

DEAR BRETHREN,—We are constrained to acknowledge, with deep gratitude, the presence, loving care, and guiding wisdom of God in directing and helping our efforts throughout the year which has just closed.

Scarcely had the year opened when it became evident to us all that the natives would soon be involved in a war with the Portuguese rulers of the country; and what would be the effect of such a struggle on our mission work we could not forecast. At this point Mr. Lee was called from the station to fill a gap made by the retirement of Mr. Searle, from Benguela, before anyone could be found to fill his place. (Mr. and Mrs. Searle could not stand the climate, and hence were ordered away without delay.) Miss Clarke, who had been appointed to our station, and who was then on her way to this field, was not expected to settle with us for a time (she has not yet seen our station nor been seen by me). Our outlook was not bright. There was little room for us to expect any marked improvement in our work. We were almost deprived of the hope of being able to hold our own. With what joy then are we able now to report progress in every department of our work.

The war came, and it was a cause of much anxiety for a time, and kept us in daily council with the natives. Many were killed, several villages were burnt; the chief was captured; a fort was built and garrisoned with soldiers, but our station has suffered no injury, and the district of country round about us escaped without any loss.

*Building.*—Work in this line was carried on with little interruption, and with more expedition than heretofore. A fence round our premises has been built, which adds greatly to our comfort and convenience. The road and bridge across the river have been completed, and they are now rapidly becoming one of the chief thoroughfares in the country, besides bringing us into easy contact with the villages. Three cabins have been erected to meet the wants of our growing family of boys, besides an hospital and dispensary, none of which buildings have been a tax on the mission funds. A permanent house for one missionary family is now rapidly approaching completion. We greatly need a school-house, but had neither

time nor means at our disposal during the year to erect one.

*Medical.*—No regular physician has been in charge of our medical department, yet we have been able to minister to the wants of a large number of people. Those who have sought our help have been suffering from various complaints, but these were chiefly of a simple character. We have now about twenty patients a day under care.

*School.*—We began the session with only five names on the roll of our boys' school, and with scarcely any material on hand to carry on the work; we have since received an ample supply of books, slates and other requisites for immediate use; and after revising our roll, find that we have now forty scholars. We have not been able to devote more than two hours a day, on an average, to the school, yet the lads have made good progress. In four months two boys were able to read for themselves the Gospel by John, and they did not know the alphabet previous.

An attempt to open a girls' school met with considerable encouragement for a time; but in the absence of a lady teacher, and in consideration of various other matters, it seemed best not to continue the effort for the present.

Evangelistic evening worship has been conducted with regularity throughout the year, and has been attended by an average of thirty-three. The interest manifested at these services has often been touching in its simplicity and earnestness. From two to three services have been conducted each Sunday. A course of sermons delivered at these meetings have led us twice through the Gospel of John; and through six chapters of the Gospel of Mark. In addition to the above a number of addresses have been delivered on some of the chief events in the Old Testament. At the beginning of the year our congregations averaged thirty. For the past three months they average one hundred and twenty-five. Our house is too small to hold the people; the little place is often darkened by those who crowd about the door and windows.

Our relationship with the people seems to be steadily improving; certainly we are admitted to a larger place in their confidence and respect than was accorded us in the past. Our greatest joy