TWO OF INDIA'S MANY ROADSIDE SHRINES

MAHARASHTRA FIELD
(Formerly—Marathi)

RAINY SEASON, 1964
COLD SEASON, 1965
The India Alliance is issued in the Cold Season (Jan.), in the Hot Season (May), and in the Rainy Season (Sept.), by the Maharashtra Field of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in India, to encourage Christians to pray and give for the unfinished task. You may receive it by writing the Chairman, P.O. Box 5, Akola, Maharashtra, INDIA.

—EDITOR, E. H. LEWELLEN

“LORD, THEY DON’T UNDERSTAND”

There can be no duplicate to that joy which comes to a missionary when he leads his first soul to Christ in the vernacular. However, when you find a precious blood-bought saint who has stood true to Christ through trials and persecution and suffering down through the years, and has proven Him as Sanctifier, Healer and Lord of her life, this most certainly brings an indescribable joy. This joy has come to me through fellowship with Sagunabai.

Born an outcaste girl, Sagunabai was married at the age of seven. By her early teens she knew much sorrow that comes from being a childless widow. By the age of eighteen or so, she had married again, buried two children, and scarcely ceased to weep for them when the dreaded goddess came again, and took her husband by smallpox. It was in these years however, that she learned to know Christ as Saviour. Six years after her baptism, she pledged to pray for her family’s salvation, until the victory came. It took thirteen years of praying but she had the privilege of leading her two sisters, brothers-in-law, one daughter-in-law, and her hard-hearted mother to Jesus.

The women in the villages were always attentive to her testimony. Was it because she was educated and had the Bible stories so well prepared, that she held their attention? No, for she was just a plain uneducated villager. But when she told those women about her Lord, (my Prabhu) they couldn’t help but know she was telling of One Who was real to her. Each time she opened the Bible to read about God’s love, and His life given for them, it was made possible by a miracle God performed years ago while in Bible School as she struggled to learn to read. Finding her mind unable to grasp the lessons, she cried out to
God in desperation for Him to teach her, and she promised to use the knowledge to read only the Holy Word, and God answered.

Believing that she trusted in a Living God, One who answers prayer she was called on many times to pray for neighbors, after they had, to no avail called on their gods, with the beating of drums and offerings of rice and coconuts. A man was near death’s door because of continual dysentery and a child with severe ear ache had suffered for days. When she prayed for them in Jesus’ Name, she had the joy of seeing immediate answer to prayer and hearing their testimonies of praise to her Prabhu.

Whenever Sagunabai came in for a visit, it wasn’t for just a short visit, but we would spread the rug on the verandah and sit down together, or sometimes she would come inside and tell me to sit up on a chair so she could sit at my feet. But, oh so often did I really sit at her feet and learn spiritual things. Once seated, hours would pass as I received blessing and inspiration as she would tell of the Lord’s faithfulness in the past days. This day was no exception, and though she always could fall back on many past blessings, Sagunabai always had fresh blessings which she was rejoicing over. The Lord had healed her once again. She had asked Him to take her home this time, she said, but He said, "No! for He still had work for her to do. Then she put her arm upon my lap and asked me to examine it. Some months back she had chosen to trust the Lord to heal her broken arm rather than have a cast put on it. How pleased she was to show it and brag about the excellent job God did in healing it straight. She said, "God deals with me minutely sometimes. Others don’t seem to understand me but I just keep saying to the Lord, ‘Lord, they don’t understand, but I’ll do what you want me to do at any rate.’"

After the hot summer, when everything is so dry and parched, with not a blade of green to be seen, the earth and people alike wait patiently for the refreshing of the first rains. In the midst of such surroundings, there stands the Gold Mohur tree blooming with colorful red flowers. How can this be possible without water for months? It is because of the tree’s roots. It draws its life from a hidden source. I like to think of Sagunabai as a Gold Mohur tree, who in like manner is full of spiritual life, praising, trusting, testifying in the midst of difficult situations, and among thirsty souls on every hand—yes, souls thirsting for the Living Water. Her roots have gone deep and she knows what it is to depend on that hidden source, the Holy Spirit, to fill her, use her, guide her and prompt her daily life.

Lord, give us more like Sagunabai, who will be wholly sold out to God, and by their influence bring others of the many lost sheep, yet here in Maharashtra, to Jesus!

