertaining to the registered Church of the Christian and Missionary Alliance of India.

Annual conventions, committee meetings, collection of church dues, disbursement of funds, baptism, marriage and funeral arrangements are all in the hands of the Indian Church. Ten ordained pastors take the lead in shouldering the management of eighteen organized and, in a few cases, fully self-supporting churches.
For all these tangible evidences of growth we are truly grateful to our Lord, the Head of the Church, not forgetting the honoured ministry of our valiant predecessors who laid the foundation for this church development in the preparation of “workmen that need not to be ashamed.”

But, on the other hand, when we look upon the fields open to evangelism in an area of approximately 8,000 square miles, representing a population of two and one-fourth millions, and find there only two missionary couples, with a contingent of ten trained evangelists and three Bible-women in direct evangelistic work, our hearts are burdened with the overwhelming need for more workers—white and brown—in this great heathen field.

And when we turn to the church, the logical evangelizing agency of the surrounding districts, our hearts ache because of their apathetic attitude towards their idol-worshipping neighbours. There is a deplorable tendency within the Church to confine her activities to the Christian communities, callous, it would seem, to the urgent, soul-stirring need of the thousands rushing on to eternity without God and without hope.
Certainly, individual cases might be cited where church members by precept and practice are endeavouring to share redemption's story with their Hindu countrymen, but generally speaking, it must be admitted that our Gujarati church [and Marathi church—Ed.] as a whole, is contributing but little to the spread of the gospel.

Friends in the homeland, this is our situation; this is our need. Help us by intercession to arouse the Indian Church to a vital partnership in the proclamation of the gospel to the heathen, as well as the administration of her own affairs. And when you pray for our Indian brethren please remember the handful of missionaries working in Gujarat—also those young men and women in the homeland with the call of God upon their hearts for service in this hard, castey field, that they too may soon come to our help in the power of the Spirit of God.

About our Pictures

*A Happy Family* shows Sagunabai with her son Anand (Gladness) and his wife and child. Sagunabai is "an outcaste transformed" by the grace of God. Read her wonderful story in the pamphlet under this title, by Rev. K. D. Garrison and published at only five cents the copy by The C. & M. Alliance, 260 West 44th Street, New York. *A Group of New Believers* will be understood and appreciated by reading the article by Mr. E. F. Eicher in this issue; also the picture of the Delegation Who Wanted to be "Made Christians." "Bethel Church"—Ahmedabad and On Dedication Day, explain themselves. Read the note concerning the occasion, under "News and Notes." The group *At the Dedication*, from left to right are Mrs. Gustafson, Mr. Gustafson, Mr. Girdharbhai Bhagat, Mr. Carner, Mrs. G. Bhagat, Mr. Kerr, Mrs. Ringenberg, Mr. Ringenberg and Mrs. Brabazon. *One of Hinduism's "Holy Men,"* and *A Home for Idols* show you what our missionaries meet constantly as they move among the people of this great land.
News and Notes

The recent Synods of the national church of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in India were seasons of blessing. These are the annual business meetings which represent the two areas of the Indian Church in which our missionaries work—the Gujarati area and the Marathi area. For the most part the discussions and decisions at these meetings are the work of our Indian brethren. We praise God for the marks of progress in these brethren. The quiet dignity and reverence with which they discuss the problems of God's work and the wisdom which usually marks the decisions they make are causes for thanksgiving.

The annual convention of the Gujarati churches was held in Mehdadabad, March 10th to 12th. The meetings were well attended, the big church being well filled at most of the services. God gave to His servants who brought the messages liberty in telling forth His truth and the Spirit of God worked in many hearts. We long, how-
ever, to see a greater manifestation of His reviving power and earnestly solicit your prayers for this manifest need.

What has been said about the annual convention at Mehmadabad is also true of the one for our Marathi Christians, held this year from March 31st to April 2nd, at Khamgaon instead of Akola. A very interesting feature of this convention was that scores of new converts from Angaongaon, Amraoti and Akola districts attended these meetings. The final testimony meeting did not break up till three o'clock in the morning and might have gone on till daylight if wisdom on the part of the leaders had not made it apparent that a few hours of sleep were really necessary in order to prepare for the work of the following day.

The awakening mentioned in our Annual Report number, among the outcastes of Berar, has continued and our missionaries and Indian brethren at work among these down-trodden people are greatly encouraged at the large number of enquirers who still keep asking for baptism. A goodly number have been baptized since we last reported and our Indian workers stationed in these areas have continued, right through the dust and excessive discomfort of the hot season, to visit the villages and to instruct the new converts and the ones who expect to confess Christ openly in baptism.

