

Feb 8th / 95

Luebo

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Dear friend Gertie

Congo Free State
Africa

When your letter came to me I was just coming back to life from the very verge of the grave, and O how humble, and how very grateful I am that my Heavenly Father saw fit to spare me awhile longer. My constant desire is never to be less humble or grateful. But now let me tell you of our sad, and anxious time. You know long before this that Mr Sheppard, and his party were here with us. All are very light in color save Miss Fearing, but all refined, gentle and deferential in manners to us. Mrs Sheppard was pregnant, expected to be sick the middle of February, but like many other young wives made a great mistake, and when De Witt was sent for at noon of Dec 22nd he found that they had depended on Miss Fearing to take the case, and when she was told that Mrs Sheppard was in labor, became very nervous and said she could "dress and care for the baby." Poor woman! I did not much blame her, and De Witt and I had to take the case. Everything went well, and a dear little girl baby came just at 9, P.M. We waited the usual time

for signs no not dead. It was Mr Drayton of Bangor

for the Placenta to come away, but no sign of it whatever, we waited an hour, and still no results, I made slight traction on the cord but it never moved, again we waited still longer, and again I tried traction but to no^{avail} we dared not use force lest there was adhesion and naturally hemorrhage would result.

Dr Witt gave a dose of Ergot, but it was of no use; so we just simply put all in the hands of the Lord and prayed and waited.

We remained all night Saturday, all day Sabbath, only going home to meals, until 12.30 Sunday night, all day Monday, and until 12-30 Monday night, but just before leaving.

I made an examination, and thought I saw an object presenting itself, so when I called the others we told them if at any time Mrs Shepard wanted us to send for us, at 4, A.M. we were sent for, and when we got there I looked and there lay the Placenta whole & all well with the brave little Mother. She had said in the first part of her trial Dr Snyder I trust you, I have every confidence in you and Mrs Snyder, she clung tightly to my neck during the whole of her labor. Well I did for her all that was needed, and in less than two hours after I was in bed with a high fever. Last Xmas I was in bed with fever also.

The fever lasted until late Friday, on Saturday I got up but felt very feeble, and on Sunday afternoon Haematuria, (bleeding from the kidneys) set copiously, Dr Witt said I had nine bad hemorrhages in fifteen hours. I knew from the first the dangerous character of the disease and was conscious all the while. Dr Witt gave a purge immediately, then Hypodermic injections of Lurine in my arms night and morning.

And for days, no one thought I could recover, I had no thought but that I must go, and my constant prayer was Lord make me willing to go, if the call has come. But it distressed me because I could not feel the willingness I wanted to. I was too weak to talk, then when the hemorrhages were checked, came the battle of fighting the excessive exhaustion caused by loss of blood. My dear husband, with an almost despairing heart never lost a moment of time.

Mr Shepard would sleep in the dining room to be ready if Dr Witt needed help, he did this for eight nights. Miss Lillian Thomas spent every day here looking after the house, my children and seeing to my room. Dear Miss Fearing attended to Dr Witt's meals, poor Mrs Shepard's heart was with me, altho' she was in bed with the new baby, but just as soon as she got permission she came over every day to see

me. I cannot tell you on paper how kind they all were to me, Mr Sheppard was indeed a brother in every sense of the word. This sickness has brought us all very close together, it is doubtful if I ever get my former strength again, or am ever capable of doing much active mission work.

All watch me even now, as I crawl slowly ^{around} and care for me as if I were a dear sister.

May God abundantly bless them all. My Sheppard has been in bed with fever for two or three days, he was out and over to see me to day. To night Miss Lillian is in bed with fever, this is life in Africa. Since writing you last we have at last started a Home for our children, Miss Fearing & Miss Thomas are in charge of, Dr Witt Director twenty five girls, and seven little boys are the regular inmates, but ten larger boys are allowed to take their meals there, but not to sleep there. It is to be an Industrial Home. It takes a great strain from my heart and mind, I know when our girls are now at night. It was not a very light thing for me to look after twenty five girls of all ages in addition to all the rest I had to do. I wish you could see Mrs Sheppard's baby she is a dear little thing, her hair is just lovely and Mrs S. keeps her so dainty and sweet. She brings over to see me every fine day. Mr Sheppard says I worked hard for that baby.

Bertie dear I do not believe that I can do justice to your nice letter, we appreciate your letters ^{more} than I can tell, but I am utterly worn out as far as my body goes. I note your strictures on Mr O, he would never do for Africa, we most surely need another white man on this field but we want a consecrated christian. Your church must be pretty; but we would not feel at home in it. Is it not sad to that poor Dr Griffiths has gone, and under such disappointment, how our hearts ached for the dear ones he has left behind, Mrs Fuller wrote me of it. I just dread to answer Mrs G. and Daisy's last letters. Yes Bertie it does take a long time for our letters to reach each other. Your letter and several others dated Aug came in the same mail with several more dated November; a big difference was it not a mistake somewhere, but no doubt it is on this end of the line. How glad we are your dear husband still goes to the jail, he will surely be rewarded, and while you could dear friend you did what you could, and the Lord will bless you for it. I am quite a little disappointed in all C. C. Societies, we receive quite a few letters from them all asking for items of our life and work out here, to stimulate flagging interest. All want to be spiced up. I am so

sorry to hear of your poor health, do try and get
stronger Bertie, let something go, and live for the
dear little ones. At last I have the Photo of Dora
and "Gracie May". Dora is the image of her papa
and dear little Gracie May will be the same of
her mama, how proud you must be of them!
We were so glad you had the dear babies baptized
I got the flower seed all right dear, and thank
you so much for them, also the books & papers
which, are so much to us. Strange to say no other
"Households" have reached me but those you have
sent. Now let me tell you of another thing that
for a time gave me a little heart-ache until I
just put it into the dear Father's care. I have
not had a line from Mrs Phillips since July
last and then only have a sheet. I have written
a short note to ask if I have done anything to
deserve, if so I am not conscious of it.
It is hard, living so far away, and where our
life is so different from yours in every way.
If I should write and give one half of the
irritations and discomforts that we have
to endure, I don't know what you all would
think of us. The misery caused by "figgers"
alone are enough almost to distract one.
I am naturally patient and forbearing I
think, but when De Witt takes them out for
me sometimes the tears just rain down my

cricks from the pain, and now for over seven
 months we have both suffered from a terribly
 annoying skin irritation, a constant itching.
 It has just attacked Mrs Sheppard, I feel
 sorry for her with a young baby to take care
 of too. De Witt received a letter from Mr Lenfesty
 and I from Mrs L. & Lizzie, tell Mr L. if he
 knew how the most of our letters were written
 and when some of our friends would appreciate
 them more. De Witt has made a Primer and
 sent it to the Board to be published, a "Kiketi
 Primer for our children, and another goes ^{down}
 the coast by this mail to the Baptist to publish
 for us. He has translated "Peep O Day" and is
 now on the Gospel of St. Matthew, all this means
 hard work, and much night work, beside
 composing hymns. Yes dear I too am rejoiced
 over the Rescue Home and am sure it will be a
 source of blessing. No Gertie there are no "Alligator
 Pears" here, Pineapples Plantains and Banannas
 are our fruits. Now I must stop, and will try
 and keep you posted if spared. Thank you so
 much for all your kindness, the dimes are my
 keepsakes, what a dainty pattern your dress
 is. Anything dear is acceptable in this desolate
 place. The "Society box" has not come but we
 have the bill of it, we are now expecting the
 steamer, I will not close this just now.