—Mrs Betty Dyke
Evangelism-In-Depth in Maharashtra has shown evidence of a steady leading by the Spirit of God. It began in 1962 as a God-given desire in the hearts of a handful. A year later it was an eager hope in the hearts of sixty or seventy delegates at the annual B.K.C.C. Conference. Then in 1964 it became a living possibility to over two hundred and fifty Christian workers at the Evangelism-In-Depth Leader's Conference which convened in Akola. Today it is a growing fact in the spiritual life of all the churches and scattered groups of Christian people in Berar and Khandesh, northern Maharashtra.

The purpose of Evangelism-In-Depth is to lead the whole Church to feel the responsibility and the desire to be a witness for Christ to the unsaved who surround it. This reach, from the pastor down to the very last church member, is the significance of the word "Depth". It also necessitates a new "depth" in spiritual life. This depth, which reaches to all believers and into all believers toward the goal of a constantly witnessing church, is based on two Biblical foundation stones, prayer and a knowledge of the Word.

To encourage all believers to join together in constant, specific prayer, Prayer Cells are formed. Volunteers are asked to open their homes to their Christian neighbors for a brief time of prayer each day. A prayer Calendar giving the name of every Christian worker in Berar-Khandesh is provided to each Cell. Thus each servant of God and his
congregation are prayed for at least once each week by all the people participating in all the Prayer Cells in the total area. With only half of the churches having reported, there are already approximately four hundred Cells formed with over two thousand believers taking part. There are about 110 town churches, not including the many village groups. Best of all, pastors have already begun to write in about the working of God in new spiritual carefulness in the lives of their church members taking part in these Cells.

In the same way volunteer Bible study groups are being formed to gather together as many believers as possible in discussion groups around the Word after home preparation outlined for the other six days. The manual being used is the Marathi version of the Billy Graham counsellors guide book. Every day we are mailing out more books to churches as they report new classes begun. With each book is mailed a set of memory cards, using verses chosen from the lessons in the twelve-week course. We are anticipating the work of God through His Word to cleanse His people and create in them the desire to lead others to Him. Tract distribution, house-to-house visitation, and counselling in revival meetings are avenues of witness to follow in the total Evangelism-In-Depth campaign.

From December 1964 through February 1965 revival meetings will be conducted in all churches with special speakers appointed. The Prayer Cells will be informed of all special meetings for each following month, so that thousands of believers will be praying for each local campaign.

We believe God has great visitations of grace appointed for India in these days and we who are in His church in Maharashtra want to be ready to have a share in that ingathering. We beg you to pray for us and with us as we look forward toward a purified church and one of which it can be said—"And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2: 47).

—J. F. Derr
THE MEN'S BIBLE TRAINING SCHOOL, NARGAON

October once again began the training of young men and women for service in God's vineyard. The second semester was under way and the choosing of teams for the School-on-Wheels was done. Times of prayer were held and preparation for giving out the Word of God was begun. Nine teams of three each were sent out in early December. This ministry was a blessing to our students as well as to those ministered to. The students returned with glowing reports of the way in which the Lord had led them and taught them as they labored in many villages and cities throughout Maharashtra. One group told of their trials pushing old jeeps out of mud holes, another told of the night a panther visited their tent camp and the missionary came from his tent and shot it. Inspiring to us as we listened to their reports was the joy each student, in his own way found as he obeyed the call of God.

From Nargaon, Sunday Schools were conducted every Sunday in the nearby villages, followed at the end of the School year by a Sunday School rally in which 75 village children attended. As the year ended we saw four students graduate to go out into the service of the Lord. As we reviewed the past year, we rejoiced as we noticed the definite increase in tithing, the renewed interest in evangelistic endeavor and the desire of the student body to go forth into the villages to reach India's people with the Gospel of Christ.

School opened in July with twenty-seven men and ten women in attendance, representing nine different missions. As this term ended we celebrated the Christian Home Festival, which is always a particularly happy time for the Christians. On the closing Sunday we had the privilege of seeing seven people baptised. One of these was a village man who has been helping in the field work, and has been inquiring for two years. This has truly been a year of rejoicing.

