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THE GLOW OF THE VELD FIRES

By Fairy Steele Chism

And

Helen Irene Jester

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to Louise Robinson Chapman and Ora Lovelace West whose torches touched
off a line of vivid fires in benighted Africa.

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CONTENTS

Introduction

- 01 -- Powers Of Darkness
- 02 -- Hands That Minister
- 03 -- The Glow Of Answered Prayer
- 04 -- Simanga
- 05 -- Across The Border
- 06 -- From The Glow To The Throne
- 07 -- A Church Building Arises
- 08 -- From Church To Church
- 09 -- Two Chiefs -- Sipepa And Dlamini
- 10 -- The Fire Blazes Up
- 11 -- Kindling The Fire
- 12 -- Tomorrow

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INTRODUCTION

I am come to send fire on the earth (Luke 12:49).

Swaziland knows no twilight. When the sun tops the western hills, night slips quietly from his hiding place and with one quick fling from his fingers drapes the entire landscape with a shroud of blackness. And how depressingly black that blackness can be! But the darker the night the brighter the glow of the veld fires. Near and far, straight up the mountain side, or gracefully rounding a curve; now rushing pell-mell before a brisk breeze, now inching along at a snail's pace; always somewhere, somehow, those fascinating beams of light are ever on the move, breaking the spell of the night. Sometimes when high upon a mountain whose dimmest outlines have been swallowed up in inky blackness, the veld fire takes on the appearance of a halo hovering between earth and heaven. The glows may vary in color, length, breadth, or intensity; but there is not one that does not hold a fascination that is uniquely its own. It is not only light in the midst of darkness; it bespeaks hope where all around is hopelessness, life where death has abounded.

These fires have been kindled by the shepherds. The veld grass becomes old, dry, brittle, non-appetizing and non-nourishing to the herds and flocks. It is not only useless itself but it prevents tender, new life-giving shoots from springing from the soil. If the cattle and sheep are to flourish, that old stubble must go. So the shepherd sets aflame one of those ugly dried-up tufts and, grasping firmly a fagot of long, dry grass, dips it into the flame, then walks along in a straight line periodically touching his torch to the ground. From each place there arises first a spiral of smoke, then a leaping flame. These quickly spread out their arms and join hands to form one long, unbroken glowing line.

These scenes, so familiar in Swaziland, are symbolic of the lines of holy fire kindled by other "Shepherds of the Veld" that are shedding their glow amidst a darkness infinitely more intense than the blackest night and destroying the stubble of death-dealing superstition and sin. From the ashes there springs forth LIFE -- yea, life everlasting-life that is in Christ Jesus. May those glowing lines grow in width, length, and beauty until the Sun of Righteousness breaks through the eastern clouds in the dawn of Eternal Day.

Glow Of Veld Fire

Glow on, O line of vivid, living fire!
Lift high your gleaming torches o'er the veld.
O'er all the paths now steeped in darkness dire
Waft forth to men the hope so long withheld.

Oh, far too long they groped in blackest night,
Forgotten by the hordes more richly blest.

Vain efforts of their own can ne'er bring light;
Enfeebled as they are, they cry for rest.
Long, long ago, o'er other vale and hill,
Dispelling night, The Shepherd lit the flame

Forevermore to burn and glow until,
Illuminated, men revere His Name.
Roll on! Your glow shall end the night and strife!
Eternal light shall dawn! Eternal life!

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01 -- POWERS OF DARKNESS

A land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness (Job 10:22).

I will make darkness light before them (Isaiah 42:16).

Dark, dark Africa! Job could well have been describing Africa when he spoke these words, "A land of darkness, as darkness itself... where the light is as darkness." Twice Jesus, when speaking of the abode of Satan and his followers, described it as the place of outer darkness. It is this satanic darkness that engulfs heathen Africa.

Natural darkness is fearful. To be lost in the night is an unforgettable experience. On one occasion at Endingeni mission station I spent what seemed to be an unending interval of time trying to go from the dispensary building to the mission home, a distance of about two hundred yards. In the pitch blackness of the night all sense of direction was lost, and only as my hands touched some familiar object could I tell whether I was near or far from the path. Once it was the back door of the tabernacle; I must have turned a right angle shortly after leaving the dispensary. Getting my bearings, once again I groped my way along. Some time later my feet stumbled over something; I stooped down and my fingers traced the outlines of a pumpkin. I was in the field! After wandering, I knew not where nor how long, my outstretched hands felt a brick wall which proved to be the grinding shed -- nearer home but not yet there. It was with an indescribable sense of relief that I finally reached the door of the mission home. But that was natural darkness -- only a faint symbol of that other indefinable, fearful, impenetrable darkness that characterizes every land that is yet under the power of Satan and his emissaries.

The human agent responsible for the promulgation of this darkness is the witch doctor with his practice of black magic. The heathen are always in mortal fear of the powers of the witch doctor. A big chief, having occasion to spend the night on the mission station one night, smilingly greeted the missionaries the next morning with the words, "What a wonderful place this is! There is no fear here. I slept all night! At home I am always afraid and I cannot sleep." But sometimes that diabolic fear even sheds its shadow on the mission station. At one time around Endingeni there was one word on the lips of all people and it was spoken in whispered tones -- amajapane -- lurking murderers. Nobody traveled at night, and in the daytime those who

of necessity had to go any distance did so in groups of three or more and always over well-beaten paths. Men, accustomed to carrying one spear, walked nowhere without three or four. Word leaked out that the witch doctor wanted several people for his horrible concoctions. Bodies of four victims were found, none of them far from the mission station, minus those organs which the witch doctor had evidently specified.

The more potent medicines must have certain parts of a human body. The type shade of color, age, or sex of the body desired depend upon the use to be made of the medicine. For instance, to make corn grow in times of great drought, certain parts of a very black person either male or female are required. Some powers, so they say, give way only when a mixture containing ingredients from a white body or at least from a mulatto is used. Of course, such practices are carried out at the risk of having to suffer the extreme penalty imposed by the British law. And without doubt the knowledge of this prevents many such atrocities, but witchcraft even in its most atrocious forms cannot be eradicated except by the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It was reported at this time that, in addition to the various kinds of black bodies demanded, there was wanted "one who enters his house in an upright position" -- a European, of course. Stories of the four mysterious murders were told and retold. In fact, in the isolated sections out away from the mission station, they were the one and only topic of conversation. Fear and terror reigned everywhere. It is no exaggeration to say that the people were actually afraid to speak above a whisper. Such terror is wholly indescribable and is felt only in heathen lands. The very atmosphere seemed to be permeated, charged and recharged, with a most hellish darkness that bore in upon the people with a crushing, paralyzing, awful power. Everybody felt it. The missionaries, native Christians, and the schoolgirls gave themselves to prayer. But, oh, how hard it was to pray! The very heavens were brass. God seemed not to live. It was a desperate battle. For three weeks the powers of darkness seemed to dominate. But two incidents of those three weeks proved conclusively that the power of Satan was limited; that he could go so far and no farther; that, however greatly he desired to do so, he could not touch one of God's children.

One night I was left alone with the girls. During the evening, as the girls were bombarding heaven with their loud prayers, I was also praying alone in the little mud and wattle house which I called home. A peculiar feeling crept over me and I thought, "With these girls praying as they are, a person might easily enter this room and attempt violence without being heard. Suppose they were looking for that fifth person, the one who enters his house in erect position, tonight!" I arose from my place of prayer beside my bed and walked to the door to hook the screen. One should use precaution! To leave the door unlatched might be courting danger. As I was drawing the hook, I felt the presence of a person near. There were no visible nor audible signs of anyone; yet so sure was I that someone was near that I spoke, "Who is there?" There was no reply, and my question was repeated with emphasis.

Out from the honeysuckle vine that twined around and over the small verandah, about six feet from where I stood, there emerged a very black heathen man with two sharp spears which shone in the light of the lamp held in my hand. With the fear and terror reigning everywhere I

was not overjoyed to see this visitor. Once again I repeated the question, "Who are you?" He gave a name which I did not recognize. "And what do you want?" I asked.

"I was trying to find my way to Danda's kraal, but I see I am lost," came back the answer.

That remark confirmed the suspicions and fears which had already imbedded themselves in my mind, for I had been in Swaziland long enough to know that the abantu (native peoples) do not easily lose their way. They know all the streams, just where they can be crossed and where they cannot; they know all the trails, and when a trail ends their sense of direction keeps them going aright. Danda's kraal was only about a mile from the mission station. It could not be that this man was lost and unable to reach that well-known place. Very definitely the suggestion came to me, "You are God's only representative in this place. Don't let him see that you are afraid." So, bravely, I spoke, "Oh, that is easy. I can tell you how to reach Danda's kraal. You have almost reached your destination." I then proceeded to give him directions.

But he interrupted me by saying, "Never mind. The night is dark. I will stay here."

Now it was time to prove by actions that God's people are not afraid. "Yes, that will be all right. Just a minute, and I will get you a sleeping mat and a blanket."

I turned and went to get some of the girls who, still praying, could not have heard my call. A tug at their arms and a motion to the kitchen brought them out to hear about the nocturnal called. The lamp-lighted faces filled with horror and genuine alarm.

"But, Child of the King, that is the name of a man from the kraal suspected for the murder of those four people! Oh, no! He cannot sleep here! He means no good; he means harm."

I spoke words to assure them that they were the children of the living God, who had all power, and that they must not reveal fear to a mere man. A grass mat and warm blankets were procured and the lost (?) man with his two shining spears, a missionary with a lantern, and three Swazi girls with the bedding walked in single file down the path to the church. The mat was spread out and the blankets arranged before we, the hostesses, returned to our rooms.

At daybreak when the bell rang for morning prayers the man was seen arising. Whatever his plans had been, he had found that he was utterly unable to carry them out. At this place the Prince of Light had come to dwell, and His light stays the hand of darkness!

The second incident happened some distance away from the station. I, as one of the Endingeni missionaries, had been called to attend a special committee meeting to be held on another mission station sixty-five miles away. It was necessary to go by horseback thirteen miles to avail myself of a proffered place in a white man's car. A large group of schoolgirls, self-appointed bodyguards, accompanied me over that part of the journey and the trip to the committee was uneventful. On the return journey, however, since no one knew when I would be returning, I arrived at the crossroads thirteen miles away with no one to meet me. I knew it would be dangerous to proceed alone, and to do so would be presumptuous if there were human means of protection available. There being none, I felt I should go ahead and trust God to care

for me. I was climbing the first big mountain not more than a half mile from where I mounted the horse when I became extremely conscious of God's presence. He came as a Protector and Guide with His presence as real as that of a visible person at my side. I pulled the reins and slackened my hurrying gait. Possibly danger lurked ahead, but with Him so really near there was no cause for alarm. Rather, there was sense of fellowship that was precious beyond compare.

When about halfway home the horse started down a very steep mountain. A river ran along the foot of this, across which there arose another very high mountain. It was a most secluded spot, an ideal place for mischief. Down, down I went with the horse stepping carefully to make sure of his footing. While I was yet some distance from the river, a shrill whistle coming from the opposite mountainside pierced the air. Shortly another, as if in answer to the first, was heard. The sounds indicated that there was quite a distance between the places from which they came. Before long two black heathen men were seen approaching each other. It looked ominous, and under ordinary circumstances fear would have been natural and inevitable. But as sure as was Livingstone when he said his life was charmed until he had finished the work God had for him to do, so surely did I know that my life was charmed that day. Whether they intended evil I knew not, but of one thing I had no doubt -- they could never touch me until they had first disposed of my unseen Escort. I never felt safer. In fact, I almost wished they would try to molest me, just to see how God would protect His child. They met some distance ahead and approached me as I crossed the river and started on the upward climb. As I drew near, they separated and stood one on either side of the trail, necessitating my passing between them. Each man carried three spears; but that in itself did not indicate anything, as most men carried as many these days. I looked from one to the other and spoke the usual courteous greeting, "I greet you, men." They replied, "Yes, Daughter of the King, we greet you." I then passed between them and proceeded up the mountain trail. Later I looked back, and there they still stood in the same spot, looking after the horse and rider. Whether they saw the form of the Second One I never knew. But it is altogether possible that their eyes beheld the One over whom their spears could have no power.

The presence of that One remained with me until I reached the mission gate. The girls came running to meet me. "Nkosazana, you didn't come home alone!" "No, I didn't come alone today."

Wonderingly they looked around and asked, "But who came with you?"

"Oh, I had a wonderful Companion. The Lord Jesus brought me home this time."

Satisfied, they replied, "Ku lungile (that is all right)."

After about three weeks of that reign of terror, one Saturday night the King of Kings suddenly and gloriously broke the power of darkness. The band of Christians seemed to be transplanted from the depths of hellish blackness to the heights of the marvelous light of the Son of God. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath [had] shined in our [their] hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" (II Cor. 4:6).

Sometimes the darkness of heathenism takes the form of demon possession. The following is a translation of a report sent in by the pastor of one of the outstation churches.

Last week we had a revival here in our church. It happened that at noon one day a woman came to me and said that her girl and boy were dying of evil spirits and asked me to pray for them. They were once Christians in our church and left God; then these demons came to live in them. I was afraid, very much so. I never did see a person like that brought to be prayed for. I had only read of such things. Yet I told her to bring them here.

They were brought on stretchers and truly they were dead [meaning they were very, very ill]. They were thin and could not possibly stand up. The girl had not eaten nor slept for months [another native exaggeration, saying she had eaten and slept very little], and sometimes she had talked or cried all day and all night. The boy behaved differently. It was a very strange thing. It sometimes made him to be mad and sometimes he bit people. Sometimes he roared just like a lion. At other times he was dead [unconscious] for a week and then he came back to life. But he said that he now wanted to repent and come back to God. Oh, oh! It made my whole body tremble to see such a sight. I was afraid and I said to myself, "From where can power come, power enough to get hold of God for such people until the demons leave?" Then it just seemed that Jesus came and helped me to trust Him. He made me to feel that if they really want Him, according to His Word and His love, He will save and deliver them. But I trusted also that another one of the outstation preachers would arrive that day to help us.

All the church people trembled with fear and said, "We have no power to get hold of God for such people." But I replied, "We must go into the church and after service we will pray, and GOD CAN touch such people." But, my, oh, my! we just got into the church and started to sing when the evil spirits awoke in them. Such noise! The demons made so much noise that I could not preach. I said, "Let us pray." I tell you we nearly died. We prayed and prayed. We fought and fought. About eight o'clock that night [five hours later] two preachers came. We prayed on until after twelve o'clock and JESUS WON! Those two people were touched by God. They began to confess their sins, awful sins, in a way that is seldom seen. Jesus forgave them all, and the evil spirits came out. Oh! It truly was a very, very, very wonderful thing! They were "clothed and in their right minds." And it has taught us a great thing about leaving the Lord. And I, myself, have asked the Lord Jesus to help me to never break one of His laws and to keep me strong for Him.

It is I, Sheba.

Such as these are the "treasures of darkness," as spoken of in the forty-fifth chapter of Isaiah. And every missionary is a torch bearer before whom the darkness must flee, for he goes out with the promise from God, "I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places... that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light" (Isaiah 45:2-7).

* * * * *

02 -- HANDS THAT MINISTER

And Jesus went about... healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease (Matt. 4:23).

The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister (Matt. 20:28).

"The big box is full of empty bottles, all packed and ready to be consigned to the Drug Company. Two more boxes are filled with medicine for the bushveld clinic tomorrow. What time shall we leave here?" Thus queried Estella MacDonald, the nurse in charge of the Endingeni dispensary.

With an arm upraised to about a thirty degree angle, I replied, "The pastor of the church there says the people will have gathered together when the sun reaches this high in the heavens. That will be about ten o'clock. We should leave here not later than eight, for even Simanga (the car) must go at the pace of an ox over some sections of the road that have been made nearly impassable by the recent rains."

"Very well. I will have a lunch packed and be ready before eight. Good night."

But it wasn't to be "Good night," for about an hour later two little boys appeared from the Pigg's Peak station. The native nurse had been left to carry on alone for a few days in the Peak Dispensary. Genuinely alarmed at the serious condition of three little children who had been brought in and not feeling adequate to cope with the responsibility involved, she was calling for help. Would the missionary please come over?

Not "to go or not to go" but "when to go" was the burning question. Darkness had long since fallen, and already the morrow was very heavily scheduled. If we should leave at the time when, according to the abantu, all people are beautiful that is, just at the peep of dawn -- perhaps we could go to answer the call and still reach the clinic on time. So it was settled. Good nights were again in order. The remaining hours of the night sped with wings, but the stars had not yet ceased their struggle to twinkle their way through the mountain mists when the bustle of another busy day was in evidence.