We are truly grateful to our heavenly Father for making it possible for our missionaries to have a few weeks of change in the hills, away from the heat and dust, during part of the hot season. We cannot too strongly emphasize the fact that such rest and change are real economy, even if Christian Missions in India were nothing
more than a mere business proposition. In other words to give the missionaries this rest and change prolongs their lives and makes them much more efficient through the rest of the year. Besides they get spiritual refreshing through fellowship with God's servants of other communions, whom they meet in the hills and with whom they worship the blessed Lord and Saviour of all who are redeemed. In this connection we want to mention again our appreciation of the kindness of our Home Board in making it possible for us to purchase the property at Kodaikanal, in the Palni Hills in South India. We still owe something on the land and two cottages there but hope that all the debt may soon be cancelled.

On Sunday, April 19th, it was the editor's privilege to attend the dedication of a splendid new church building and parsonage for the Alliance church at the section of the city of Ahmedabad known as Railwaypura ("railway town"). The building was crowded to its capacity on this occasion and it was remarked that the only fault to find with the building was that it was not big enough. This place of worship will be known as Bethel Church. Pray that it may be in very truth a "House of God." Mr. Gustafson and Mr. Girdharbhai Bhagat were the brethren who did most of the work in engineering the construction of this edifice and the adjacent parsonage. This is the second Alliance church in the great city of Ahmedabad. We give some pictures of this building in this number.

The churches in Gujarat observed with great zeal the "week of witnessing" recently. A large percentage of the membership of all the congregations took part in this special effort to witness for Christ. What these churches specially need, as it seems to us, is the kind of zeal that will make them all-the-year-through witnesses to their fellows of the saving grace of Christ. Read the article by Mrs. Kerr in this issue, relative to this matter.

A meeting of the General Assembly of the representatives of the Indian churches of the Christian and Missionary Alliance is planned to be held, the Lord willing, next September. May we ask you to pray especially for this gathering which is but the third of its kind
in the history of our Mission? In this triennial gathering, questions of vital importance concerning the governing and the extension of our Indian churches will be pondered by our church leaders. Pray that new vision and new inspiration, given by the Holy Spirit, may come upon these Indian leaders of Christ’s Church.

A Special Call to Prayer and Praise

Probably most of the readers of THE INDIA ALLIANCE BULLETIN will have heard of the serious testing through which our dear comrade and brother, Rev. C. A. Gustafson, has been passing. His throat had been giving him distress for a long time and when, after an attack of influenza, it became worse and his voice broke down completely, he felt it wise to consult the civil surgeon of the Ahmedabad hospital. This doctor found the vocal cords and larynx in a serious condition and feared there was a malignant growth. A further examination, with other doctors, confirmed them in this fear and he was asked to go to Bombay to consult with specialists there. This he did with a like result. These doctors advised that he go at once to America for special radium treatment, though one specialist felt that an operation in India would be the best thing to do. Meanwhile all our
missionaries and Indian brethren were much in prayer and a cable was sent to America, and there and in Canada the Lord’s children prayed earnestly for deliverance for our brother.

A recent letter from brother Gustafson is very encouraging and we believe that a brief quotation from it is a testimony which all will be glad to read. Relative to the opinion of the doctors and their kindness to him, brother Gustafson writes: “We had our last examination at the kind and sympathetic hands of Dr. S. B. Cooper, Bombay. Here, in short, is his diagnosis and advice. He believes he has thoroughly and carefully examined the larynx, vocal cords and the throat. . . . So marvellous has been the response of the growth, swelling and inflammation to the body and nerve upbuilding injections, both intravenous and intramuscular, that he fully believes a complete rest in Landour will wipe out any trace of unhealthy tissue in the throat. Already, and that without doubt, the vocal cords have entirely cleared up. Monday evening Dr. Cooper assured us that not a single trace of swelling, inflammation or nodule could be found on the cords. However, there were swelling, inflammation, etc., on the outside of the ‘voice-box,’ as he termed it, but this he believes will disappear as did that on the cords. Surely God has worked a miracle! Surely He will complete what has been so definitely His miraculous work, so let us keep on praising, praying and believing. After we return from Landour I am to go to Bombay to have Dr. Cooper examine me again, and at that time I expect to hear him exclaim at greater length and with conviction that God has heard and answered prayer.”

Let us thank our heavenly Father for His goodness to our dear brother and to us all in this, and let us keep on trusting in believing prayer that the healing which he has begun may be completed. Brother Gustafson was worn down with overwork and this enforced rest is a necessity for his whole body. Again, we reiterate that we need more married couples in Gujarat to reinforce our thin ranks. Pray for this while you pray for brother Gustafson.