—The G. F. Vandegrifts

PLEASE NOTE

Have you ever wondered why you are receiving the INDIA ALLIANCE, or who is sending it to you? Perhaps you have written directly to the Field Chairman requesting to be put on our mailing list, or you have submitted your name to a missionary who has come to your church. If not, your name has been submitted to our mailing list by your personal friend on the Field who is bearing the cost of postage to you, as well as partial cost of publishing, so that you may know how to pray for India. Since missionaries' finances are limited, donations for publication will be welcomed.
The word “helps” in Cor. 12:39, is translated “helpers” in some translations; and we find it sandwiched in between “those with ability to heal the sick” and “administrators.” Helpers are those who enable others to do their work more efficiently. What a privilege it is to be the Lord’s helper! I am a secretary in our Headquarters Office in Akola. It is a full-time job taking care of the correspondence with the Home Board, missionaries on and off the Field, Inter-Mission correspondence, and the answering of requests for information from home, from Indian pastors, and missionaries. There are the many small items which require time, patience and an abundance of the Lord’s wisdom. Also, as Sub-Treasurer of the Mission on the Field, there are the myriad accounts to keep, such as Indian Income Tax, Mission Property accounts, and due to the lack of local check-cashing facilities, missionary accommodation accounts, to list a few.

Yet one can always find time to be one of the Lord’s helpers in other areas. A Mission Secretary is ideally situated for a broad, well-informed ministry of prayer. “Pray for the Boys’ and Girls’ Camps,” “Remember our special meetings,” “Our classes for new Christians has started. Please pray for these,” or someone is ill, or another is having a testing time. These and many other requests which come into the office are carried to the Throne of Grace. Very often we share in rejoicing over the answers to these prayers. For months the women in my Sunday School class have made excuses for not attending. Then last Sunday my small class swelled to eight, and oh, what joy to find that they had memorized the special verse before coming to class. For the last two years, I have had the privilege of chaperoning a group of Bible School young women during their two-week practical work training. Last year these women held a D.V.B.S. in the school house early in the morning before the regular school began. Can you imagine sixty or seventy children sitting in different corners of the school room all reciting different verses, telling a story or singing, at the same time? One wonders that they receive anything at all, but God has His own way to get His Word into hearts, and many are the reports of the children’s growth in the knowledge of the Lord.

There is so much to be done in the Lord’s harvest fields, at the desk, on our knees and along the dusty road. Will you join us in being helpers in the winning of precious souls for His Glory? —RUTH SCHLATTER

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**THE MAHARASHTRA FIELD CHURCH STATISTICS—1963* **

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<tr>
<td>Number of Sunday Schools</td>
<td>38</td>
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—All Pastors, Evangelists, and the teachers and staff of the Santa Barbara Boys School are supported solely by the Indian Church.

—Our responsibility is to an area 200 miles long and varying in width from 30 to 70 miles containing 3,230 villages, in which reside 2,387,000 people.

* 1964 Statistics not yet received.
FOUR NEW CHURCHES DEDICATED

There was much gladness and praise to the Lord this Rainy Season at the dedications of four churches, a testimony of the Lord's working in the hearts of His people.

The Akot congregation rejoices in their improved and enlarged church building, and report that the attendance had doubled in the past year. Dr Harold Boon of Nyack was present for the dedication of the new church building in the village of Hatgaon, and now the church is filled each Sunday morning. Five years from the time of groundbreaking, the church in Wai was dedicated by Rev. A. C. Eicher to the glory of God. In this very heart-moving service at which about 300 of the village people were present, Rev. John Taylor of Nyack brought a simple and clear message on the all-sufficiency of Our Wonderful Lord. This has also proved to be the means of uniting the congregation and focusing their attention on Christ rather than on individuals.

The E. F. Eichers write of how their hearts were encouraged by the growth in the Lord of the group of seventeen believers at Dhangarkhed, and of the time of rejoicing when their new little earthen-walled chapel was dedicated and the Christian group had their first communion service in their new church. Unto Our Lord be the Glory and Praise!

WELCOME BACK

We are glad to report the safe arrival back on the Field of Rev. and Mrs D. W. Capps, Rev. and Mrs A. C. Eicher, Miss Julia Derr, Miss Ferne Gerrie and Rev. and Mrs L. F. Stengele. We wish them a term of service full of joy and fruit as they serve the King of Kings.
It is with a heart filled with rejoicing that we report of the faithfulness of the Lord. We were stirred and thrilled recently to see twenty seven people from three villages follow the Lord in baptism. At the close of the Short Term Bible School, the members left for their villages singing the praises of God. Some were greeted with the news that one of their valuable bullocks had somehow gotten loose during the night and gorged itself on cotton and grain which was stored nearby. They had seen two other bullocks die in just this way so they knew what to expect. The pastor who was with them when they received the news, recognized this as an attack of the enemy to discourage them, so suggested that they pray for the animal which by this time was in a serious condition. The whole family joined in prayer for the animal. As we drove out later to check on the situation, the elder brother of the home came out to greet us with a face wreathed in smiles. When asked about the bullock he said, "Saheb, we could still hear the jeep climbing out of the sand in the river bed when we went to the shed and there stood our bullock completely well! This is the hand of the Lord Jesus, this is a miracle!"