Too early for food, but a cup of coffee would be refreshing; so off to the kitchen to light the primus. Dear old primus! What person in the remote corners of the earth has not called you "blessed"? A little kerosene, a little warming up, a few strokes of air, and you make one forget that he lives where gas ranges and electric stoves are unheard of. In no time the delicious fragrance of fresh boiling coffee filled the house, and the taste was even better than the smell. But there could be no loitering over coffee cups this morning. Before the abantu were out to demonstrate the fact that they were all beautiful, Simanga nosed her way out the gate and turned left toward the Peak.

It was glorious to ride along and watch the slender fingers of light slowly emerge from the east and gently roll up the curtains of night, revealing the majestic mountains draped in their regal robes of purple haze. Mountain mists were everywhere; sometimes embracing the car, sometimes sailing along just above it like the wings of protecting angels, or again imitating

dashing whitecaps of the sea, running down through the valleys, having their final frolic before being called back sunward.

But what was that ahead? The dim outlines of a car standing beside the road! Perhaps the cattle inspector's car but no, he never leaves it so near the Peak as this. Do you suppose? But by this time suppositions were no longer necessary. Simanga, too, was forced to come to an abrupt stop, for not ten yards ahead there loomed an immense chasm. And lo, the road was not! This was at the place where the little brook known as the Mhlambongweni had trickled its way across the road, lapping peacefully at the huge boulders that formed a fording place for traffic, rippling along its meandering path down through the valley. Innocent little stream! But stormy days had come and with them other waters whose evil whisperings had roused our little stream to a raging torrent, tearing itself along its former course, picking up the once caressed boulders and hurling them singly or in heaps to one side, and laying flat the tall reeds that had been wont to nod a friendly greeting, covering them over with silt and debris. Its anger had somewhat subsided now, but that could not right the wrong done. At an incredible distance across the turbid waters the little road picked its way out of the havoc wrought and continued its climbing, winding journey toward the Peak. But this Simanga could not do.

There was only one thing that could be done -- find a place where the children could be safely crossed and send them on with instructions to the nurse, then turn back from the fruitless journey toward home and the down-country clinic. Fruitless? Not altogether so; for one cannot be long in Africa without learning the necessity of conserving all things, including time, space, and petrol (gasoline). Simanga must never return to the station empty. Somewhere along any journey stone or sand is procurable, two building commodities in constant demand on any mission station. This time it was stones. So we two "Maids of the Mountains," the name by which the Endingeni missionaries are known, rolled huge foundation stones down the mountainside and hoisted them into the Dodge. This splendid muscle-stretching exercise did not take "too long"; the rest of the trip was made with as much speed as Swazi roads permitted.

After a hasty breakfast and loading of the car with medical supplies, Simanga took the road again according to plan. Near the Komazi River we saw something which arrested our attention and aroused within us a sense of indignation. Two men were riding a small donkey. They should be taught how to treat animals! As we drew nearer, however, our indignation melted away and a great wave of sympathy took its place. One of the men was evidently very, very ill and was being held in place with great difficulty. The car was stopped and assistance was offered. The ill man, quite young, had been for three weeks in the throes of a very severe attack of cerebral malaria without care of medicine. He was still irrational and had partial paralysis. Over seventeen long, weary miles they had thus traveled the day before.

How it could be even imagined that they could reach Bremersdorp Hospital, forty-seven miles farther, was beyond understanding; yet that was their intention. The sun was then beating down in all his fury. Of course proffered help was accepted with profoundest appreciation. The man was carefully laid in the truck, taken to the clinic, given an intravenous injection of quinine, and left in the shade of a tree until the car returned to the Endingeni Dispensary.

By "native express" the word had gone far and near that the nurse would be at Ealagane on this day. Thus a good attendance was assured. The crowd is usually made up of three classes -- first, those who are very ill. Nothing is more pathetic than the sick African. -- generally he is so far removed from medical assistance and so destitute of care and attention! The second class consists of those who are not desperately ill but who are seldom really well, most of the time suffering from chronic malarial condition. One is always glad when these can get a little medicine to give them a respite from the listless life to which they are often confined. The third class find sickness a convenience of clinic day. In the narrow confines of African routine, life can become boring; a clinic is a welcome diversion. So, to have a headache, to be killed by the stomach, to have pain in the bones, or to have bad blood is something that can be conjured from somewhere for the day. For all classes the powers of and fascination for the stethoscope are unbounded. Legion are the testimonials of its curative powers!

All classes were there that day. The service, which is always first, was conducted under a big tree. Then, one by one, each enjoyed the luxury of entering the little mud hut, of being examined, of being prescribed for and, last but not least, of having his name written down.

At the close of the day, when the last one had received just attention and preparations were being made for the homeward journey, a heathen mother slipped up to me and whispered that she wanted her baby dedicated to the Lord. She said, "Look at your big boys! You remember you dedicated them to God yonder in the church when they were babies like this one. They are little Christians. But you did not give them a name. Please give each one a name today and, oh, kind Missionary, note that their clothes are old and worn. Christians should dress, and I have done my best to keep them with something on. Can't you help them, my Missionary friend? Here, Daughter of the King, is my baby girl. Give her to God and give her a name."

I confess that I had quite forgotten the little fellows, now about six and nine years of age, but was glad to call one David and the other Peter. Those who remained sang a song and Baby Esther was dedicated to Him who said, "Let the little children come unto Me, and forbid them not."

That was remembered a few months later when the mother of David, Peter, and Esther gave herself to the Lord Jesus and requested prayer that the children's father also give himself to God. "And a little child shall lead them."

Clinics are conducted once or twice a month. The remainder of the nurse's time is spent in ministering to those at the dispensary or to those who, through the very serious nature of their sickness, must be treated at their kraals.

Considering that all cooking and heating is done with an open fire in the center of the hut or outside, it is not to be wondered at that a great number of treatments must be given for burns of various degrees. A baby falls into the fire, clothing of adults ignites easily, or sparks flying upward to a low thatched roof find it easy to kindle a devastating conflagration.

A very pitiful burn case was that of a young woman who lived in the bushveld area about twelve miles from the station. I was with a group of boys in that area, making cement blocks for

a worker's home. A brother of the young woman came to report the calamity. The day before, all members of the kraal had gone to work in the gardens, leaving alone this one, who was subject to epileptic attacks. They did not know how soon after they had left that the accident occurred; but when they returned in the afternoon they found that their sister, in one of the seizures, had fallen across the fireplace and, of course, was indescribably burned. I informed the messenger that it would be impossible to treat a case like that in the kraal -- the girl must be taken to the dispensary. Fortunately, Simanga would be coming along on its way home from down country at noon. He must return to his home, about three miles across country, and manage somehow to bring his sister to the road. He left, greatly pleased that he could get help so quickly.

The morning hours sped away. Noon came and Simanga, but still the patient failed to appear. We workers and those who arrived with Simanga ate a picnic lunch which had been spread out on the sand under a tree. We rested and waited. Finally, when we were just about to despair, two oxen appeared drawing a V-shaped sledge with upright, roughly hewn poles stuck in holes on either side of the "V." Within the enclosure of these poles was what appeared to be a huge bird's nest made of grass. What a queer sight it made! This nest, lined with a dirty blanket, was the patient's bed, the softest that could be made with materials growing around the little native kraal. We could only grimace when we thought of that rough, up-and-down, three-mile journey across the pathless veld. Fortunately the girl was only semi-conscious. She was so badly burned from her waist down that it was necessary to leave her in the unhygienic bed until she reached the dispensary. As carefully as possible the nest was lifted from the sledge to the van. Then slowly Simanga climbed the hills to the station where for weeks, yea, months, this another daughter of Africa was to receive constant skilled medical care and, eventually, healing for her pain-wracked body.

Not always is the nurse able to perform this miracle of healing. Far too often she has to utter these saddest of words, "Too late." More generations must pass before the African learns that immediate action often spells the difference between life and death. Centuries of suffering have created within him such a stoical attitude toward pain that he is generally at the very jaws of death before it is fully realized that he needs attention.

One day a call came from an outstation. A heathen woman had been extremely ill for four days and could not be moved. Would the nurse please come? Hastily packing her medical kit, calling a woman to accompany her, and taking the lunch that had been packed for her, Miss MacDonald was soon off on the back of faithful old France, the big white horse, towards a place eight miles down the mountains. One stretch of the journey was over a very precipitous bush-and-thorn-lined trail, necessitating a slow descent by foot. This delayed them somewhat, and three hours had passed ere they reached the neat little rustic home of the pastor of the church. The travelers having been assured that the kraal of the sick one was only a short distance away, coats and lunch were left behind. How vastly do the calculations of distance by Africans and Europeans differ! And how often are missionaries made to suffer because of failing to remember this fact! For another hour they traveled as fast as they could. Finally the kraal was reached and, without undue ceremony, the nurse was ushered into a tiny hut where lay a very, very sick woman. She had given birth to a stillborn child several days before, and now it was apparent to them that there was a twin. For several hours the white-clad missionary worked desperately hard to bring relief, but to no avail. The only hope of saving the life of the mother

was to get her to the Bremersdorp Hospital without delay. At seven o'clock in the evening a message was sent by a runner back to the mission station, requesting that the car be brought at once to the nearest point in the road.

The men made a stretcher with a cow hide and two poles. Allowing plenty of time for Simanga to make the long, roundabout journey, at midnight Miss MacDonald, her assistant, and ten people to act as stretcher-bearers, left with the patient. It was a dismal night -- one of Africa's darkest -- and a cold, drizzling rain was falling. At one-thirty they laid their burden down beside the road, and the nurse tried to make her as comfortable as possible until the car should arrive. But the lights of the Dodge did not break through the darkness that night. Hour after hour slowly dragged by. Each African wrapped himself in the blanket he generally carried with him, and lay down in the wet grass. The nurse tried to use the saddle for a pillow and the saddle blanket for a cover, but without much success. She shook with the cold. With longing she thought of the coat and lunch that had been left behind. Finally at four-thirty, by the light of a tiny lantern, she gathered enough dry sticks to build a fire beside the patient. At five o'clock a man living near by sent them a pot of water, a cup of milk, and three raw eggs. Fortunately, some tea was salvaged from the saddlebags. Soon patient and nurse had a cup of steaming tea; the others disdained the tea because there was no sugar. The remaining tea was used to boil the eggs. The nurse shared them with the woman who accompanied her and the pastor.

Still the hours dragged by. Growing weaker and weaker, the woman went deeper into the valley of death. At nine o'clock, while the group knelt in prayer around her, she crossed the border of worlds.

After consultation among themselves, the heathen decided to dig a grave right where they were and bury her beside the road. But superstition demanded that the child should be removed first. Native custom makes such a task the work of the woman's mother. She was dead. Who could, by binding native custom, be qualified to take her place? The missionary! Would she help them in this now? Reluctantly she promised to try.

While they were still digging the grave I, in the Dodge, drove into view. Why had we so long delayed our coming? We left the station immediately after the arrival of the note at seven in the morning. The messenger had slept most of the night before he had started on his errand.

There beside the grave, with a rusty jackknife, the post-mortem was performed by one missionary, the other looking on! Then I conducted a brief burial service, and the body was lowered into its last resting place -- into a Christless grave. But there in that lonely spot under spreading trees, a sister of the deceased and one of the other wives of her husband gave themselves to Jesus.

These ministering hands arrived too late to save the patient, but through their sacrificial service two more were successfully pointed unto Him who said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Many are the times when the Great Shepherd of the Veld, in thus giving rest and comfort in such a dark hour, lights a fire that flickers, flares up, and burns on in Africa's night.

* * * * *

03 -- THE GLOW OF ANSWERED PRAYER

Thou art the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people (Psalms 77:14).

Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer,
That calls us from a world of care,
And bids us at our Father's throne
Make all our wants and wishes known.

One service above all others at Endingeni that has caused the glow of God's love to shine with more vividness is the prayer and fasting service conducted each Wednesday evening during the dinner hour. Although attendance is not compulsory, there are always a great number there. It is essentially an hour of prayer. A little time may be devoted to the reading of the Word, to instruction, or to making requests known; but for the most part the time is spent before "the throne," making "wants and wishes known." Sometimes the requests are written on small pieces of paper and placed in a little cedar box. Then, when answers have been received, a service is set aside for thanksgiving and praise and the papers are burned as an incense which must be well pleasing to God, for He always blesses in a very special way those participating. Some of the answers are outstanding. Indeed, anyone around Endingeni would be quick to witness to the fact that the day of miracles is not past.

It was a glorious day when God answered the request for a new mill. The old outfit had given faithful service for years but old age began to take its toll. Try as it would it could no longer muster enough strength to provide enough meal for that ever-growing family of boys and girls. Finally, in spite of much coaxing, doctoring, and replacing of worn parts, the day arrived when it turned over for the last time, gave a weak cough, and died.

Oh, those never-to-be-forgotten days that followed! If bread is the staff of life to Europeans, corn meal is the two legs of life to the abantu. Every meal consists of corn meal cooked into thin porridge, hard porridge, or sour porridge. Sometimes the meal may be augmented by amasi (sour milk), greens, pumpkin, or sweet potatoes. But a meal without porridge! Unthinkable! In those days the "unthinkable" was enacted with ever increasing frequency. Some meal was purchased, some corn ground at another mission station several miles away, and some was ground by hand. But since generally from fourteen to eighteen hundred pounds of meal was consumed in one week's time, these means of supplying the demand were totally inadequate. Often the whole grains of corn were boiled and then pounded to make a sort of hominy, but it took too long to prepare this for so many children. Too, they ate the roasted whole grains of corn; but it is not easily digested, and stomach complaints arose. There was no doubt about the need for a mill. The request went "before the Throne." God's Word says, "Before ye call, I will answer." This promise was verified. He laid the needs of His Swazi children upon the hearts of people in Michigan and Idaho, and let the word filter back that the need was being

met. In this instance we did something contrary to ordinary practice -- we borrowed the money in lieu of that which we knew was coming.

However, no mills nor engines could be purchased anywhere. Some were expected from America sometime; nobody knew just when. We felt definitely led to place an order for both mill and engine, and to pay the entire cash price in advance. How marvelously God times things! Had that order not been placed and the cash paid at that time, five years or more would have passed ere such machinery again could be secured. After an interval of time, those shiny red engines and hammer mills arrived in Johannesburg. By that time they were in great demand. The retailer could have received much more money for the outfit than had been paid, and it was with reluctance that he sent it on the last lap of its journey to Endingeni. Finally it arrived. Gala day! However, the real welcome awaited the time several days later when the concrete platform had set, the machines were bolted in place, the wheels began to turn, and the hammers to pound. I stood at the engine regulating the feed, my colaborer was at the mill pouring the first pan-full of corn into the hopper. In less time than it takes to tell it, the sound of the engine, acting as a great magnet, drew every person on the mission station to the grinding shed. The first ones to arrive had branches in their hands, shouting and presenting a wave offering to the Lord. The girls formed a long line four deep, marched all around the shed again and again, singing:

Let us praise Him! Let us praise Him!
His grace is matchless!

The boys and teachers thronged around the mill and engine, enthralled with the speed of the pulleys and at the sight of the fine meal that poured into the sack-two hundred pounds in thirty minutes! What rejoicing! The one word on all lips was, "God answers prayer." He who notes the falling sparrow is ever mindful of the needs of His children.

Another definite answer to prayer pertained to the lighting plant. Several years before, thanks to God and to his faithful servants in America, a "Westinghouse plant had been installed; "light like the sun" illuminated the buildings at Endingeni. The terrible eye strain of kerosene lamp days was no more; evening study hours lost their terrors. What a blessing! One day with emphasis the truth of the statement, "When light is turned to darkness, how great is that darkness!" was learned. A broken piston ring! An order for a new one was sent by telegram to Johannesburg. The answer came back, "None in stock." War was raging and available shipping space was reserved for more essential commodities. The same answer came from Durban, Capetown, and other Union cities. Could one be made? No; those qualified to make them were so far behind on their orders from big business concerns that they could not give a thought to the needs of a mission station. A number of airmen who had been befriended on the station during a forced landing promised to get a ring from their base, fly back, and drop it down. Nothing was heard from them again.

But there was One whose ears were attuned to the cry and who knew how to supply the need. What is shipping space or lack of it to Him! What business is greater than His! The broken ring was taken to the Pigg's Peak gold mine. Although the mission engine was like a baby compared to the huge engines used at the mine, and no spare parts for so small an engine could be expected to be obtained there, nevertheless, help was to be found. The owner of the mine,

always a friend of missionaries, said, "Just leave this with me. There is a man in Johannesburg who accepts all my orders. I will send it to him, and in a few days you will receive the new ring in the post." He is always as good as his word, and after a short time a small parcel came in the post, containing not just one ring but some spares as well! That night the lights shone with a brilliance that was doubly appreciated. Once again there was a triumphal march around the buildings and a hymn of praise to the Prince of Light.

