

Mount Salem Mission

Farmington Vt. January 23rd 1888.

Mr W. H. Melden

Dear Sir.

Yours dated July 24th 1887.

Was received with glad surprise and can fully read and I now make
an attempt to answer I am sorry I did not get your letter sooner
I did not receive it till late in December whether it lay in office at Montpelier
so long I am not able to say. I was greatly ^{dis}appointed on receiving it that
I did not get it sooner on account of the ^{made} request you ^{regarding} your November
meetings, but as it is good to be insistent in season and out of season
I will not cease to pray for the upbuilding of Christ Kingdom on earth
and that God will put his spirits into all our hearts that we may be more
diligent to and for his cause this new year, I have been trying to get some
of my people awakened to a sense of their duty, but have not been successful
as yet but I have not given up the struggle, The Churches indeed ~~need~~
among us need to be stirred up and to encourage others to go forth with the Gospel
in heart and hand, I cannot express myself as I feel on this subject,
We need help the field are wide ready for the harvest but the laborers
are few there are several towns around me that I can visit with the help
of my youngest son, as he can speak the Passa language very fluently,
My heart is in this great and good work for Christ and Egra my son
has promised to be with me in the work this year I told him of your
letter, and he will be my aid this year to try to help to impress on the
minds of the heathen, you asked me to let you know the particulars of my
work. It is small but interesting but I cannot weary you with all my

discouragements and disappointments I can only say if I had the means I could do more.

The Bassa Tribe are all for money some times in my limited state I take Baisers or two yards of calico or other article and give to the Native Chiefs to draw them out so that they can give me the little children to be at school. after when I think I have the children in good train some of their people will come and ask that they may go to visit a sick parent or friend and often there is not any truth in it. one of ^{my} little boys had to go home December 8th. Was quite sick is better now ^{but} before I can get him back I have two dollars to pay, but I am willing to do all this if it can be the means of any good, I am about to take a trip among the natives this month if my health will permit God has blessed me since I have been in this country I have no doubt but that you were acquainted with the Dickey's. I was raised in their family have been in this country 26 years Rev. John H. Dickey died since I left America one of my sons is named for Samuel Dickey & while my troubles have been and are many yet I have every reason to thank and trust God. The Bassa Tribe have what they call Sessie bush that is for the males.

The women have Ingre bush. If anyone even should pass close to the fence of these places they have to pay a large sum of money and often be pained too. The man they call the Devil is a man ^{man} all covered but his hands. When one dies he is call to state the cause of his death, and the people from all places are compelled to come together, take their flesh share their heads, and weep bitterly. if they do not they are caught and punished for witch craft. Some again are hanged alive for not confessing something perhaps they know nothing about & have kept a native chief from eating off one of his wife's fingers and ear (as was this awful) I have been told when talking to the natives

when I believe that they believe our way is good but these laws are so hard they say they are afraid. to pray or talk about the almighty God.

do pray for me that God will bless the effort which I am trying to put forth I am alone only my three children one daughter who has been a cripple four years she is a young woman, but being an invalid she can not help me. my oldest son living does not enjoy good health if I could only get the two oldest interested in the mission work I would ^{be} so glad I shall through much weakness try to enlarge my work since my son is willing to aid me, if through your kind letter I can get a little assistance I wish I could repeat to you that there ^{are} some who are willing to go forth I am teaching or rather my school is a native school. I will simply state that it is much better for us to have the children in our own families we then have the whole control over them the children when are away from all the evils of their people I am glad to be in Christian correspondence with you.

The ^{or distance} road I have to go to mail my reports and letters is sixty miles. We go five miles on foot.

Any thing that you will be please to do for me to aid me with my expenses I will be very glad to receive. I hope to hear from you soon. Will you please give me your name in full when you write again.

I remain yours very respectfully

Sophia E. Nurse

By any thing you may send
please send to care
of Mr R A Sherman