In Akot town, victories have been won in His Glorious Name. Attendance has doubled since last year. Young people have made decisions for Christ. Much time has been taken up on building work in the Mission, and we have both enjoyed the work of publishing JIWAN PRAKASH (Light of Life) magazine, praying that it may be a blessing to many hearts. Although this year has been one of testing in many ways, a year in which we have sought new blessing from the Lord, yet it has been a year for which praise is due to Him for victories won. He has been good and He is good, Praise His Name!

ROLAND AND BETTY PERRET

WHAT IS THE CHRISTIAN HOME FESTIVAL?

Although the Festival in the city churches lasts from three to seven days, the village congregations observe this occasion on one day usually in October designated by their itinerant pastor. The Christian Home Festival is a looked-forward-to event among the village Christians. Each home is cleaned, a red cross freshly painted on the outside wall of the home near the door as a witness to all who pass by, and very often, underneath, the inscription, "Christ is the Head of this home." Although the program varies slightly, the solemnity of the occasion and testimonies tend to strengthen and weld the Christian family together.

The evening activity begins by all partaking of the evening meal together. Following this the Christian homes in the village are visited one by one. In the first home prayer is offered for the home and family,
as each one stands with lighted candle, symbolic of the light that they are determined to let shine in a village and world of darkness. From the first home the members join the pastor and missionary as they walk through the village singing, "We are walking in His light," to the next home where prayer is asked, and so throughout the entire village until all the Christian homes have been visited. The evening is climaxed with a time of devotion or prayer together around God's Word in the small church or open clearing designated for the meeting.

THE SHEPHERD'S CALL

Yes, there is a strange enchantment
Twining round our very heart,
As we linger in the Orient,
Share each joy with loving heart.

Still there is a saddening halo
Darkening hearts and wooing minds,
Circling every town and village—
Lifeless gods enthroned in shrines.

Loudly sounds each temple bell
Reaching to these listening ears.
My heartstrings tug—my spirit draws—
Helpless souls o'ercome by fears.

God, in vain they go to worship
And in vain they voice their prayers;
Lifeless gods so deaf do mock them;
Naught but Thee can still their fears.

Oh, our Father, dear and precious,
Wilt Thou help us seek and win
Sheep for whom Thy heart is yearning,
That they too may enter in.

E'er the shades of earth's last twilight
Hover o'er these dear lost sheep,
May they come dear loving Shepherd,
On Thy bosom—grace to keep.

—CARRIS CROWFOOT (A Missionary in India)

"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there Shall be one fold and one shepherd" Matt. 10:12.
JALGAON DISTRICT
(Population—191,482)

This conference year has seen many world changes. President Kennedy was assassinated, Pandit Nehru died, Mr. Khrushchev was forced out of office, and many other nations small and large have changed. Our own mission ranks have decreased by the Home going of Miss Hilda Davies, and in our work faced with mountain-high problems, we have become aware of a deep hunger for a visible manifestation of God’s power.

We have been kept busy with our regular assignments which have included teaching in the Men’s Bible Training School, holding English services for the Malayalam Christians in Bhusawal, teaching in Sunday School, leading the Jalgaon young people, and organizing prayer cells in the C. and M.A. area for the Evangelism-in-Depth program. We count it a privilege to impart the Word to the students in Bible School. Only eternity will reveal the working of God’s Spirit in the hearts of these men and women. We yearn to be faithful instructors imparting sound doctrine and a love for the Word.