On another occasion the lamps in the tabernacle refused to shine. With the exception of camp-meeting time, these lights are seldom used. Possibly they had been out of order for some time. New poles were erected and the line examined carefully. Apparently nothing was wrong, but switches were turned in vain. Not a glimmer was to be seen. Fuses were interchanged with those working perfectly in the houses at the top of the hill. Still no light. Just one day remained before the crowds would be coming from all the outstations to attend the great annual camp meeting. The tabernacle must have light. I, at Wit's-End-Corner, took the problem to the early morning prayer service conducted in the ill-fated building. These words were spoken to that great group of young people present: "I have done everything I know how to do. The line apparently is all right; the connections seem to be in order. But still there is no light. Please pray. God knows all about it. He knows we need light and He answers prayer." It was not a long petition that followed but it was a fervent one, presented by the student in charge of prayers that day and echoed by the two hundred others. Before the last student was out of the building, I walked the half length of the tabernacle to the switches and snapped them on. Every bulb glowed forth in radiance. To this day no one knows what had been wrong, but all know full well that God answered prayer.

Even the little children know how to pray the effectual, fervent prayer of faith that brings an answer. Two little boys eight and ten years of age were sent to the post office twelve miles away to get the weekly mail. Swazis learn while yet very young to travel long distances by foot; so it was not unusual for these to present themselves for this weekly trip to Pigg's Peak. The load they attempted to carry back to the mission station was unusually heavy that day. Unexpectedly some very heavy account books had arrived for audit as well as several rolls of the church periodicals for distribution to the churches in northern Swaziland. These, together with the usual amount of mail, made a load that three boys twice their size might have been able to carry with some ease. These two felt that, since they had volunteered, they must try to accomplish the task; so they shouldered the burdens and trudged slowly over the mountain trail. Time and again they were forced to stop and rest their weary arms. The minutes passed with a speed not at all commensurate with the progress made in the journey homeward. Their self-imposed task was too much for their abilities. However, they were well acquainted with One who was strong. Laying their burdens down again, they knelt in the path and asked the Lord to send a motor car along the road running not far from the trail and to put it into the heart of the driver to ask them to ride. That was not an easy thing to ask, for the road past Endingeni has very little traffic -- so little that the sound of a motor invariably brings one or more missionaries out to see who is coming or who is passing. Furthermore, Europeans do not usually invite little native boys to ride in their cars. But the boys were not looking at difficulties; they were looking to God. Before they had time to properly gather up their parcels they heard the sound of a motor. With as much speed as possible they left the trail and made their way to the road, reaching it just before the car came

around the mountain curve behind them. It slowed; then stopped. "Greetings, boys. It looks as if you have a load. Would you like to ride?" So spoke the white man, a stranger to that section of the country. These boys know the reality of the power of prayer.

The greatest joy possible is to have prayer answered for the salvation of a soul. Near Endingeni there was a "hard case," a woman who loved beer and snuff far too much even to entertain the thought of becoming a Christian. Two of her daughters had been beautifully converted and entered school. Later one of them became a worker. The mother was adamant to all their pleas to give herself to the Lord. One daughter sickened, and it was soon realized that her days on the earth were few. Her own Christian experience was glorious, but she longed to see her mother saved. She prayed and begged, but to no avail. That hardened mother bade good-bye to her daughter as she lay on her deathbed and later followed the body to the grave, apparently unmoved in her decision to continue to live a heathen. This stirred the Christians to the depths. They had prayed for her before; now they made her a continued subject of intercession.

Time rolled by. Camp meeting was drawing near. This year every effort was to be made to bring the heathen to God in the camp meeting. Every outstation church came with a number of heathen whom they hoped would find God during that week. What a picture of contrast they made! When one gives himself to Christ he dons simple, modest European attire. These nonChristians were decked for dress parade. The men all wore skins around the loins. Some had a square of bright-colored cloth over the skins, two adjoining corners knotted around the waist at the side, forming a slit skirt. The upper part of the body was bare except for perhaps a string of beads or light-colored tails. A few wore European shirts with the tails hanging down over their loin skins. Spears, shields, knobkerries, and mirrors were everywhere in evidence. The women were conspicuous, especially in their high headdress, their full pleated skin skirts, and brightly colored blankets or other Cloth that draped over one shoulder. All these were given a very special place in the center section of the huge but well-filled tabernacle. The sermons were all for them; the prayers were in their behalf. Many of the Endingeni Christians had concentrated their prayers for weeks beforehand on this old heathen mother. She very graciously accepted the invitation to the camp and was present from the first service. As she is unusually large for a Swazi, she could easily be seen by the workers up in front. Service after service passed without the least indication of any change of attitude on her part. Christian workers spoke to her time after time, only to be answered with an emphatic shake of the head.

God began to work in the hearts of others. One afternoon there was a real break in the service; God came in power. Twenty heathen stepped out in front and gave themselves to Christ. A number of women whose husbands refused to permit them to become Christians came to the front and held their babies high in presentation to God. They were not at liberty to give themselves; they could give their children. This meant that later these children would be brought to church, perhaps entered in school and given every opportunity to become Christians. What a service that was! No one present could ever forget it. But that object of so many prayers stood in her place apparently unmoved. A number of workers spoke to her; one of the evangelists pleaded for some time, but to no avail. They were made to understand that without any doubt her answer was "No."

The time of invitation drew to a close. Just before the service was dismissed and the Christians called to the front to pray with those at the altar, while an evangelist was making an announcement, there was a disturbance in the center section of the tabernacle. There came the big Swazi heathen woman toward the altar, as ostentatious in elbowing her way to the front as she had been in her refusal to come just a little while previously. All eyes of the workers were riveted on her as she came out into an open space, turned and faced that vast audience, raised her head high, and with a voice that echoed through the rafters cried, "I choose Christ." No thrill on earth can equal the one felt on such an occasion. She yielded herself fully to God. Beer and snuff lost their attractions, and today she still stands a monument to what God can do for a person who is willing to do His will.

Occasionally God helps His people to answer their own prayers in ways they had hitherto not thought possible. One time the native workers' fund was down to low ebb. Unless some relief came and came soon, some teachers or preachers would be forced to leave the work. No one was willing for that to happen. A day for prayer and fasting was to be observed in all the Swaziland churches.

At Endingeni Church the congregation was divided into several groups praying in the various homes of the Christians until one o'clock, after which they were to gather in the church. I, as missionary leader of one of the groups, was impressed by the Holy Spirit to give a certain offering. Furthermore He whispered, "I want my children at Endingeni to bring an offering, too." At this I began to remonstrate. "These people are so poor. They cannot bring an offering. Some of these poor widows will starve." The Lord assured me that it would be something new under the sun for a widow to starve by giving an offering to Him. With the words, "All those who were stirred in their hearts and those who were driven by their spirit brought the offering of Jehovah" [Zulu rendering of Exod. 35:21], ringing in my ears, I went to church.

After a brief preliminary service the leader said, "We are going to prayer again. If there is anyone who has anything on his heart, we pause to give him an opportunity to speak." One poor old widow woman whose food hut with most of her supply of food had recently burned to the ground arose and said that during the morning prayer God had told her to give a shilling (25c). Instantly another widow was on her feet, saying that God had put it upon her heart to pledge a shilling and that He would help her to find it. A third one spoke to the effect that she was to give \$1.25. (She works from sunup to sundown for 18c per day.) Others arose, sometimes three at a time, to speak. Without a lull every woman save one testified that God had asked a certain amount from her. Then the girls started. The first one, Alice the kitchen girl, said that in the morning she had been praying for the Lord to please tell the people in America about this urgent need when God plainly spoke to her, "But what are you going to do? This isn't to get the gospel to Americans but to your people." She said she tried to keep part of her month's salary (\$2.50) back, but He asked it all. With great joy she pledged her offering. She was followed by many girls, who told what God had put upon their hearts to give. The men and boys then spoke one after another until the great majority of those present had either given or pledged either money or something that was dear to their hearts. And no one had said one word about taking an offering. No one but God!

Samuel Dlamini, the district evangelist, who had been called away that day, said upon his return that he had thought to give 50c, but God said to him, "No, give your new trousers." He needed those trousers, but he did not find it hard to part with them. Rather he testified with a beaming face. "It is no struggle for me to give what God asks. He has answered so many of our prayers this year; He has saved so many heathen souls in answer to our cries; He has been so good to us that it is easy to give to Jesus." He had already sold the trousers on the way home and had the offering in hand.

What joy and blessing crowned the midweek prayer meeting the following Wednesday when all the pledges were brought in! The great heart of the Father above must have looked upon the sacrifice and devotion of His loving, obedient children with pride and joy that day. Two schoolgirls had given their Sunday dresses. Another person presented the last chicken she possessed. In fact every single offering presented represented real sacrifice. When the articles were sold and the cash counted the amount was found to be almost \$250 -- a most amazing amount for Swaziland.

And it can be added that no one starved or suffered want for having participated in that great love offering to God. Rather "the bread they had cast upon the water came back to them buttered." The stories they have to tell of the material blessings received from God in most unexpected and unusual ways are as amazing as the offering was.

Yes, the glow of the gospel of Christ gleams with greatest intensity and beauty through the medium of answered prayer.

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04 -- SIMANGA

This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes (Psalms 118:23).

Transport was always a problem at Endingeni. As the station grew the increasing demands for the necessities for sustaining life were commensurate with the growth. Between the station and "The Peak," where the post office and store are located, there lived one lone white family. It was a happy day when they purchased a lorry; for, although it was for their own private use, the friendly relations which existed between them and the missionaries constrained them to assist their neighbors. However, that good fortune lasted only three years. The owner of the truck, never well, one day died suddenly on the way to the hospital. His truck was sold. To make matters worse, about the same time East Coast fever broke out among the cattle in adjoining areas and all oxen were put under strict quarantine. A period of not months but years was to pass before the ox wagon could again make the trip to Balagane, the bus terminal. This was a tremendous blow to all of us missionaries who were responsible for a big station, its workers, and a school of over two hundred children, as well as the twenty outlying churches with their needs.

The Chevrolet sedan carried missionaries about, brought in the sick, and did excellent service as a busy missionary car, but its capacity was limited. When it came to heavy transport, it

was about like moving a sand pile with a teacup. A pickup, either a three-quarter or ton, was just the thing needed! The matter was often taken to God in prayer. We had been monthly laying a portion of our salary aside toward the purchase of a new car. A few birthday and Christmas gifts from personal friends swelled the car fund a bit. Then, just when the need was greatest, very unexpectedly by cable an amount arrived which, combined with the money on hand and the turn-in value of the old car, was sufficient for the purchase of a truck.

But the war was on and such things were very difficult to get. A permit would have to be secured. The trip to the magistrate's office would have dampened any spirits rooted in earthly hopes. He assured us there were no such cars to be purchased, that the rationing of petrol was going to get worse, and it could not be run even if it could be found, et cetera, et cetera. Anyway, he could not give a permit -- it must come from the capital of Swaziland. But none of these things mattered to the "Maids of the Mountains." We could go through Mbabane and get the permit on our way to Johannesburg to get the car. The Mbabane officials were as pessimistic as the district magistrate had been. Having arrived late in the afternoon, the request could not be cared for that day. A night in the hotel was a real lark to us who were so accustomed to spending our days on a mission station. The morning interview, however, was no more hopeful than the one of the day before. We left for Johannesburg without the permit.

The gray Chevrolet bid a last good-bye to the lovely mountain region of its Swaziland home and sped on its way until only eight hours of travel put the truck-hunters at the home of the district superintendent, just twenty miles from the metropolis of South Africa. The ever and always optimistic superintendent said, "Well, I don't want to discourage you, but I am afraid that you will not be able to get a truck. Only last week the Swaziland government tried in vain to get the very thing you have come for. They were told that every Chevrolet and Ford lorry had been sent up to the war area. However, I will go down with you tomorrow and we'll see what we can do -- it will do no harm to try. Miracles do happen." Faith sang a song of hope not daunted by cold facts -- it inwardly declared that a miracle would happen.

Into the office of the Rillstone Motors our party went. Yes, they had one light lorry -- a three-quarter ton Dodge; it could be purchased if a permit to buy could be produced. A trip to the show room revealed a very dark blue, shiny-bodied "Dodge Express" which God had kept for His work. But the permit! The money was in hand; the car stood before our grateful eyes. Wires to Swaziland brought no response. The salesman suggested that an application be made direct to the controllers at Pretoria. The formal application blank was obtainable at the office. At his suggestion an accompanying letter was sent, giving every reason why a truck was needed. The salesman was making a trip to Pretoria and would personally present the petition. While he was speeding along the beautiful highway that leads to the legislative capital of the Union of South Africa, another petition was taken on the wings of prayer to a much higher Authority.

There followed days of waiting. Every day the telephone call out of Eloff Extension brought the same response, "Sorry, nothing has come through. Call tomorrow." One morning, however, I had no sooner given my name than the wires tingled with a "Yippie! It's here! Come and drive your truck away!" And that is exactly what we did. Who said the days of miracles are past! "My God shall supply all your need" means just what it says any time, anywhere, and under any circumstances.

The family of Swazi girls and boys at home were praying. Before they had expected us back, there was a strangely new-sounding horn honking at the gate. A few of the bolder ones went out to inform the white people that all the missionaries were away, when they recognized us, their own missionaries. They shouted to the girls inside, who came pouring out, all but falling over one another. This new car! Yes, a Truck!! They simultaneously began shouting, jumping up and down, clapping their hands, running all around the car with eyes poking out of their heads. Some drew near and with loving and wondering hands slightly touched it. What could it be but an "Isimanga" -- a miracle or a wonderful thing! We briefly told them how it had become ours. Awed and grateful, they that day gave the Dodge Express its name, a name not hard to find -- Simanga (Wonderful Thing). We looked at them and it, thinking of the words of the Psalmist, "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes."

The fame of the car sped far and wide and, among heathen as well as Christians, the name Simanga became familiar everywhere. The marvelous fact of its presence in northern Swaziland was not alone responsible for this widespread fame; its work, ever wonderful to all people, added greatly to its popularity. Ever and always it stood at the beck and call of those in distress or need. By it, food was carried for the hungry; by it, building materials were transported, thus making possible the erection of churches and schools; by it, the sick were taken to the dispensary or hospital, where health and happiness might be restored; by it, the footsore traveler on a long road found a "lift." By it, the heralds of the gospel speeded over the country, proclaiming to those bound in darkness the message of salvation, light, and peace.

Beneath the burning sun or under the cool night's star-studded canopy; in the mountain regions or along the low veld roads; anywhere, any time the dark blue Dodge might be seen hurrying along on some errand of helpfulness or mercy, and everywhere might be heard from old and young alike the word given in warm, friendly greeting, "SIMANGA."

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05 -- ACROSS THE BORDER

They... passed through the gate... and their king shall pass before them (Micah 2:13).

The fire of evangelism that had so greatly influenced northern Swaziland, making possible a number of churches and schools, burned its way into the hearts of some of the people across the border in Eastern Transvaal. For a long while these people attended a church some few miles from the boundary line; but as their numbers grew they clamored for a church of their own. One happy day their request was granted; a site was chosen, upon which the congregation erected a mud and wattle church building. A young couple, both Bible School graduates, were placed there. To reach this place we missionaries were wont to drive to an outstation, leave the car there, walk twelve miles to Nhlangezana, then on eight miles to Nhlanguyavuka, and then hit the trail to Mgobodi seven miles farther across the border, thus contacting four churches in one journey. These paths led uphill and downhill, through marshes and across rivers; yet one taking the journey always felt compensated for doing so when he witnessed the abounding joy of the bands of Christians as they greeted their missionary in these isolated parts so far from the

traveled road. Nevertheless, it was a long, tiresome, and often very hot hike. And, too, sometimes we desired to go to the farthest outstation without necessarily having to visit the first three. In terms of miles this way was closer, but there was another way to reach Mgobodi.

Simanga could take the road that leads through the Peak out toward Hectorspruit. Beyond the Transvaal border this road is joined by another lane-like road which runs eastward through flat country that is thickly covered with low, wide-spreading trees. This section, noted for its wild game, has a restful beauty that is captivating. Over that lane one could reach within two miles of Mgobodi church, and even those two miles could be covered by car. Of course, this route was much longer; but it could be traversed in half a day. Also, at least five churches on the Peak District were either on, or within three or four miles of, this road. Therefore, in due time Simanga more and more frequently took the trail that led across the border.

After a night's rest at Mgobodi on one of these trips, two preachers, a Swazi woman, and I walked over to Nhlangezana church to conduct an annual church business meeting. A letter notifying the church of the coming of the missionary and district evangelist had been sent three weeks earlier by a responsible person living in that area, who happened to be passing Endingeni. All members were requested to be at the church by nine-thirty in the morning. Annual reports of the officers were to be made and new officers were to be elected; and, of course, James, the native district leader and I, as missionary, must have messages for the people. The day would be a full one, yet we must walk back to the car that evening. With all these things in mind our little party hastened its pace.

