

## Our Work Abroad

### THE ANNUAL REPORT FROM MISS ALICE BOOKER

Peniel Hall Farm, Bolivia

For the year March 31, '24, to March 31, '25.

In many ways this year has been the most encouraging, yet, in our work here. There have been, perhaps, few definite results and yet we have really gained in many ways.

With an enrolment, last year, of 175 in the school, (which is more than double the enrolment of any other year) we became acquainted with many more people, especially young men and boys, then ever before. These have all received some teaching in the Gospel, and have learned some hymns. This certainly will have results.

Then we have entered more homes during the past year. This has come to pass both through calling and being called to treat sick people. Much of this work has been done in the homes of those who, four years ago, were our enemies.

When we reopened night school in March last year we had an unusually good attendance. In April, attendance and interest increased slightly. One Sunday night in May, when we entered Sunday School, we noticed four or five young men who were strangers, and eight or ten new boys. They paid excellent attention. In the following four or five weeks many more came. We found they came from Cilaya, the community of Indians on the Huarina side of us. A few had been coming already from that part, a distance of a mile and a half. Then this crowd came. They were interested—many came morning and evening. They were very anxious to learn the Aymara hymns, and would have me play them over and over.

Many young men and boys were coming from Tajara on the other side of us and, with the young folks from the farm, we had as many as eighty several nights. Our school is not equipped for so many, and they were sitting two in single seats, in the windows, wherever they could find a seat. It was difficult to handle so many of all ages and stages of learning. Mrs. Vickerson took the little beginners, and there were a great many, and I took the rest.

The people of Huarina heard of all this

and did all they could with threats and petty persecution to stop it. Fiesta time for the Chielaya community came on. Some of the most influential Indians said they would have no fiesta. But there were many still not ready to give up such a custom, and these were backed by the priest and the people of Huarina, to whom no fiesta would mean the loss of money they would get by selling alcohol. The young men folk left school to dance in the fiesta. There were sermons and talk against us—and we have seen no more of that fine crowd of men and boys.

Cold windy winter nights came, and the attendance dropped and for the last three months, the attendance was very small. I hoped to be able to continue school during November and December, when the weather would be finer, but was unable to make the experiment.

This year the school has been encouraging from the first. Even the morning attendance, though still small, is better than usual. There is much interest in the Tajara community and the night school is quite large enough for good work. Yesterday, passing in that direction on my way to treat a patient, I was called by some Indians. I went. The head official of Tajara was among them. They wanted me to write a letter to the President of the Republic to tell him that there is a teacher here (meaning myself) and asking him for an order to the Indians making school compulsory for their boys. We had some difficulty in making each other understood, and I did not write the letter, as there were some points to their plans which I did not understand. But this shows the great opportunities here for us either to take or to lose. The Indians are awaking, and will not long be content to remain ignorant. The situation is one which calls for prayer.

With what joy and thankfulness to God I report the one outstanding result of the year,—the conversion of a married man, Jerenimo Huanapaco. He is the first fruits of our work here. One night last winter a man came into the school, who was older than those who usually came. He was unknown to me. He said he wanted to learn to read. I thought he would come for per-