Special assignments have taken us into neighboring Mission areas for meetings in eight cities and towns. The Lord gave a sense of His presence in the meetings and we acknowledge His blessing. We were in Chikalda for two weeks at the Lay Workers School, and were encouraged to see the village men and women grow in grace and eagerly respond to the teaching of God’s Word. Our latest and newest assignment was the supervision of the Boys’ Camp held near Jalgaon. Forty-four boys from the Alliance area who had memorized the first two chapters of First John, came to the camp. Classes, bathing, swimming, organized games and handwork, followed by a song fest and a message in the evening were items on the program for the four days of camp. We can only surmise the work that God did. Several testified of receiving Christ as Saviour, others of returning to the Lord, after having gone back. May God continue His work in the lives of these—the Church of tomorrow.

As we enter into a new year we long that the Lord will come upon us in a new way and that some of the long standing hinderances to the work will be solved as lives are yielded to Him.

HERB AND BETTY DYKE
REINFORCEMENTS AT LAST

After twelve years without reinforcements, during which our Field force has been reduced by retirement and death, we rejoiced in answer to prayer, when news was received of the coming of two new couples to the Maharashtra Field. Mr. Frederick and Cora Roth arrived in Bombay on August 29th with their two daughters. Mr. Roth is from Thun, Switzerland, and his wife is from Canada. Having both been in India previously, they are already well acquainted with India and her people.

In December we again saw much prayer answered when Rev. William Bell and his wife, Elaine arrived. Bill Bell felt the Call of God while serving the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and after serving six years, resigned to answer God’s Call to India. Mrs. Bell, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Austin Parliman of our Gabon, Africa Field, was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma, going to Gabon with her parents at the age of three.

These two couples are now hard at the study of the Marathi language, so we would covet your prayers for them. May God make them a blessing to India’s people and reward them with many souls for the Master.

~ HERE AND THERE ~

Rev. Gerald Carner was again nominated as Mission Chairman of our Maharashtra Field at the field elections in October. This was followed by prayer for God’s strength, wisdom and blessing on Rev. and Mrs. Carner in this coming year. As they serve Him as Chairman and Hostess of the Akola Home respectively.

SHORT TERM BIBLE SCHOOLS

A Short Term Bible School was convened for village people in Murtazapur in September. The families had difficulty in getting in from their villages due to the swollen rivers and mud caused by the
heavy rains, but the sixth day found 17 adults and 13 children in attendance. The Holy Spirit’s faithfulness was revealed as six students in brokenness cried out to God for forgiveness, and for the first time, as revealed on their faces, experienced the joy of sins forgiven. On the closing day, five took their stand publicly in baptism, as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Akola District, Jack and Ruth Derr conducted a School during April at which time six people were baptised including two couples from Buddhist backgrounds, and two young people of Christian parents. One brief camp was held in the District and since then two couples have been baptised.

READING ROOM, BOOK STORE

The Lord has used the Akola Reading Room and Book Store this year in many ways. Hundreds of Christian books, including Dr. Simpson’s, and Dr. Tozer’s, have been sold in the Akola area as well as parcel after parcel being sent to other cities of India. Thousands of tracts have been purchased by customers for distribution, in Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Malayalam, Urdu and English. The Reading Room Evangelist, Moses Palaspagar has had numerous opportunities of directing conversations into spiritual channels, as well as placing spiritual books into the hands of avid readers. One Gentleman described the Reading Room as “an oasis in the desert,” and truly it is. The Colporter, himself saved through the reading of the Word of God, has zealously sold books, Bibles and New Testaments all over Maharashtra. Your prayers are coveted for this ministry through the Book Shop, Library and colportage work.

COLLEGE STUDENTS

Amraoti has become one of the leading educational centres of the State of Maharashtra. Many new colleges have been built and others are under construction, presenting a challenge to reach the college
students for Christ. The local protestant churches and Christian students gathered recently to share their burdens and to make plans for reaching the Amraoti college students. As a result the students organized themselves into a Christian College Students' Union and requested the ordained ministers to act as councillors. These eighteen students have manifested a real interest in witnessing for Christ. God grant that they may grow in Christ and win many of their fellow students to the Saviour.

LAY WORKERS' INSTITUTE

The E. F. Eichers report the joy in finding several families of enquirers in the villages of Amraoti District, who were being instructed in the Word through the efforts of Lay Workers who had been trained at the Lay Workers' Institute in Chikalda. The Institute opened its Hot Season term in March and enrolled 23 families from five different missions. It proved to be one of the most responsive groups having attended, and we trust that these laymen will be useful instruments for Christ in the building up and shepherding of village Christians.