Somewhere along the path the beating of native drums was heard. That meant that the people of that kraal were trying to arouse the spirits of their ancestors. Some danger had evidently threatened, indicating a laxity in the protecting care of these spirits. They probably had been beating the drums all night, for now there was the sound signifying that the spirits had awakened and were dancing. In each kraal there is one who is supposed to understand the language of the spirits. He acts as interpreter, informing the people as to the reasons why their ancestral spirits are angry with them and what they must do to regain their favor. While there is beating of drums, sorrow and fear grip the hearts of the people. This kraal, situated between two churches of the living God, would wait how long before the mighty influence of the power of the gospel of Christ would break the shackles and set it free from superstition and fear? With a prayer in our hearts that it might be soon, we hurried on.

We arrived in ample time but, to our utter dismay, there was no congregation awaiting us -- the letter had never been delivered! What a keen disappointment! Never can one be sure of the reliability of the native-runner postal system. The pastor and his wife were most decidedly regretful over the situation. It was impossible to call the people, for they were too widely scattered; nor could the party soon repeat this long journey. Furthermore, they felt utterly chagrined to have these district leaders arrive at their kraal and find no food prepared. They quickly roasted some peanuts for me, and with profuse apologies they presented me with a nice, fat cackling hen, saying, "Daughter of the King, this is your food." The others were served the hard corn meal porridge which had been cooked for the family.

Since there could be no meeting that day, after we had knelt in prayer we four soon started back. As we approached one kraal on our way homeward, we were greeted by a number of heathen women who had heard of the passing of a white person that morning and had congregated, hoping to see her as she returned. What a hubbub! Everyone talked at once.

"White person, why are you out here where only black people travel? Why did you leave your home over the sea? Did no young man ever make love to you?" So the questions rang. One young woman lifted her little child up, saying to her, "Look, my child! Today you are seeing a wonderful thing -- a white person! You have never seen a white person before!" I greeted them with a few words and asked the district evangelist to pray. All present reverently bowed their heads during the prayer and at the close expressed their thanks for being remembered. They were urged to attend services at one of the two churches, which they promised to do. Then our party set off again, arriving at Mgobodi a little after midday.

Since plans for the day had been spoiled, I saw an opportunity to run down to Hectorspruit, fifty miles away, to get some roofing tiles (corrugated asbestos sheets), which had come by train from Johannesburg for one of our churches. My Endingeni missionary colaborer was at this place supervising the erection of the new building, and they needed the roofing material badly. The district evangelist was going on to another church in the opposite direction; but I was not to be alone, for the preacher's wife was sick and asked to go along as far as the Swedish Mission, where she could receive treatment at the dispensary. Before we left, I again received many apologies at finding no food; for since I had not been expected back before evening, now nothing more nourishing than a cup of tea could be produced. We two sped along until we struck a stretch of road that was all sand. Simanga made a brave effort to plow through, but her wheels sank deeper and deeper until it was impossible for them to move forward. Lois, the preacher's wife, lamented our plight by saying, "Child of the King, this is a bad place in which to stick because it is the territory of the lions. There is not a kraal within many miles, and the few people who travel this road use it only in the middle of the day. Everyone fears the lions."

Pressed into service by her desire to be away, the sick woman bent every effort to help me to extricate the car. With hands and with sticks we dug out piles of sand from around the wheels. I jacked up the car and placed branches under the wheels, but all to no avail. The car seemed rooted to the spot. Effort after effort was crowned only with failure. In the warm sand we knelt and prayed. Perfect assurance filled my heart that God heard and had things in hand. The afternoon wore away -- instead of getting the tiles, we merely sat. The faith of the native woman decreased and then disappeared. She spoke emphatically, declaring that now all hope could be abandoned. Even the people who might use this road would not pass now -- it was too late. I endeavored to calm her fears by assuring her that no harm could befall us even if we did have to remain there for the night; in the morning help would come. I insisted, however, that I believed even yet God would put us on our way.

Just after the sun had bid us "Good night" I again got out of the cab to have another look at the sand-bound wheels before darkness enveloped us. I looked up the long stretch of road ahead of and behind us. What was that away back yonder? It was a moving object. A person? Happily I called out, "Here comes someone!!!"

"Oh, Daughter of the King, not really!" came the reply from Lois, who was also scrambling out to have a look. The keen eyes of the Swazi saw and she joyously exclaimed, "Yes, it is a man coming in this direction."

Finally there approached a heathen man, who politely greeted us and commented, "Stuck." Strangely enough, he carried with him something similar to a shovel, and without even a request having been expressed, he set to digging. By the last flickering light of the dying day, I again jacked up the car wheels. Remembering all that Lois had said, and feeling that God had definitely sent this man, I wished to know the human reasons for his appearance at that time of day. As he worked I inquired as to why he should be traveling this evening. Still shoveling sand, he replied, "I don't know why I came this way. I had no intention whatever of taking this road. There is another road which leads to my destination. I have friends on the other road where I spend the night if darkness overtakes me. But today I looked up and saw that the sun was still high in the heavens and I just took this way with no real reason. Now it has landed me here where there are no kraals within many miles and it is dark." When asked his destination, lo, it was miles ahead, just off the very road that Simanga must take out.

He was told why he had taken this path and was assured that he would arrive there before long. The path for the car wheels having been carefully prepared, he seemed to have the strength of three men as he pushed from behind. Simanga pulled her best. There was a slight quiver -- the wheels began to take hold -- they gripped -- out the car pulled. Beyond the stretch of sand Simanga and I waited for the other two passengers. Then, speeding along, we soon arrived at Shongroe mission station, where Lois was to visit the dispensary, and I was to find a place of refuge for the night.

The missionaries at this Swedish Mission were just ready to be seated at the supper table. Quickly arranging a place for me, they welcomed me into their midst and to a delicious meal. Fellowship between our two holiness missions had always been blessed but everybody is so busy carrying on his own work that never had we exchanged services. That night Rev. Runholtz, the missionary in charge, declared that the Endingeni missionary should bring the message at their evening meeting. How sweetly God blessed our hearts together, for, "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love." After a good night on a comfortable bed, a five-thirty breakfast, and thanks and farewells spoken, I headed Simanga for Hectorspruit, where I was again to witness the hand of God working.

The tiles were there but, through an error, there was a bill of three pounds (\$15.00) to pay before they could be released. Besides money for petrol (gasoline) I had only four shillings (\$1.00) in my purse. What was I to do? In a strange place where no one knew me and I knew no one! Knowing that the gold miner back in Swaziland, who was a fast friend of the "Maids of the Mountain," would not mind having the amount put on his account there until things could be settled, I asked that favor. But, since I had no order from him in writing and since he had no telephone, the official adhered strictly to business and refused. Those tiles were needed now; a trip after money would entail time and extra expense to say nothing of the petrol quota for the month, which would not permit another trip down. I breathed a prayer for guidance. Suddenly the thought occurred, "Go to the storekeeper and ask for a loan."

Walking into the shop, I smiled and said, "You don't know me and I don't know you. But I'm in trouble. An order of tiles has come here for us and, through a mistake, it has come "Charges Forward."

"Oh, do you want some money?" he interrupted.

I laughed and replied, "You have guessed exactly right! I need three pounds."

He called back to the bookkeeper, "Give this lady three pounds!"

I gave my name, promised to send the money immediately upon my return home, heartily thanked the man, and was off to get the wares.

As I recrossed the border into Swaziland that day with a load of roofing tiles, my heart was full of praise. The King had passed before me and all was well.

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06 -- FROM THE GLOW TO THE THRONE

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne (Rev. 3:21).

Despairing, horrible, hopeless blackness of heathenism! Glorious, triumphant gospel of Jesus Christ! Nowhere is this vast, unspeakable contrast more greatly realized than when last farewells are being spoken and souls pass through the veil that marks the end of time and the dawn of eternity. Wesley said, "Our people die well." The Swazi Christians would emphasize it with more vigor. They who have heard the tom-toms in the night and have witnessed the wailing of the heathen at death scenes would, when their own fellow Christians cross the border of worlds, cry out with Paul, "O death, where is thy sting? Death is swallowed up in victory."

The Swaziland annual conference, the African district assembly of the Church of the Nazarene in embryo, was in session. It was the special delight of every worker to attend this meeting, but two preachers who pastored neighboring churches in the low veld failed to respond to the roll call. One had not been very well for some time. The second one sent a message saying that he had started on the journey to Endingeni but had been laid low with malaria and was forced to return to his home. That was on Wednesday. Friday morning after the close of the conference, when Simanga was ready to take the visiting missionaries to the bus line, a messenger reached them with the amazing, shocking announcement that both preachers were dead and buried!

Winter rains had made the low veld roads almost impassable, but three preachers and I determined to reach those bereaved homes as speedily as possible. After going as far as the car would take us, we walked eleven miles to the "Rising of the Reeds," arriving at a very late hour in the night. The next day the people of the church were called in for a memorial service. No

sound of tom-toms there! The little wife rose to picture, tearlessly and victoriously, the triumphant home going of her husband. He had realized that he was going, and that realization was more glorious than could be described. He had said, "Don't wear black for me when I am gone. Black is for death. This is not what I am facing, but life. I shall be alive forevermore." Again just before the end, his face lit up radiantly; he was thrilled in the very throes of death because he caught a glimpse beyond the veil. He saw a crown of stars descending toward him. No wonder David said, "Precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of his saints"!

Leaving this place of reeds, the district evangelist and I, who went "to mourn with those who mourn," proceeded to the home of the second bereaved family. But there, too, mourning had been swallowed up in victory. This preacher was older and weary with many attacks of sickness and suffering. When he faced the end he was happy to be going home. He called his wife and children and bade them good-by, saying, "The way before me shines with light." Death! There is no death to the followers of Jesus. It was He who said, "He that followeth me... shall have the light of life."

That same year a third preacher on the Endingeni district set sail in the little barge that crosses the river of death. He too was youngish and was a victim of the tiny anopheles mosquito. He had many times felt the burnings and chills of malaria. This time they had no quinine in the home. With a body wracked by pain and burning with a high temperature, he mounted a donkey and set out on the long trail to the Endingeni dispensary. He had gone only six miles, however, when Simanga overtook him and made the journey easy for him, and yet that six miles had done much harm. Soon after he arrived the nurse pronounced his sickness to be the dreaded black-water fever. He had always been a strong man, and even in those last days he seemed to retain an unusual amount of strength; yet he insisted that he was not going to get well (although the nurse felt optimistic about his recovery). He knew, for he had heard a higher call. He began to make preparations to leave his wife and family, as calmly as if he had been going to Johannesburg. He was gloriously happy and kept talking of "home." He called his wife and his heathen brother. Under Swazi law his wife would become the property of the brother since cows from the father's kraal had been paid for this girl, but the dying preacher did not intend for his wife to be so bound. In front of witnesses he declared that he set his wife free; she could return to her mother's home, which was Christian.

On the last day, although outwardly he did not seem so near death, he said, "I am going home today." He called his children one by one and bade them good-by. The day before he had had a long talk with me about his leaving the work. He told me to say for him a last farewell to his brethren in the ministry. He asked that his grave be near that of Mr. Schmelzenbach. I stood on one side of his bed and his wife on the other side; throwing out both hands, he firmly clasped the hand of his wife on one side and mine on the other side, saying "Masihambe siye ekhaya" -- "Let us go; let us go home."

Before the sun had reached its zenith in the heavens that day, he had witnessed the glorious welcome that awaited him within the portals of Home.

The gates of Home open for the young as well as the older ones, and the entrance offered is just as glorious. There was one girl who became a Christian while yet a child at the church

near her home up in the high mountains of Ezintabeni. A few years later she came to Endingeni to attend school. Although she was still very young, it could be said of her as it was of Barnabas of old -- she was "good... full of the Holy Ghost and of faith." It was a joy to have her in the home and school-she was so bright, cheerful, helpful, and ever ready for any task. Many times in chapel services her testimonies rang with the report of answered prayers.

When time came for her to enter the sixth grade, she asked to stay home for a while because she was ill. She had complained of not feeling well for some time; but, as the medical workers had found nothing seriously wrong, it was expected that she would soon return to school. It was not to be so. Just what her sickness was is not known; even to the last she was not confined to her bed. On the last Sunday on earth she attended the little church in the mountains and, as the pastor was at Endingeni for the Christian Workers' Meeting, she was asked to take charge of the service. All who heard her were gripped by her God-anointed message in which she urged the people to work, work for God and for eternity. She called them to prayer; and the entire church, as one man, came weeping to the altar to pledge themselves to God for a more useful life. After a most blessed season of prayer she dismissed them. They were to see her no more.

At home that evening she shared with her parents what she alone realized -- that soon, very soon, she was to leave this world. Discrediting her fears, they did not soon hearken to her plea for them to take her to her mission station home to die. Finally, however, to please her, they started on that long, steep, hazardous trail over the Ezintabeni Mountains, traveling, of course, by foot, except that a donkey was taken along to rest the girl when she became very weary. After finishing about eighteen miles, her mother decided that they must stop for the night to rest. The girl pitifully besought them to continue the journey, for she so greatly desired to reach Endingeni and to say "Good-by" to her many friends there. She pleaded, "I do not want to rest. I want to go on." But Endingeni was still another seventeen miles away; they refused to proceed, but stopped at a heathen kraal for the night.

When morning dawned she informed them that now it was too late to go on; she could never reach Endingeni. At her request they sang a song of her choice. She prayed and then farewelled them all, sending a very touching message to her heathen brother. Then she began to sing alone. While she sang her face lighted with an indescribable heavenly radiance the like of which those around her had never seen before, and she was gone. That radiant glow remained on the face after the triumphant spirit had taken its flight until the heathen, looking on, were made to exclaim, "This person was different. We never saw anyone die like this. We are not afraid." Afraid! How could they be afraid? Had they not seen a reflection of the glory that surrounds the heavenly throne!

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07 -- A CHURCH BUILDING ARISES

Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it (Psalms 127:1).

"Ding! Dong! Clang! Clang!" The bell was neither beautiful nor melodious, but it was faithful in sending far and wide its summons to come to the church on the mountain-top. After its pealing tones had gone forth, one could see far down in the valley below on the various winding paths a single-file procession of men and women, boys and girls, starting that slow, steep, rocky climb to Helehele Church. After their arrival the familiar "Clang[Clang!" sounded again. It was time to go in. But to go in was a problem that was without solution, for the congregation had long since outgrown the space inclosed within those four stone walls. However, one must not say a problem is unsolvable without first giving it a fair trial.

The pastor goes in, kneels in silent prayer for a few seconds, then sits down behind the rickety table that acts as a pulpit. The children flock in next and take their places on the floor all around the preacher. Finally the young people and adults crowd in and seat themselves either on the few backless benches or on the floor until it seems that every bit of space is filled even to the door. And yet there are many people outside! This will never do! So the preacher, accustomed to seating that great crowd in the church, arises and with a thunderous voice says, "We will arise and sing 'Onward Christian Soldiers.' " At the end of the first stanza he sends forth another command, "Everybody move forward." The children hug the front wall a little more tightly, and there is a noticeable forward movement throughout the congregation. Like air rushes into a vacuum, those on the outside rush in to fill the space thus created in the back. On goes the song until the last: "NanguMholi wethu. Simlandele lo!" And then! "Halalani phansi" -- "Sit down!" Talk about miracles! When one knee buckles, they all do of necessity; and that congregation, molded into one unit, slowly lowers like the descent of a slow freight elevator.

There was no doubt about it. Helehele needed a new church building. They had prayed about it many times, but now the situation was desperate. Once again their petition was sent to the Throne, every word given such a tremendous volley of emphasis that their plea could not be denied. "Lord, use our hands; use our feet; use our strength; add to our little bit of money and please build us a church."

Away across the sea in New Castle, Indiana, the Lord started to answer their prayer. In honor of the Hoosier Nazarenes' "Mother Superior," Mattie Wines, affectionately known as Morn Wines, the Indianapolis District took an offering of five hundred dollars to build a church in Africa. When the news reached Swaziland, we took a special trip up to Helehele to make the announcement and to take measurements for materials for roof, doors, and windows. The new building was to be four times as big as the old one had been. That meant that stones by the ton would be necessary.

"Lord, use our hands; use our feet." He began to answer this part of their prayer. Boys and girls, mothers with their babies on their backs, old grandmothers, as well as the men, worked for many, many days carrying stones upon their heads. The pile grew bigger and bigger. "Surely we have enough now!" they would exclaim. But we would look at the pile, shake our heads, and say, "Oh, no. We will need many, many more." So, off they would go again. At last even we were satisfied that there were enough stones for the building.

But that was only the first task accomplished! The lumber and galvanized-iron roofing arrived at Balegane, thirty-five miles away; but there was no means of transport to bring it the

rest of the way. A man who had done trucking had died the month before and his truck was sold. The storekeeper had two large trucks, but one of them was not in running order and the other was too badly needed for store transport to be available for another's need. The prevalence of East Coast fever in near-by territories had brought about a strict quarantine of all cattle and oxen; therefore the ox wagon was out of the question. How was that building material to reach Helehele!

"Lord, use our hands; use our feet." They wanted a church. They needed a church. Indeed they must have a church. Every Swazi knows the story of the Zulu King Shaka's soldier who ran a six-day journey in one day, arriving at his destination crying out, "Nothing is impossible to him who loves the king." Neither was anything impossible to these who love the King of Kings. They could carry that building material. Dr. J. B. Chapman used to say that there are those who can explain the difference between long years and short years in such statements as, "I spent ten long years in that place." No one could be more qualified to differentiate between long miles and short miles than these Swazis from Helehele and the volunteers from three other churches who transported those heavy timbers and iron roofing materials over the thirty-five miles of rough, rocky, thorny paths that run up, down, and around the mountains lying between Balegane and Helehele. "Sesifile" -- "Now we are dead," they gasped as they laid the last piece down at the building site. It was not a complaint -- merely a statement of fact.

Stones, planks, roofing -- all were there. But who was to put them together to form a church? Tradesmen are very scarce in Swaziland, and it was not a little thing to ask one of these few to stay up in that little native kraal, miles away from any white people, long enough to build a stone church. The old Irish stonemason who worships at the shrine of Bacchus was presented with this problem, and he agreed to "build another church for God." Up in the mountains he went and established himself in the little native hut. It did not take him long to learn that those people wanted a church so badly that they would do anything, and he consequently led them a merry chase for two months. If he wanted anything he got it. They gave him their best and biggest papayas, bananas, and other fruits; they brought him milk and vegetables; they presented him with their fattest and best chickens; and they worked like slaves breaking stone, mixing mortar, or carrying water. It was a most difficult time, but they faithfully and patiently did their best until the walls were up and pointed.

The next problem was the roof. The builder was a stonemason and bricklayer. Any other kind of work was regarded with the utmost disdain; he would not think of using a hammer and saw. Inquiries were made everywhere for a carpenter. Finally someone said, "There is a wonderful carpenter working at the Pigg's Peak gold mine, but he refuses to take any jobs. Certainly he would not agree to go up there in the mountains and put a roof on a native church." He was a gold miner with the world's record for finding the greatest amount of loose gold in one day. Who would expect him to agree to put a roof on a mission church for a mere fifty dollars! "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it." So spoke King David to his son, Solomon. But the Lord was building this house. Off I went to interview this man. To the amazement of some people, without the use of any unusual powers of persuasion--that is, human persuasion -- the miner-carpenter was established in the little hut, working with a will. He, too, had the natives at his feet ready to do anything for him--not because he took advantage of their desire for his labor, but because he treated them with such kindness and mercy. We were not

greatly surprised to hear him tell that his old Scotch mother was a godly woman, who twice daily gathered her children around her knee for Bible reading and prayer. He worked with skill and speed, and soon the roof was on. Then the plastering was done by a man of the church.

One more job remained to be done -- the floor. Again all the church came to carry rock and break it for concrete. What a merry crowd they were! The women and girls carried, and the men kept the hammers going. At the same time I was there hanging doors and windows and staining woodwork. Then followed days of carrying sand. How very heavy sand can be! And every bit had to be brought from the banks of the Lomati River far down in the valley. Oxen and donkeys were put to work, but the work went so slowly that the people almost despaired of ever finishing the job. However, they had long since learned of the conquering powers of persistency, so on they jogged until the last strain and tug of the oxen brought the final slip-load of sand to the hilltop. In a little while Enoch Mcina, one of the Endingeni men, put in the floor and platform. Two bags of lime were sent up to whitewash the walls, and I arrived to oversee the last bit of cleaning up before the grand opening day.

There had been no time to notify the church that I was coming, but after all it was not necessary to make a formal announcement in order to call the people in to work. The pastor said, "We need lots of water and we need lots of help." The clang clang, ding dong of the bell reverberated from mountainside to mountainside and on, on down through the valley. To add to its effectiveness, the pastor, going out in front of the church, cupping his hands over his mouth, called out, "All you believers, come and carry water." He repeated this performance at the back and at either side of the building, and in a remarkably short time the paths were lined with singing, laughing Christians. Nor did whitewashing walls, scrubbing floors, or washing windows dampen their gaiety. When there remained not one thing more to do, it was with justifiable pride that they stood, patting the stone walls as affectionately as if that building upon which so much sacrificial labor had been expended were a loved child, and exclaimed, "Our church is beautiful. Hasn't God given us a beautiful church!"

The day of dedication dawned clear and bright. What a gala day it was! The men of the church had worked very diligently on the road so that the missionary's motor car could come up the mountain. White stones had been placed along the way. All was in readiness. Two cars with six missionaries and a number of native workers from other districts arrived. Hundreds of natives swarmed over the mountain-top. The Christians wore clean, neat, simple European attire in such marked contrast to the hosts of heathen who were on full dress parade with leopard skins, beads, feathers, mud-plastered hair, spears, shields and mirrors. In one corner of the churchyard a number of large vats of meat, rice, and corn meal porridge were being prepared for the feast that was to follow the dedicatory message.

The bell rang and, after prayer led by Rev. H. A. Shirley, the veteran missionary who had worked with these people in the early years before there had ever been a church building of any kind, the crepe paper streamers draped across the door were clipped and the door swung open for the first service in this new and, to the Swazis, imposing edifice. It was a precious service. The Lord was invited to come and take possession of His temple, and He came. It was not only a dedication service; it was one of praise as well. The pastor said the Lord wanted new benches in His temple, so the people wanted to thank the Lord for what He had done for them by bringing

an offering toward those benches. One by one they arose and said, "I thank the Lord with ten shillings (\$2.50) "; or, "I thank the Lord with a goat." Some were unable to give such large gifts; they could only "thank Him" with a shilling, a sixpence, a rickey, a chicken, a mat, a broom, or some other such offerings. Everything was to go toward the benches which "the Lord wanted in His temple." And they were sure the Lord wanted benches with backs to them! The offering amounted to seventy-five dollars in cash, which is no mean sum for poverty-stricken Swazis to give. The Lord had built His house, and one day He would have seats with backs on them in it!!

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08 -- FROM CHURCH TO CHURCH

And he went... confirming the churches (Acts 15: 41).

And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily (Acts 16:5).

By various means new churches are organized and the borders of any mission district are made more and more far-flung. Pastors, and oftentimes teachers as well, are stationed at the new posts. At least once a year all congregations are gathered together for a great camp meeting. But all of this must be coupled with frequent visitation by district leaders if the work is to be strong and flourishing. Church visitation in Swaziland is made by car, horseback, or muleback, or by the more slow but sure method -- by foot. All kinds of experiences, pleasant and otherwise, might be encountered on these travels.

In northern Swaziland throughout the year there are those who ply their way over the routes connecting the various outstations. Once a year, however, generally from March to May, at least two months are set aside for a systematic going from church to church to conduct the annual business meetings. This is done with a hope that one day in the annals of the tomorrows the Swazi church will become self-governing and self-supporting. At these meetings reports are given by the pastor and various other officers of the church, any special progress made is noted, and new officers are elected. Always, of course, there are special inspirational messages that instill in the hearts of the members a desire to do "just a little bit more" in every phase of the work.

One year these series of meetings started a bit earlier than usual because the preacher at the farthest outstation to the north of Endingeni pleaded that the trip up there be set for an earlier date in order to appease the wrath of the new landowner upon whose territory the little church was built. Those steep mountainsides were used for sheep farming. Now the farm had changed hands, and the new owner was not amiable in his treatment of the preacher and his family. If the pastor and the church were to stay among those mountain heights, special intercession would be necessary.

Plans were made accordingly and the district leaders, Gideon Nkambule and I, set off, going by car as far as Simanga could take us. After a two-and-a-half hour trek that led up, up, continually up, the "winter home" of the white man was pointed out -- one tiny grass hut. (Sheep

are brought from the Transvaal for winter grazing in Swaziland.) As we drew nearer, we saw the sheep farmer standing outside the hut. He was a short, well-bearded South African of Dutch descent, known as an Afrikaner, and did not appear to be too angry looking. He spoke a greeting in Afrikaans, the language of the Dutch South Africans; but when he learned that I could not converse in that language, he chatted freely in English. South Africa is a bilingual country. Later he offered me a cup of black coffee in a big worn, chipped enamel cup. No chairs or stools graced his mountainside home; so we stood talking beside an open fire over which the water in a three-legged black pot boiled. After all we had something in common. We were both shepherds, though our flocks differed. It was "sheep," nevertheless, that had brought both of us to these mountains. Matters were satisfactorily settled and our party went on its way.

We were not more than halfway to our destination and already the sun had set. No one had a torch or a lantern to light our way; furthermore, among those heights the path always led either very abruptly up or just as abruptly downward. No sooner would we reach the peak of a mountain than we started a perilous descent on the other side. Finally, on a downward stretch we struck a precipice that far surpassed all the others. This route was seldom used; but the detour that had been made to the sheep farmer's abode had taken us from the more frequently traveled path, and we did not care to lose the time it would have taken to go back to it again. Jacobe, one of the preachers, went first, slowly creeping along in a sitting posture, catching hold of rocks or grass to secure his footing. Several times he warned me not to walk uprightly, reminding me of the great depths below. Looking ahead we saw flames climbing the mountainside. As we came within range of the smoke of this veld fire, the descent was made more and more difficult because of smarting eyes. As there was no other course open to use, we blinked, rubbed our eyes at intervals, but slowly crawled on. All at once on a huge slab of stone my slick shoes slipped, and down I went on the rock. Jacobe was on one side of the long ledge and Gideon on the other side, each one shouting, so excitedly, suggestions as to how to get off that rock that, in spite of the danger, it greatly amused me and I could but laugh. Slowly I crawled over that expanse of rock, and was none the worse for the mishap. At long last we reached the bottom, unscathed and unscorched, but not without the smell of fire!

Ahead lay two big rivers -- over these, much to my chagrin, I was carried as African babies are carried, on the back of a Swazi woman who lived near the river and who had been commandeered into this service by the pastor of the church to which we were going. The woman had to wade waist-deep to deposit me, safe and dry, on the other side. Through fire and water we had traveled that night but finally arrived at that mountain home, where a belated supper of boiled potatoes and corn meal mush awaited us.

The next morning, as I looked across the valley to that sheer precipice over which we had crawled the night before, I thought, Surely here is a point in favor of the Darwinian theory, for, after all, surely only monkeys could make that descent!

A delightful day with two services and the annual meeting was spent with those appreciative and hospitable mountain dwellers. The next morning, as the sun's magic brush changed the blue crests of those majestic heights to gold, our party set our faces once again to the lower country where awaited Simanga.

In visiting the next church on the itinerary, Simanga could take the district evangelist and me only thirty miles in that direction. A horse and donkey were provided to make the rest of the journey not quite so wearisome. The five-hour jog was made without mishap; but, as the weather had changed, our journey brought us more and more into the clutches of biting-cold mountain winds. By the time we reached the few huts that constituted the kraal of the Nazarene pastor, we were stiff with cold. We warmed ourselves at the little fire burning in the center of the cook hut, but there was little prospect that that warmth could be retained for long. The tiny one-roomed heatless shelter, which was to be my guest room for the night, boasted of a homemade bed with a grass-filled mattress and one blanket. This was the first charge of the young fellow who had just recently graduated from Bible school; hence his possessions were few -- far too few for any degree of comfort in such weather as enveloped the mountain that night. In such circumstances one must make the best of it, and this I tried to do. However, it required no exaggerated sense of humor on my part to laugh at myself as I prepared to crawl under that lone blanket. To keep the teeth of the wind from penetrating too far, I had donned every article of clothing that had been in the saddlebags, including riding habit and shoes. I at least had the satisfaction of knowing that the howling angry gale that blew outside would exact a much smaller toll than had been anticipated. Perhaps the sheer weariness produced by five hours in the saddle proved to be a blessing that night, for sleep was sweet in spite of such a "beauty rest."

The third trip lay between two churches fifteen miles apart. The services in the second church were unusually blessed; the day was altogether a good one. The reports were most heartening. The evening hours were spent in trying to make a jig-saw picture out of the puzzling pieces of a Swazi love affair which had presented itself to the workers for counsel and advice. At eight-thirty supper was served, and later a comfortable bed with plenty of covers was provided.

When the illuminated dial of my wrist watch pointed to 3:00 a.m., a call to arouse from slumbers was given; and long before dawn our feet were being swished by the dew-drenched grasses that overhung the narrow trail that led to our next resting place. This part of the path had been traversed by mule back the morning before; but, to my horror, I discovered a raw, bleeding sore as big as my hand on the back of that poor animal. Of course, riding became out of the question. Because of this the district evangelist thought it better to try a short cut. As many others have discovered in life, we were to learn that short cuts can have their drawbacks and that fairly often the longest way round is the safest way home. A good-sized stream and a very boggy stretch of land submerged the tiny, winding way. Sore or no sore, there was nothing to do but mount the mule and ride across. In the middle of the bog that accommodating animal sank down -- down -- down! I was some way able to free myself from the stirrups and by some quick maneuvers managed to reach terra firma. Alas, the mule could not be so agile. His hind quarters were almost entirely submerged and his tail lay like a rope on the surface of the marsh. Quicksand! Would he ever get out! Only after several violent efforts did he pull himself free and mule and rider plodded on, wetter and dirtier for the experience.

A very good and welcome breakfast awaited us at Ensingweni. After doing justice to it, we two hiked another five miles to the car. We laughed as we crossed a little stream which we had forded two nights before in the dark. I had removed my shoes and waded the creek, which was knee-deep and swiftly flowing. In midstream one shoe slipped from among a number of parcels being carried, dropped into the water, and quickly followed the current out of reach and

out of sight. Fortunately for my pride as well as convenience, I had a second pair along. I was nonetheless thankful when, the next morning, the school children found the missing brogan lodged against a large rock not too far from the fording place. On the return journey the light of the benevolent though burning sun enabled us to cover the distance to the Dodge without a repetition of such inconveniences. In a comparatively short order we soon reached another little church in the bushveld area, where we conducted and enjoyed two more services before running in home for the night.

Yes, the journeys themselves are never without interest. One could with profit follow these trails for the sole purpose of enjoying the wide and varied experiences encountered. But these experiences are of minor interest to the missionary. His every faculty is on the alert to catch the indications of growth in the churches. As any cessation in the process of growth in his child's development causes gravest alarm to a parent, just so does a like condition in a church affect a missionary. It must be growth or stagnation and death. Not numerical growth alone, though that, too, is important; but spiritual growth and growth in ability to carry responsibility. These are essential -- tremendously so.

Some of the reports on the above treks set our hearts to bubbling over with joy. At one place it was of a plan which had been followed of three months of intensive evangelism. The church had gathered together repeatedly for intercessory prayer and then had literally "gone into the highways and hedges and compelled" the people to come in; not with the compulsion of force, of course, but that of the constraining, wooing power of the gospel. By their lives, their messages, and their constant use of the Word they had brought Jesus to the people and the people to Jesus. Nineteen raw heathen became believers and put themselves openly on record that they had chosen to follow the lowly Nazarene. The pastor at that place and his wife are earnest soul winners, and the contagion of their passion for evangelism had permeated the entire church. It was not surprising, therefore, to us to find the church full to overflowing when we visited them. So full was it, in fact, that in order to utilize every bit of space, the people carried outside all the prayer mats and even all the shawls which the women wear to and from church but which are not needed within the building.

Two other churches had also outgrown the space confined between the four walls of their buildings. One of these had started a building fund and had about one hundred dollars on hand. It was their request that this money be taken to the mission station to be kept safely until they could add enough to it to enlarge their stone building. When one remembers the infinitesimal salaries of the natives, it is realized that a building fund of one hundred dollars and all local expenses paid is nothing short of a miracle.

Still another pastor reported that God had put the little herd boys on his heart. Since it was impossible for them to leave their flocks and herds by day, he had gathered them into the church at night, starting a little night school for them, thus giving them the opportunity to obtain at least the rudiments of learning and, far more important, to come into the knowledge of the gospel of Christ. Thirty-five boys availed themselves of this opportunity and many of them became Christians.

Indeed, the toils of the road seem as nothing when listening to such reports. A million times over it is worth trekking over mountain trails, crossing bogs, wading rivers, or suffering any of the other inconveniences associated with outstation travels just to see the work of God grow and glow with the "grace of God bestowed on the churches." It was after making similar journeys that Paul was made to exclaim, "We ourselves glory in you in the churches."