BIBLE REVISION

For the last nine years it has been my privilege to be a member of a committee appointed by the Bible Society to revise the Marathi translation of the Bible. This committee held twenty-four sessions, with a total of 166 working days, for seven years, to complete its work on the New Testament. Two more years have been required to add a system of marginal references and to print it. On October 5, 1964 this Revised New Testament was released for sale.

The first translation of the New Testament in Marathi was done by William Carey and his helpers. It was published in 1807. But because it was in a dialect not widely understood in Maharashtra, and also because it was printed in a peculiar form of "modi", the ancient Marathi script, and not in "balbodh", the characters ordinarily used, its value was very limited. A new translation was made by missionaries living in the Marathi area and published in 1826. This translation has undergone four major revisions at various times, prior to the one just finished. The last of these was completed in 1907.

Pandita Ramabai, famous founder of the mission that now bears her name, felt that the revised edition of 1907 used language too scholarly for common people to understand, and so she translated the whole Bible
into more simple Marathi. Her version was printed on her own mission press and published in 1922. It has been out of print for a generation, and Mukti Mission felt it would be appropriate to publish a new edition of this Bible in honor of Ramabai’s centenary. However it seemed best to modernize some of its language and to adopt the nomenclature of the Society’s version to make it more useful to the Christian readers of Maharashtra. It has been my privilege to help in this task also, which has taken far longer than any of us at first suspected. It is too late by several years for the Centenary, but at long last the entire Old Testament has been printed, and all of Matthew’s Gospel. It is hoped that the whole Bible will be printed in April, 1965.

Only those who have engaged in this type of work can realize all the painstaking work involved, and understand why it takes so long. But it has been a blessed task and I am grateful to God and to our mission authorities for allowing me to have a part of it. —F. W. Schelander

MISSIONARY DIRECTORY

Rev. and Mrs. J. L. Amstutz, Mission Bungalow, Anjangaon-Surji, Amraoti Dist., Maharashtra.
Rev. and Mrs. William Bell, Ramabai Mukti Mission, Kedgaon, Poona Dist., Maharashtra.
Rev. and Mrs. D. W. Capps, Mission Bungalow, Amraoti, Maharashtra.
Rev. and Mrs. D. W. Cartmel, Yeotmal Biblical Seminary, Yeotmal, Maharashtra.
*Mrs Lacy Lee Carner (on furlough).
Rev. and Mrs. G. L. Carner, P.O. Box 5, Akola, Maharashtra.
Rev. and Mrs. J. F. Derr, P.O. Box 5, Akola, Maharashtra.
Miss Julia Derr, Mission Bungalow, Khamgaon, Buldana Dist., Maharashtra.
Miss Ann Droppa, Mission Girl’s School, Khamgaon, Buldana Dist. Maharashtra.
Rev. and Mrs. C. H. Dyke, Mission Bungalow, Jalgaon, Maharashtra.
Rev. and Mrs. A. C. Eicher, Mission Bungalow, Murtazapur, Akola Dist., Maharashtra.
†Rev. and Mrs. E. F. Eicher, Men’s Bible School, Nargaon, Jalgaon Dist. Maharashtra.
Miss F. A. Gerrie, P.O. Box 5, Akola, Maharashtra.
*Miss Gladys Jasper, (on furlough).
†Rev. and Mrs. E. H. Lewellen, Mission Bungalow, Murtazapur, Akola Dist., Maharashtra.
†Miss M. Ransom, Mission Bungalow, Bhusawal, Maharashtra.
Mr and Mrs. Frederick Roth, B.C.H. Mission, Dhond, Poona Dist. Maharashtra.
Miss W. Sanford, Women’s Bible School, Khamgaon, Buldana Dist., Maharashtra.
†Rev. and Mrs. F. W. Schelander, Ramabai Mukti Mission, Kedgaon, Poona Dist., Maharashtra.
Mrs. Ruth Schlatter, P.O. Box 5, Akola, Maharashtra.
*Rev. and Mrs. A. B. Shaw, (on furlough).
Rev. and Mrs. L. F. Stengele, Longcroft Hostel, Kodaikanal, S. India.
Rev. and Mrs. G. F. Vandegrift, Men’s Bible School, Nargaon, Jalgaon District, Maharashtra.
*Those on furlough—These may be contacted through: The Christian and Missionary Alliance, 260 W. 44th St., New York 36, N. Y.
†Due for furlough in the Spring, 1965.