* * * * *

09 -- TWO CHIEFS -- SIPEPA AND DLAMINI

But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him... Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him (John 12:37-42).

Twenty girls, with the inimitable stately carriage of the African, tripped single file along the narrow mountain path. Behind them came Lillian Bhembe, their teacher, and I, their missionary; before us sped our advance guard -- a lilting melody which gladdened the hearts of the abantu in their kraals with the announcement that an amajoyini group was coming with a message of peace and joy. The word "amajoyini" is the Zulu-ized English word, "join." The Christian workers' bands are those who have "joined up" or volunteered for service. Early in the history of the Swazi church this idea caught the fancy of the Christians, and the word "amajoyini" became a common word in their vocabulary. These girls formed one of twelve of such groups that grace the Endingeni Mission Station. Light-Bearers, Excelsiors, Soul-Hunters, Sunshine Band, Firebrands, and Strong-Hearted are some of their significant names. Most of the other groups had scattered in different directions to the kraals or to outstations. These, the Strong-Hearted Maidens, were making their way to the village of a chief about three and a half miles away. One girl carried a small box of fruit and a sack of sugar -- a gift for the chief; the others balanced their Bibles and songbooks deftly and gracefully on their heads.

On the hillside ahead the brandishing of sticks, the scurry of little feet, and the hasty gathering together of cattle bespoke the eager expectancy of the little herders that the oncoming group would have a special word of greeting for them. Nor were they to be disappointed.

"Ho ho, children! We greet you! What are you doing on the hillside on the Lord's day?" Lillian called as soon as we were within earshot.

"We are looking after the cattle."

"Whose cattle?"

"Father's cattle."

"And whose child are you?"

"Dlamini's."

"Maseko's."

"Ndwandwe's."

"And how are all at home? Are they all well?"

"Yes, they are still alive."

"Now we are going to see Sipepa today, but if you like we will sing a song here and pray for you."

"We want it very much, Teacher."

The song rang out clearly upon the air, and the words echoed distinctly far and near.

Where is there another name By which we are saved here? There is no other name-That of Jesus only!

"Now before we pray, how many of you would like to go to school?" Eagerly a number of hands were uplifted. "If you would like to be Christians and want us to pray for you, step out here and kneel down." Without the least hesitancy three of them about ten to twelve years of age stepped forward and knelt. "Now, whom do you want to pray for you?" Timidly one of the boys lifted his stick and pointed to me. Soon every knee was bowed and a volume of prayer arose for those unfortunate youngsters who are destined to spend their childhood days, rain or shine, out on the hillsides, running after cattle that are to the abantu their greatest possessions. Tears of joy were flowing freely when the amajoyini bade the children adieu and hastened on to see the chief.

Across the last little stream and up a steep mountainside, and suddenly the large kraal appeared in view. Outside the cattle kraal the girls sat down. Before long Sipepa's frail form, bent with the weight of many winters, and supported by a long crooked stick, slowly emerged from some low bushes on the other side of which he had been lying on a grass mat, absorbing the heat and healing of Africa's sun. His face beamed a smile of welcome as his eyes glanced from one girl to another and finally rested on me, the missionary.

"Child of the King! Children of Endingeni! You have arrived." Thus he greeted us as he gave to each one a Swazi handshake.

"Yes, Father. You are unable to get to Endingeni to worship with us; so we have come to have a service with you."

"I am glad." And he hobbled over and sat down on a mat to listen. Several of the women of the kraal-wives, daughters, daughters-in-law -- came out of their huts and with a nod of greeting took their seats on the ground behind Sipepa. Next the men came and silently joined the group of listeners.

Each Strong-Hearted Maiden contributed something to the service, either a song, a Bible reading, or a word of testimony. Then I brought a short message and exhortation for this group of

heathen to give their hearts to God. Sipepa sat silently through it all, his eyes riveted on the various ones taking part. At the close an old woman, a Christian visiting in the kraal and evidently of some close relationship to Sipepa, arose and addressed him.

"Don't you hear what they say? They have come here to tell you about God and they want you to give your heart to Him. Don't you know that now you are an old man and that your days are short on the earth? You should listen to these messengers and give yourself to the Lord."

Slowly he shook his head. "I know. I hear what they say, but I'm not ready yet. Anyway, I'm not going to give myself to the Lord here at home. When I give myself to Him, I will go to His house -- the church."

"Yes, Chief, we hear what you say. Next Sunday we are having a big meeting and we are calling in all the people. Will you come?"

"I am not well and Endingeni is so far."

"Doctor Hynd will be there on Thursday. Suppose we send a boy to bring you to see him, and then you stay with us until Sunday."

"On Thursday Doctor will be there! I will come." So it was agreed.

A young woman, the chief's daughter-in-law, spoke and asked for special prayer, as her heart was hungry for light but she could not understand how to become a Christian. She, too, was urged to come to the church on the next Sunday.

A large dish of "amasi," a delicious food prepared from clabbered milk and pounded corn, and a bundle of ears of green corn were set before the group. After we had partaken of this hospitality, farewells were spoken and the amajoyini set off at a rapid rate toward the mission station, for the sun had already started to hide its face behind the distant mountains.

The next Thursday dawned clear and bright, but not until the time when the shadows are shortest did tottering old Sipepa hobble through the gate of the mission station. He rested a while, was examined and treated by the doctor, and then was served with tea. Then, to the amazement of all, he asked to go back home.

"But, friend, you said you were going to stay with us and worship with us on Sunday!" I am sure that my voice was full of the keen disappointment I felt.

"Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday." Slowly he counted, "That is four days and I am an old man. It is better for me to be at home. I am not used to staying other places. I will return "on Sunday."

He could not be prevailed upon, so we with defeated and saddened hearts watched him go his snail's pace out the gate and over the hill, knowing well that his feeble strength would not permit him to return in such a short time. Would that chief ever be saved! Sunday came, but no

Sipepa! Three and a half miles away; so near and yet so far! So friendly to missionaries and the Christian abantu, but so reluctant to give himself to the One whose friendship surpasses all others! Poor old Sipepa!

Two weeks later a revival was in progress at the home station. God was blessing and victory's banners were flying. On Friday afternoon just before time for the service, Sipepa was found sitting on the steps of the mission home.

"Sipepa, I am so glad to see you!" I cried joyfully. "Did you send for me?" he queried in his thin voice.

"No, I did not send for you, but I am delighted that you are here. We are having wonderful services, and I am sure God wants you to give yourself to Him."

"They told me you sent for me. They didn't use your name, but I thought it was you because you came to my kraal. Two girls came to call me."

"Perhaps someone did send for you. I shall see."

But no missionary had sent for Sipepa. After much questioning the truth was manifest. Two of the "Strong-Hearted Maidens" had gone to get Sipepa. They had prayed for him so much and they wanted him to come to the revival. But they were too insignificant to ask him in their own name, so they said, "The amakosazana (daughters of the King) want you." They knew he would listen to that if he was able to walk that three and a half miles. And wasn't it the truth? The missionaries had prayed for Sipepa many times. Didn't they want him in the revival? Of course they did! It was not a lie! Sipepa's head went down. "I will stay," he said.

Friday afternoon and night and twice on Saturday he listened to stirring messages, only to hobble back to his hut without comment. Various ones prepared food for him and tried to make him comfortable in body while they prayed for God to trouble his soul until he should yield. Saturday afternoon when the bell rang, once again his crooked stick was heard tap-tap-tapping its way down the right-hand side of the tabernacle. Poor old bent Sipepa! With the trunk of his body stooped over until it was almost parallel with the floor and his head thrown back, he drank in one more message of hope, peace, and salvation. Before the service was over a commotion from his little corner attracted the eyes of the congregation. Sipepa was arising! Straightening himself as far as his feeble frame permitted him, with his hands in the air and with a voice much stronger than was thought possible from him, he cried, "Ngiya thanda iNkosi." Sipepa was choosing Christ at last!

Dlamini was a chief who lived about five miles east of Endingeni. Like many people of many lands he was a friend to, and welcomed, the friendship of the Christians; but, against his own better judgment, he could never bring himself to trust the Friend of Friends. Of course, every soul has his own battles to fight ere he reaches the point of yielding himself to God. To die the death to the world that brings salvation is never easy. That death is doubly hard to a regional chief who serves under others who are not only not Christians but are openly antagonistic to Christ and to Christian principles. Such chiefs need sympathetic understanding and, what is

greater, they need the real agonizing, intercessory prayer of the Christians in their behalf. Dlamini had been the subject of many prayers down through the years and he seemed to appreciate the interest shown in him.

In Christian lands the method used most for revival meetings is to go out and invite non-church-goers to the house of God, where through protracted effort on the part of evangelist, pastor, and people many are won to Christ. In heathen lands the gospel must be preached in the "highways and hedges." In one revival season the Endingeni Church planned a series of services at the kraals of the chiefs. Plans were well laid. For two weeks before the campaign started the church gave itself over to prayer. Permission was asked of the chiefs, and not one objected to the gospel's being preached in their villages. In the daytime the church went en masse to the people. At night they were back again at the mission station, interceding for the next day's services. On Sundays the services were conducted in the church, and the heathen were urged to be present. Many came and quite a number gave themselves to God.

All of the meetings were memorable, but the ones at Chief Dlamini's kraal were especially so. He sent a command for all his people to be present, and it was a command that they dared not disobey. A large hut was being built in the village but, when the Christians arrived, all work stopped. Dlamini and all his people seated themselves on the ground and gave rapt attention to the messages. Then the chief himself gave an exhortation to the people to listen to the Word of God, that the Christian way is the right way. Alas, how easy it is to tell others to do what we ourselves refuse to do! A number of young people became Christians there, but how many more might have made decisions for Christ and His righteousness had their chief, instead of merely exhorting them, had the courage to declare openly, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord"! As it was, the meeting closed and Dlamini was still unsaved.

He was much younger than many of the other chiefs and no doubt he listened to that age-old plea of the enemy of the soul, "Time enough yet." He was soon to learn, however, that a person's time is not contingent upon a certain number of years. Little tubercular germs began to make inroads upon his health. Not long afterwards it was noised abroad that his life was despaired of. He had refused to trust the Christian's God when he was strong; there was nothing left for him to do now but to place his case in the hands of the witch doctor. He allowed himself to be taken to the village of a renowned witch doctor some fifteen miles distant. Yet the Christians did not give up hope. Announcement was made in church relative to his sickness, and all the men were urged to visit him and to pray with him. Both publicly and privately the chief's name was repeatedly presented to the Throne of Grace. This caused no little consternation among the heathen. One of them came to make inquiries about the way his chief's name was presented in public; but he was soon convinced of the genuine interest the Christians had for Dlamini's welfare and he smilingly said, "It is all right."

Not many days passed before the sick man was returned to his home "rather the worse" for his treatment at the hands of those emissaries of Satan, Africa's witch doctors. After that the trail to his kraal was kept warm with the feet of those who carry the message of peace and pardon. The constant bombardment of the Word upon the chief's heart and the tremendous amount of spiritual energy released through the prayers of the children of God began to destroy the wall of partition erected by the powers of darkness between Dlamini and his God. Finally the

last bit of reserve was swept away, and another African chief yielded himself into the care of the Great Redeemer. What rejoicing there must have been in heaven that day!

He was a sick man and there was no question but that his days upon the earth were numbered. He had much to do in that short space of time allotted to him, and without delay he began. All through his chieftainship he had given commands. That power was still his, and the commands he had now to give were of the utmost importance. He called his counselors and, though his voice was weak from disease, his words demanded obedience. They ran something like this: "Men, I have become a believer. We abantu have many customs. I want to tell you these customs are wrong. In a few days I am going to die. I have called you to tell you that when that time comes you are not to kill the ox for the dead. You must not allow any witch doctor to sprinkle his medicine around this kraal. The usual procedure for the funeral of a chief is to bind his body and with ceremonial rites place it in a cave. My people will all gather in for that occasion. You must tell them that their chief died a Christian and he must be buried as a Christian. My body is to lie where the Christian dead lie; the final service must be in the hands of the Christians. Do you understand?"

"We understand, Chief. It shall be even as you say. You have spoken."

To everyone who came near, Dlamini witnessed that he had become a Christian. However, his time to witness for Christ was short. In a few days he said his last farewells and crossed the border of worlds. When the end came, two of those heathen counselors came to the mission station and placed the funeral arrangements in the hands of us missionaries and the Christian workers. Those heathen were fully prepared to co-operate with the Christians in every way. Together with the district evangelist they took some used lumber which I had donated for the purpose and fashioned a crude coffin. Darkness had fallen by the time this task was finished, and a drizzling dismal rain which began earlier in the day and continued throughout the next day enveloped the countryside. Through this they carried the box to the dead man's kraal, prepared his body for burial, and with the help of others, during the wee small hours of the morning, bore their burden back over those weary spiral miles to the mission station. A gray dawn had just penetrated the gloom of the night when they arrived; but it was not until ten o'clock that the schoolboys announced that the grave was ready. This was the signal for the service to begin.

School was dismissed and the boys, lined up on one side of the coffin, and the girls, on the other, sang, "O Grave, Where Is Thy Victory?" and "We Will Meet You in the Morning." The district evangelist brought a mighty message from God on "Victory Through Christ" and of what that victory consists. The eyes of the heathen never left the face of the speaker -- they seemed to be glued there. When some vital comparison between heathenism and Christianity was made, some of the old white-haired chiefs nodded their heads. They were not Christians but they knew the reality of those contrasts. God was in that funeral service. His Spirit pervaded the very atmosphere. The coffin was lowered into the grave and, as is the usual custom, each one present dropped a handful of earth on top of it, after which the men and boys filled in the grave. Single file the mourners walked away to return in a short while, each carrying a stone from the veld. They piled these stones neatly all around the grave, then silently took their departure.

Two weeks later one of those counselors returned again to the mission station and asked for me. He said, "I have come to thank you and the church for all you did for our chief. The whole affair was a great thing which causes us to wonder very much. We do thank you with all our hearts."

Who knows but that the conversion and triumphant death of Chief Dlamini kindled another fire which will spread and glow until the dawn of eternity?

* * * * *

10 -- THE FIRE BLAZES UP

Behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire (Jeremiah 5:14).

"O Lord, revive thy work," cried the prophet of old; and it must ever be the cry of those who are anxious for the expansion of the Kingdom. The Church of Jesus Christ was born in a revival, and its normal atmosphere should be that of a revival if it is to stay a living, vital organism. When conditions for a revival are met, heavenly fire falls, the Church is revived, and new babes in Christ are born into the Kingdom.

Many have been the revivals the very memory of which brings blessing to those who felt their fires. A most glorious one was conducted for the mothers of Endingeni school girls and boys under the leadership and inspiration of Louise Robinson, then in charge of Endingeni Mission Station. Twenty heathen mothers chose to follow the Lord Jesus. Two years later another such campaign was launched. Weeks before, names of mothers were placed on a large sheet of paper which hung in the prayer hut. Blessed seasons of intercession assured them that God was answering.

The mothers, some Christian and some heathen, arrived on Friday afternoon. They were welcomed by their daughters and sons with an evening of play, in which all joined heartily. This created a home atmosphere and generated a warm feeling of fellowship. After that lively, happy time together mothers and children knelt in prayer. The Spirit of God fell on the scene and many began to weep. Those mothers who were strangers to the grace of God felt a stirring within their hearts before unknown. Saturday morning they all attended the early morning prayer meeting, where God again dealt with their hearts. Later in the day the mothers enjoyed a program in which their children at school were at their best. This was followed by a feast of meat and hominy. Saturday evening marked the first strictly evangelistic service. Hearts were expectant and God came! One mother gave herself to God and others wept under conviction.

Sunday, a never-to-be-forgotten Mother's Day, dawned. Every service that day was God-owned. Four heathen women, mostly wives of influential men around the station, who had heard the gospel for years without apparently being touched, arose and electrified hearts by declaring, "I choose Christ." What abounding joy and sweet blessing filled hearts! God was there! Tremendous conviction gripped others who did not yet feel free to yield. African women are not their own. After another great service on Monday morning these were yet without victory; but the word, sharper than a two-edged sword, had entered their hearts. God followed

hard after them, and in their homes they yielded their all to Him. Fourteen more Swazis had been won by that matchless story of redeeming love, and joined the ranks of Him whose name is Wonderful -- all because of that week-end Mother's Day meeting.

At Endingeni the girls, especially, are soldiers, indefatigable soldiers of the Cross, in outstation revivals as well as on the home station. One week end a group of girls was asked to help in a revival being conducted by the native district leader, Samuel Dlamini, at Matshe. Because word had come that some distinguished government officials would be visitors on the mission station on Saturday, it was not possible for a missionary to accompany the party. Possibly this was disappointing to the little band of Swazis as they walked alone on that journey to the revival; but it had one advantage-it made them feel more keenly their own responsibility for that meeting.

The first services were hard. There were a few seekers after Christ but they seemed to get nowhere. Sunday noon came and still there was no "break." Without discussing it beforehand with one another, they decided to leave their food (it was to be meat -- a great treat to them -- that day) and find a place to pray, determined to stay there until they had heard from heaven. The evangelist found a place under a big overhanging slab of rock; the girls gathered in the church. One of them afterward said, "We were telling the Lord that we were serving Elijah's God and, if He be God, we must see Him answer by fire today in this place." God met their hearts. People outside were suddenly seized with great fear. One by one they entered the church, knelt down, and started praying for themselves. The Holy Spirit took complete charge and nobody interfered. The evangelist entered at the time appointed for his service, but was driven to his knees by the presence and power of prayer.

Everyone prayed through to the Throne. Confessions of theft of goats and chickens and other sins by those seeking pardon were made with promises that the stolen goods would be returned or paid for -- restitution was easy if only God's favor could be obtained. The very heavens opened on that crowd of Africa's sons and daughters that day.

When the girls came shouting home that night, their spirits were much as the disciples' must have been when they joyously exclaimed to the Master, "Even the devils are subject unto us."

On another occasion the outstation to which they went, with me this time, was a far one. The girls ran before my horse mile after mile, but even so the darkness descended upon us ere we reached the hilltop upon which the little outstation stood.

Immediately upon our arrival the bell -- an old plowshare suspended by a wire from a tree and struck by another piece of iron -- rang out its summons to enter the church. After the service, which was a fairly long one, the girls ate a little food that had been prepared for them, and laid their weary bodies down on grass mats stretched out on the floor of the church. Here they could rest a few hours before the old plowshare would arouse them from their slumbers before dawn for another service.

In the midst of that early morning meeting a demon-possessed woman shrieked a piercing scream and ran out of the building. Outside she continued her disturbing yells. The Christians went to prayer and found it fearfully hard to pray. Finally we decided that each one should find a place of prayer among the rocks and shrubs of the veld and fight a battle for victory on his own. Away they went without a thought of food, and soon the surrounding country was resounding with the earnest cry of pleading intercession. At ten o'clock we came together again; the girls ate their belated breakfast and entered service. God decidedly helped us, but still the seekers did not find victory. After a short interval a third service was held, but this was a repetition of the one before. There was no real spirit of prayer, no victory, no joy. Again individual places of prayer were sought. God lived He would drive back the enemy of souls, who was doing his utmost to defeat the seekers after righteousness. After sunset we again gathered in the church for a united prayer service. Later the bell rang for evening service, but no one heeded it. Intercession was the order of the day until God answered prayer. An hour later He came. A song service of exultant rejoicing was followed by a Spirit-anointed message by the evangelist and an altar call. One by one the seekers found the place where Heaven comes down our souls to greet And glory crowns the mercy seat. Before midnight the demon-possessed woman was found "clothed and in her right mind, sitting at the feet of Jesus."

Sunday was victorious and glorious. In the afternoon the victory-crowned warriors wended their way over the trails that led home, with a joy in their hearts that only the redeemed know.

The "break" in a revival meeting is not always brought by the same methods. At Endingeni one revival meeting was especially hard. A flinty spirit of indifference pervaded the very atmosphere. The situation was desperate. By consistently fasting, praying, preaching, and exhorting all the workers were pouring all of their strength into the meeting; still there was no break. When everyone seemed to be nearly at the end of himself, Lillian Bhembe, one of the gifted and God-anointed girl preachers, was asked to take the next service. Reluctantly she agreed.

When the bell rang she took her place on the platform and began to sing. The tones of her voice and her general demeanor did not depict an exultant Spirit; rather, one was made to feel that the words fell from the lips of one who in deepest humility was gazing upon the form of the Very Son of God. Oblivious to the crowd before her, by her song she lifted Him up for all eyes to behold. The song was in the form of questions:

Who is that Man of Sorrows,
That One who fasted in the desert?

Who is that One who prayed
In the garden -- dark garden of Gethsemane?

Who is that One who was crucified,
The One who prayed for His crucifiers?

Who is that One who was laid in the grave,

The One who seemingly was overcome?

Who is that One who came forth from the tomb,
That One who could not be bound?

Who is that One who ascended,
That One whom the clouds received?

Who is that One who is in heaven,
That One who is interceding for His own?

Who is that One who will return
To earth with glory and power?

After each verse the refrain was sung irresistibly:

It is the Lord, the Lord of heaven;
It is the Lord, the Lord of earth,
Let us bow low at His feet
And proclaim Him King of Kings.

It was indescribably wonderful -- she sang that congregation into the very presence of Jesus Christ, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, who completely met every need and satisfied every heart.

Another glory-crowned series of revivals came as a result of a "Tithe of Time" spent in prayer. The idea for this was borne in upon my heart during one of the hours of personal devotion. For a whole month was such a plan feasible on a busy mission station? Work in the schools and in all the phases of mission work could hardly be interfered with for a month. But there was a way by which it could be done -- by cutting off some time from each end of the night and by using the lunch hour, two hours and twenty-four minutes a day could be spent in prayer. At the close of the Sunday morning service I presented the plan that had been laid upon my heart. An invitation was given to all those who wished to join me in this to quietly slip to their knees in prayer. Almost instantly the great majority of the Christians knelt and presented themselves to God. A great wave of tenderness enveloped the service. God owned the plan.

Throughout the month it was increasingly easy to pray. It seemed the very spirit of prayer pervaded the place. Services became charged with the power of God. It was a time, too, when verses upon verses of God's Word as living coals burned their messages indelibly upon hearts.

During this month a group went to Poponyane for a week-end meeting. From the first, God was there, but the climax of the meeting was on Saturday evening. Alice Khumalo, preacher of the hour, came on the platform but knelt quite a distance from the little table that served as a pulpit and began to pray. Other worshipers entered quietly and knelt in their places. Soon a volume of prayer energized by the Holy Spirit himself rose from every lip. For two hours this mighty prayer continued. Seekers after pardon or purity found an unobstructed way direct to the

Throne. One by one they came through to perfect victory. All discordances were swept aside; they were at one with Him. A great praise meeting followed. It seemed that a little corner of heaven itself had filled that little church. The same holy atmosphere that called forth from the disciples those words, "Let us build here three tabernacles," gripped these people. It was with difficulty that at last the benediction was pronounced and the congregation was dismissed.

Later Alice said, "Did you notice that I never took the preacher's place on the platform? When I came into the church I so greatly longed for the Holy Spirit to be the pre-eminent One today that I left the preacher's stool for Him. He accepted the invitation; He was the Preacher of the hour; He called the seekers; He led them through to triumphant victory; yea, He filled us all with His own presence. It was as the promise of Jesus, 'When the Comforter is come, He will baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.'"

Africa, Dark Africa

Tune: (Juanita)

Out in the darkness with no ray of light to guide,
Pining in sadness, souls for whom Christ died;
How He fain would save them, if His blood they made their plea,
But there's none to tell them of a love so free.

Into the darkness Jesus Christ himself did go,
Leaving the glory for a world of woe;
Heaven's best attractions were to Him as merest dross
When for Afric's millions He endured the cross.

Out in the darkness where the lost ones die in woe,
Following our Saviour we ourselves must go.
Breaking hearts are calling; hands are stretched across the sea.
Let us haste to answer, "We bring Christ to thee."

Chorus

Africa, dark Africa, heaven's light shall stream on thee,
Africa, sad Africa, Christ has ransomed thee.

* * * * *

11 -- KINDLING THE FIRE

Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee... all flesh shall see that I the Lord have kindled it: it shall not be quenched (Ezekiel 20:4748).

The shepherd of the veld uses a wisp of straw with which to light his fire. The Lord, when kindling the great fire of evangelism, uses far more costly torches. His flames are touched off by men and women.

Many of the churches in Swaziland are in existence because of real self-denial and hardship; not a few are monuments to the extreme sacrifice. The two most outstanding causes of this are drought and malaria. These two dragons have drawn many of the Christian workers into their nets; yet they have never been able to expel from their domains those whose hearts are burning to shed abroad the blessed story of redeeming love. One may fall, but another quickly rises to take his place; and the good work goes on in spite of the threats of want and woe. Their sheer love for Christ and His kingdom acts as a propelling force that refuses to look at difficulties.

Simeon, a pastor of a little church, sat in the mission office and was, though very unusual for him, the very picture of dejection. He was alarmingly thin and over his face spread a yellow pallor. Never really strong, perhaps even bordering on tuberculosis, two years before he had had a nervous disorder from which he had not yet fully recovered. But the volume of desperation which poured from his knotted brow and troubled black eyes did not have its basis in his physical condition.

He had come to ask permission to obtain some secular employment by which to get money enough to pay off some debts. The family was absolutely without food, so he had borrowed a sack of corn from a Catholic priest who lived near him. This must be paid for. The children were so in need of clothes that, to hide their nakedness, he was forced to buy a few garments at the little store on credit -- now the storekeeper was pressing him for this. For weeks they had not had enough salt to season their food and for months they had had no kerosene. The little cup-sized, chimneyless lamp had not shed its tiny flickering ray; therefore, night after night they had sat for a while around the fire outside and then had slipped off to bed in darkness. They were continually in need of soap with which to keep their bodies and clothing clean.

Such was the plea of one of the best preachers. No one was more energetic or industrious than he and his wife. Fourteen years previous they became pastors of a small outstation church, and by much prayer and hard work they had built it up to be one of the strongest on the Endingeni district. What a shepherd he was! Tirelessly he trudged the steep mountain paths or waded the African rivers, ever seeking those "other sheep" who had not yet come within the fold. And with what jealous care did he watch over the little lambs! There is not a more tender, more sympathetic, or kinder preacher in Africa. The church prospered under his care and leadership in every way. The offerings were good and, as there was seldom a crop failure in that area, they "got on" nicely.

But two years before they had left this church to pastor a small, struggling church where crop failures were frequent. Both years their gardens had withered and died in spite of all their efforts. The members of their church were few in number and, though willing, were extremely limited in their giving since they, too, were products of such environment.

The preacher raised his dark troubled eyes and said, "My missionary, tell me -- what am I going to do?" Then in a few moments he bravely added, "If I can get those debts paid, perhaps I can get along. God will help me." Such courage and faith in the face of such burdens as were his demanded admiration. Although it was utterly beyond his powers to carry on unless God miraculously helped him, he did not ask to be moved: he did not ask to be given money. He only asked to be given a little time to spend in secular work in order to help himself. To grant his request would mean defeat and might expose him to temptations to neglect his work to which God had called him. He was given enough to meet his immediate needs and the problem was taken to the Throne. After this all dejection was gone; his eyes smiled, his lips poured forth praise. God was good. He could now go back and center his whole heart in the work of "kindling the fire."

Down in the heart of the fever area there was, governed by one chief, an entire district into which no church had gone. This place was the subject of many prayers. When the Lord in answer to those prayers threw out the challenge, "Who will go for me?" the impact of the call seemed to be directed toward a little wiry, fiery, industrious preacher and his wise, prayerful, zealous wife. Conviction grew that they should be the ones to say, "Here am I. Send me to Nyakato." And this they did wholeheartedly, not only to the Lord, but to their district leaders.

It was a most impressive occasion when this pastor together with James Molambe, native district leader, and I went to request permission officially of the chief to erect a church in his area. Outside the kraal under a typical bushveld tree sat the chief and his counselors. Just what their attitude would be, no one knew. Even during the speeches made by the party of Christian workers their faces were, as is usual among the abantu, expressionless. The burden that had been upon the hearts of many people for this place and the deep conviction on the heart of the preacher that this was God's choice for his field of service were evidences that the opening of a new work here was in the providence of God, who makes no mistakes. Consequently they were not concerned about the ultimate decision, but no one could be sure as to what these rulers would say as far as "now" was concerned. The abantu are never in a hurry; what can be done tomorrow requires no undue haste today. A thing worth while will bear reflection and reflection takes time. No people would more readily agree with Emerson in his statement, "Nothing is so vulgar as to be in a hurry." Because of this renowned characteristic of the Swazi, the answer of the chief took us all by surprise. His welcome was warm and his verdict was couched in the words, "I wish you had come with poles and nails prepared to start building today." To express appreciation for this unusually quick decision, he was given two pieces of old automobile tires, the E-Z-Fit shoes of the primitive Swazi. As he bade us farewell that day, he was beaming with pride and pleasure both in his prized gift and in the anticipation of having a church and a school to grace his district.

To the new pastor and his wife was left the responsibility of building a small two-roomed mud and wattle structure that could temporarily serve as church and living quarters for the pastor. A small cook hut was to be built at the back. Poles were hard to get in that area and, as the soil was extremely sandy, the mud had to be carried from quite a distance. These difficulties, however, had the advantage that in the process of getting materials the workers would have greater opportunities for meeting the people and making them acquainted with the idea of attending church in their own district. Those days of building were camping days, for the preacher had taken with him the very minimum of supplies.

Finally the glad day came when they were ready to move their possessions to their new parsonage. The day appointed for the task turned out to be a very cold and blustery one. Into the pick-up was packed their furniture, all homemade -- a bed, two rickety cupboards, a table, and three chairs. Besides these there were several three-legged iron cooking pots, two boxes of clothing and other necessities, and a bag of corn. All these were tied as securely as possible. But to be sure that they would ride well, both native workers climbed into the back to watch their only household possessions.

Their children, who had been staying with their grandmother during the building days, would come later. The wind was blowing mercilessly and the cold was exceedingly penetrating. Protected as they were by canvas curtains only, and those not very securely fastened, they must have felt the exposure keenly. Looking at them, however, one could not see the least semblance that they were in discomfort. They were too radiantly happy to be affected very much by climatic conditions. After traveling about thirty miles down through the bushveld, the car turned for the last lap of the journey out through the open veld. This stretch, though only two miles in length, slowed progress considerably; for there were thorn bushes and snags of trees to dodge and a nasty little stream to ford. Eventually the car drew up before the crude house, which in short order was made into a "home." God in His mercy veiled from their eyes that which their coming to that bushveld parsonage would entail. Together we knelt as I committed them to the Lord and prayed for the people among whom they had come to preach Jesus Christ and His power to save.

Winter days gave place to the spring rainy season. Rain in the bushveld brings the mosquito, and the mosquito brings malaria. Before long runners came from Nyakato, requesting quinine. One after another of the family was laid low with the fever. One day word came that the preacher was dying. The car went down and brought back a very sick man, but God in His mercy spared his life. Late one evening, months later, a messenger came to say that the oldest son was dead. Again the car went hurrying off through the night to Nyakato. Fortunately the child was not dead, but he was unconscious with cerebral malaria, and, had medical help not reached him at the earliest possible moment, he could not have lived long. A couple of hours before daybreak he was placed in a comfortable bed in the Endingeni dispensary where, through the wise and competent care of the nurses, he was brought back to health.

But the day came when the preacher himself came to report that their little girl about eight years of age was lying at home with malaria in its worst form -- black-water. Even though a few people do recover from black-water fever, the very word has an ominous sound. Since the nature of the disease forbids the moving of the patient, the efficient African nurse, Beta Maluka, was sent down to care for the child. All that was possible to stay the hand of death was done, but to no avail. The little soul slipped away to be with Jesus. At the funeral the victory of the parents was a great sermon to those in that dark land. They learned as they never could have learned otherwise that to the Christian it is possible to declare, "Death is swallowed up in victory." The mother, especially, used the opportunity to point others to Jesus and the light of His gospel.

Just nine days later another messenger came running to the mission station to announce that the pastor's wife, Silome, was also a victim of the dread black-water. By the time the car arrived at the humble little parsonage, the woman was already past any help Miss MacDonald,

the missionary nurse, could give her. She lay wholly unconscious and apparently very near the border of worlds. The facts were few. Early that morning the disease had taken hold of her and before breakfast, evidently realizing how firmly she was in its clutches, she had sent runners to call us missionaries and her husband who, though suffering from malaria himself, had gone the day before to keep his appointment as evangelist in a revival meeting at a neighboring church. Fortunately for the girl schoolteacher, who would have been alone in this crisis otherwise, some relatives were visiting in this home. At noon she called these into the house and spoke for the last time rationally. These were her words:

"I am going home today. My little girl is at the gate waiting for me. If my husband were here, I would go now. I will try to wait for him, but I am afraid I will not be able to speak when he arrives. Tell him that he must take good care of the children and do his utmost to see that they are Christians. They must serve God. And you, Teacher, please write down my debts. I owe Marietta thirty-five cents, which I borrowed, and I promised Mina twelve cents for sewing the little girl's dress on her machine. Tell the preacher to pay those bills. Also tell him not to spend money for planks; I do not wish to be buried in a box. Those long reeds which grow near the marsh can be woven together to make a casket. Also tell him not to buy any white material; there is a sheet in that box of mine. Use it to wrap my body in. Tell him that our little girl is standing at the gate waiting for me. Good-by."

She lapsed into unconsciousness from which she never rallied. Her husband arrived about two o'clock and we missionaries a little later, but she never knew that we were there. Exactly twenty-eight hours after she first felt the lash of the disease she passed away. Beautiful in life, she was beautiful in death. She had been saved as a very young girl; several years later she was sanctified wholly, and lived a consistent, Spirit-filled life. She had been a marvelous character, really. Blessed with a happy disposition, she was always jolly and optimistic. Too, she was an exceptionally good worker and could be trusted with difficult tasks. She could be said to be a person who "lived by the side of the road to be a help to man." For indeed the Swazis made a road to her door wherever she lived; and, whether the help they sought was of spiritual or material nature, to the limit of her power her service was theirs.

Of course her death was a tremendous blow to her husband, but he manifested a marvelous fortitude. It never seemed to occur to him to question the "why" of this paramount climax of his adversities. He could trust when he was not permitted to see, and he never doubted the wisdom nor the love of Him who doeth all things well. His wife's people were furious in their censure of him for having placed his family in that death-ridden bushveld area. In the face of their tirade he remained calm. His spirit was mellow and his answer to them unforgettable.

"I married her more than twenty years ago," he said, "and wonderful years they have been. We have lived like two happy children. She has always sent me whenever and wherever she wished, and I was glad to do her bidding; I have sent her when and where I desired, and she has ever cheerfully gone. We have never spoken a cross word to each other in all these years. We promised each other that we would love and be true to each other till death do us part. Now it has separated us; but I shall go to join her. I did not bring her to this place; neither did the missionaries send us here. "She wanted to come; she never wanted to leave. She said that, if it meant the giving of her life for this people, she would gladly do so. We agreed upon that. Now

my child lies buried here; today my wife will be put to rest beside her. I have only one fear that the missionaries will take me away. I wish to stay on here and, if my grave is soon to be dug beside theirs, that will be all right. Jesus died for these people."

Bantu-like he tried to bear up under his sorrow and burden with no sign of emotion. He succeeded remarkably well until the procession started from the house to the spot a few yards away where the grave had been dug near some cactus plants. On this journey he looked up into heaven and began to weep with hard, convulsive sobs; tears ran down his face like rain. This lasted only a very little while, however, for he caught hold of himself and forcibly restrained that flow of emotion; and by the time they reached the grave he was able to mingle his voice with the others in singing that song that only Christians can sing, "I Will Meet You in the Morning."

With feelings too deep and mingled to be described, I spoke the words committing the body to the grave. Later I went to the preacher and urged him to return with us to the mission station, emphasizing the fact that he needed a period of rest and a change of scene. But he insisted on staying on. There were the other children to consider, and it was reaping time. His burdens would be increased if the food in their little gardens should spoil for lack of attention that would be needed just now. "Thank you, Daughter of the King," he said. "I am not afraid to stay here. Now I must do her work as well as mine, you know."

A few weeks later when the District Annual Meeting convened at Endingeni, this preacher was in his place with the other workers. When the Endingeni head evangelist gave his report, he gave an account of the two deaths; he reminded the people that the pastor was not well; he hoped that the Stationing Committee would remember this fact in making their arrangements for the new year. While he was yet speaking, Jona, the one concerned, started to sing the song, "But Souls Are Dying in Darkness." His voice broke and he began to weep audibly as though his heart would break. All over the house tears coursed down cheeks. Later, however, when he himself was giving his report for the year, he was careful to explain that he was not crying because of his own grief in the loss of his loved ones. He knew they were safe in the presence of their Saviour. He wept for those who were without God and without hope. He pitifully begged to be allowed to return to the place where God had called him to work.

The members of the Stationing Committee felt that, even if that district should be left without a pastor for the time being, they could not grant the request that would surely mean the sacrifice of a worker. They presented an alternative plan, which he was obliged to accept. By it he was to come out of the low veld for one year with the privilege of visiting his people at Nyakato once each month. The other services of the month at his little church would be cared for by bands of Christian workers from Endingeni School. Several months later when a man who was accustomed to life in the bushveld offered to take up residence in the little parsonage, the one who had kindled the fire with such costly fagots rejoiced that once again the Nyakato veld should have an abiding shepherd.

* * * * *

God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day (Gen. 1:4-5).

An ox wagon lumbered slowly up and over the Pigg's Peak mountains and came to rest near to a small clump of trees. Beneath those trees the oxen were out-spanned and a small campfire was built. The light and the warmth of the fire provided the only welcome to Rev. and Mrs. Harmon Schmelzenbach, those first shepherds of the veld, at the place known as Endingeni. That was yesterday -- a yesterday so close in proximity to today that one of those who climbed down from that wagon and gathered the fagots for that first blaze is still carrying a torch and setting aflame other fires.

Today the camp tents have given place to commodious and substantial buildings. The oxen no more travel such long treks over a pathless veld. In their place, motor cars and lorries go from place to place over roads that did not then exist. The first two converts of yesterday are still present, but joining hands with them are hundreds of others who have been enlightened by the glows that have spread out over Swaziland, along the Reef of the Johannesburg area, up through northeastern Transvaal and east through Gazaland in East Africa. From the first tiny embryo school in the home of the missionary, where a handful of wondering abantu were gathered together for an introduction to the Ba, Be, Bi, Bo, Bu's of learning, there have sprung forth numbers of schools manned by qualified abantu teachers who are instructing hundreds of abantu boys and girls. From the crude bandaging of cuts and bruises there have developed a large and well equipped hospital and ten other hospitals-in-miniature called dispensaries -- all having trained medical workers.

Everywhere where these institutions are, and in still more places out beyond, there is the church. Always the church is first. Institutions are a part of the aftermath. They follow where the church leads the way. As the Holy Spirit breathes upon the gospel fires kindled by the missionaries and native ministry, the glow brightens and extends on and on, lengthening its borders, ever stretching out into the regions beyond. That has been the main characteristic of yesterday and today. So it will be tomorrow -- if the Church goes first.

One time all the native workers and their families met together with the missionaries on the banks of the Black Mbuluzi River for a week of fellowship, recreation, and of a general drawing nearer to one another and to God. It was a blessed occasion; something akin to the young people's camps at home, with the exception that here all ages mingled together. There was beautiful harmony. Participation by all in the games and races melted away age differences and fused the youngsters and those" no longer so young into an understanding fellowship. Preparing meals and eating together around one festal board created a spirit of unity. One great family were at home together. Most precious of all was when, in the cool of the day, God came down to walk and talk with all of them as His children. For many, those early morning devotions and evening services were times of heart searching. A number of the preachers' children who had been, spiritually speaking, on the fence or decidedly on the wrong side of the fence, yielded themselves to the Saviour.

At the close of one of those sacred times the old blind district leader, Solomon Nzimande, arose and began to speak. He spoke about the yesterdays when, in his youth and vigor, he had

answered the call of God to preach the glorious gospel of His Son. He related some of the battles and victories of his days of ministry. He gloried in the never-failing help of an all-loving Heavenly Father. Closing, he spoke in this strain:

"My earthly sun is setting; I am nearing the land of eternal dawn. I am already more there than I am here. This is the time I have lived for and it is most glorious. But when I think of what I am leaving behind -- many souls who have never known a spiritual sunrise -- I think I cannot go until I know that someone is carrying on in my place. Isn't there someone here who will point souls to the Sun of Righteousness in the place of this old blind umfundisi?"

Instantly a twelve-year-old boy, son of two most faithful servants of the Cross, arose to his feet and answered, "I will do it." The lad was called to the platform and the blind preacher, with his hands on the boy's head, prayed a prayer of such fervency that one could easily imagine the scene to be a repetition of that of the prophet Eli presenting the boy Samuel in dedication to God's service. That boy has continually testified to a definite call from God to preach the gospel.

He is only one of a number of P.K.'s in that meeting who responded to the call of the Master to enter into His vineyard. One other time, there was on the hearts of the missionaries and the abantu workers a great concern because at that time there were very few who were showing evidence of having any desire to preach. There was no dearth among the Christian young people who were ready to be teachers or nurses. Surely they could serve the Lord in that capacity. And there was the added allurements that both professions had opportunities of supplying government-aided posts, which guaranteed an attractive salary plus a cost-of-living allowance. This fact loomed so large in the eyes of some that it was impossible for them to see Isaiah's vision of the Lord "high and lifted up." Nor could they hear His voice saying, "Whom can I send, and who will go for Me?"

No one would discount the value of the work of teachers and nurses. On the other hand there are very few who are not aware of the fact that, if this dark land is to behold the rolling back of darkness in the dawning of God's day, it must come from the work of God-anointed, Spirit-filled, zealous preachers and evangelists. As in days of old enlightenment of the soul generally comes through the "foolishness of preaching." The building-up process that insures strong Christian characters will demand the services of all types of workers, but the primary essential is the proclaiming of Redeeming Love, which produces new creatures in Christ Jesus. Hence these workers did well to be concerned.

The Book lays down special instructions mapping the course to take under such circumstances. "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest." Those workers followed instructions. What a volume of petitions were daily carried to the Throne! It was the main theme that was presented at every family altar. Individuals carried real intercessory burdens. We of Endingeni and Pigg's Peak districts asked the Lord to call definitely at least ten new workers in the interval between that time and the time of the new term opening of the Bible school. These ten were to come from those northern districts. Of course we expected that other districts would have from their own number those who, in the thrusting-forth process, would feel the "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel of Christ," and for these we

earnestly prayed. But in our prayers for the northern districts there was the special petition, "not less than ten of our own, Lord."

Camp-meeting time rolled around. On Sunday afternoon the principal, Miss Lovelace, and several students from the Bible School were in charge of the service. They spoke from their hearts "as the Spirit gave them utterance." There were no high pressure methods used to work on the emotions of the people. It was the anointing of the Spirit of God on the speakers that made the service blessed. At the close the principal asked how many young people in the congregation knew that God had definitely called them to preach the gospel. Immediately twelve young men and women arose to their feet. What a wave of exultation and thanksgiving swept over that crowd! God had answered prayer.

In other places He began to move on hearts. One young man, the son of one of the district leaders, had finished his junior high school and, after taking a three-year industrial course, he started to teach in Natal. As he was very conscientious in his work, giving special attention to detail, he soon won for himself high commendation from the inspector of schools. Some time later, as a result of the good reports of his work, the Natal Department of Education offered to finance him through an additional normal course in a certain school, at the completion of which he was to be given a better position with a comparatively high salary -- certainly much higher than he could secure in Swaziland -- in one of their schools. He accepted their offer and enrolled for the course. They were investing in him because they felt reasonably sure that he would make good and that they would greatly benefit from his services in the days to come.

It was in the beginning of his fifth year away from his Swaziland home that the news of his good prospects for the future filtered back to the members of his tribe. Everywhere the consensus of opinion was, "He will never return to Swaziland. He is lost both to his church and to his tribe." Even his father gave up hopes. This opinion was intensified a while later when the young man wrote back to his parents that he had chosen a Natal girl to be his wife. This news was the last straw to any hopes his parents cherished that their son would yet return home to spend and be spent for the Swazis.

But even while he was yet in the midst of his studies God took a hand in the situation. His words were unmistakable: "I want you in Swaziland." Daily this was pressed upon the heart of the young fellow until there could be no doubt as to what he ought to do. Alone he faced the issues. It was not an easy matter to settle. He was studying this advance course at the expense of the government. If he should refuse to teach in Natal schools, he must refund the entire amount of the bursary. That, coupled with the giving up of the promised well-paid position with its chances of advancement, was no small item. Another major question was that of facing his bride and her parents. She was a city girl. Always she had lived in or around Durban. Her ways of living were far in advance of those of the backward Swazis. Then there was the matter of being separated from her family. She could not hope to travel that intervening distance of nearly a thousand miles very often.

However, the hours of questioning and struggling which he passed through must remain a matter of conjecture, for they are for the most part his own secret. All that those in Swaziland know is the final decision. One day a letter came saying, "Father, the Lord has made it very plain

to me that He wants me in Swaziland. Furthermore I believe He wants me to preach the gospel. I have placed myself in His hands. When the school term ends, I am bringing my wife home to stay." He kept his word and at present he is at Endingeni, one of the finest specimens of Swazi young manhood that could be found anywhere. And his every talent is unstintingly used in the service of the King of Kings. Thank God for such wholehearted response to His call!

By his side there is working another young man who is just as consecrated. At any time he may be found teaching in the school, going across the mountains to preach at one of the outposts, gathering the boys in their hostel for a prayer meeting, superintending the Sunday school, or doing any menial tasks that need to be done. He is married and his home is a shining example of what a Christian Swazi home should be. His wife is a preacher of no little ability herself. This fellow is another example of what a difference the words, "But God," can make in the life of an individual. As a younger lad, he was a problem. He was reared in the home of his uncle, who was and is a real saint of God and a giant in faith and righteousness. The boy no doubt felt the tremendous influence of that godly life and undoubtedly he aspired to walk in his uncle's footsteps; but like all people without God he found that, when he would do good, evil was present with him. That evil resulted in gross misconduct for which he had to be severely disciplined. He went off to Johannesburg to work in the gold mines, but stayed only a year. He said that the Lord was continually talking to him until he could stand it no longer. Back in Swaziland again, in his own home he knelt before God, confessed his sin, and yielded himself wholly to do the whole will of God. At that time he felt a distinct call to preach. Several years have passed, but not a waver has been seen that would in any way indicate that anything of the old life remains. He is indeed a new creature in Christ Jesus, filled and thrilled with the Spirit of God.

Not long since a very talented girl came to us and with a very serious countenance said, "I have been thinking much about the bushveld schools and the lack of teachers for those places, and I believe the Lord wants me to go down there to teach. I come to offer myself. You may send me anywhere you think best."

"You realize why it is hard to get teachers there, do you not? You know that the deadly mosquito lives there, and many people suffer from malaria." It was necessary for us to make the girl see just what her offer might mean, and it was advisable to try to probe the girl's heart to see what her attitude was toward going.

"Yes, I know that that place is in the fever area and that I may become a victim of that disease. But God loves the people down there and He wants them to have the opportunities that we have had to know Him and to have schools. There are many little children there that need help. I believe God has called me to go, and He will take care of me."

"This is a beautiful spirit and God will bless and honor you for presenting yourself. But, will your parents agree for you to go? You must have their permission before we can appoint you to a school."

"I do not know, but I believe they will agree. The Lord will work everything out. Since this is the last week of school, may I go home to ask their permission? I will get back before Friday."

Permission was granted, and early the next morning the girl with one of her school companions set out on a twenty-five-mile hike to her home. They were prayerful and trusting the Lord to go before them and prepare the way. The prayers of the missionaries and the students followed them, and there was an assurance that the hand of God was upon that splendid Swazi girl. It was not surprising, therefore, when on Tuesday evening she stood at the door of the mission home, smiling broadly. "Bathi ku lungile." "They say it is all right."

Today she is delighting the hearts of the workers with whom she lives and is doing an excellent job with the numbers of children she has gathered around her in the little bush school. Surely the tomorrows of those children will be different for her having come to them.

Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, and He will thrust forth workers. He is busy at His task. Here and there He is placing His hand on this boy and that girl and presenting to them the same matchless challenge, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." And they are leaving their nets gladly at His command.

There is another side to the story too. Back on blue Galilee a band of fishers toiled all the night through without landing a single fish. In the morning they were tired and weary and not a little discouraged. Then Jesus came! He knew just where the fish could be found. There is no doubt that He drew the fish together on that occasion. "Launch out into the deep," was His command. And as they obeyed His Word they made the greatest haul they had ever seen at one time.

Once again His "Launch Out" is ringing over the air. And He is gathering the fish together! Moreover the fish are anxious to be caught. The scouts who have gone out to investigate places that might be included in a program of expansion have returned with the cries of many people ringing in their ears, "Please come and help us. We have no missionaries, no churches, no schools for our children." The number is so great that the scouts come back with sinking hearts rather than any feeling of exultation. "We cannot possibly enter all those places now," is their verdict. And yet they have gone to comparatively few places. Away out beyond there are others who are looking and pleading for help. One group up in northwestern Africa have sent their petition to America to the Church Headquarters, "We need you and want you. Won't you please send us missionaries, nurses, teachers?" Very soon there will be some who will go there to "lift up their eyes and look on the field." Undoubtedly they will find it "white already to harvest."

What does it all portend? It must be tomorrow in embryo. Eye hath not seen, neither can it be conjectured, just what will be the glories of the day; but, as David long ago declared (so it can be known with certainty), the Lord is directing the dawning and "A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about. His lightnings enlightened the world... Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart."

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THE END