

and hear; then we can get medicine for our sick ones."

She told me, in her sad way, that many, many years before, they had been a happy and free people; they had much better clothes to wear, much better food, in greater abundance, and the people did not use alcohol nor cocaine. I told her we were going to teach her people not to use alcohol nor cocaine, and were going to start schools for their children. She expressed herself as being very happy indeed, but said again, "Oh, we have waited so long!"

A Mysterious Rescue

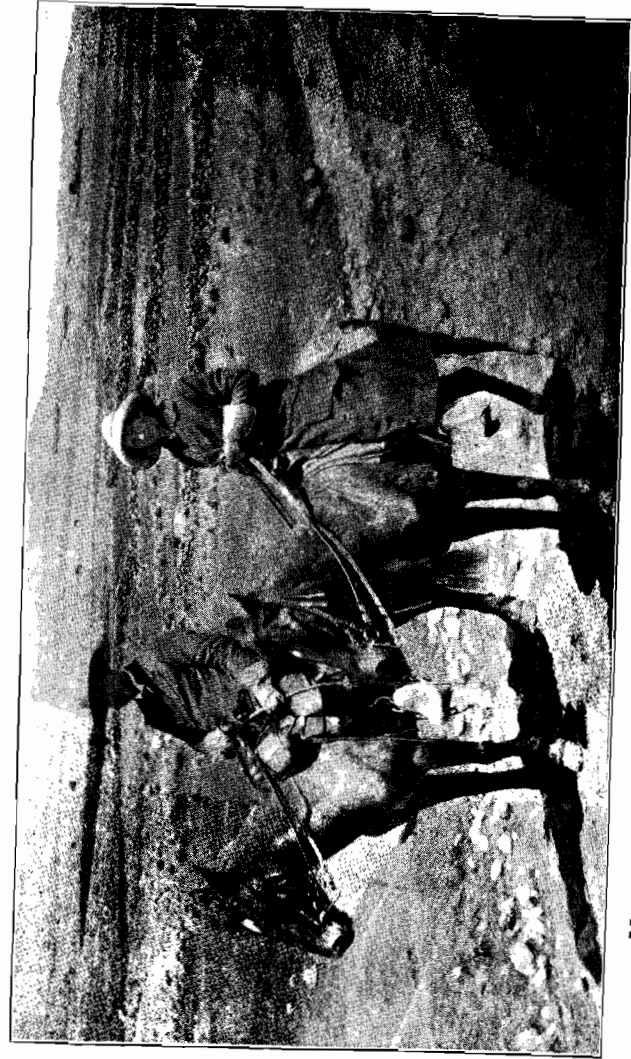
A FEW weeks after returning from this trip, we were made happy by the coming of three capable young couples from America to help us in the work. These were C. V. Achenbach and wife, John M. Howell and wife, and R. Nelson and wife. While they were taking training at the home station, getting acquainted with the Indian work, my wife and I were left freer to go among the people in the more distant districts.

We decided to visit some of the districts where interests had been created. Three trusty Indians accompanied us. The first place we went to was the province of the Esquiñas. We had previously organized a school there, with an Indian in charge. We found them holding their school sessions out of doors, because enemies had demolished the school building one night a few weeks before.

Our next stop was Jollini, about fifty miles to the north of Esquiñas. When we had gone about thirty miles, we found some Indians waiting for us. They had heard that we were

coming to see them, and had been waiting in the road for a number of days. They accompanied us, running beside the horses, and easily keeping up with them the whole remaining twenty miles. It was after dark when we arrived. The Indians were delighted to see us, especially Mrs. Stahl, whom they had invited to visit them. They tried in every way to make her comfortable; but of course the best they have is very crude. We slept on the earth floor, and the mountain wind blew through the hut. Little grows in these high, cold regions, and we could not take much food in our baggage. It is a problem to get feed for the horses. But the Lord helps as we work for Him, even in the most trying conditions.

We held meetings every day with these people. We found them quite well informed in regard to the gospel, as our native worker, Luciano, had done excellent work among them for several months. Here we baptized twenty-five very dear people, and opened a school with seventeen pupils. We placed in charge a strong native worker, who had taken about two years' training at the home station. We left them very happy. "Now we have a



MR. AND MRS. STAHL ABOUT TO START FOR A VISIT AMONG THE INDIANS

real school and a real church," they said. They told us they were tired of idols, images of stone and wood and mud. One woman informed us that she had thrown the image of St. Peter into the lake two months before, and it hadn't returned yet, so she knew that it was no god.

One thing that makes an Indian happy above all other things is to learn that he, a poor, downtrodden Indian, can go to God just as he is, without first having to talk to dead saints about his needs.

Just before we left this place, an Indian came from Queñuani to guide us to his district. It is well that he did; for our road led through a twelve-mile swamp, and we could not possibly have picked our way alone over the soft ground.

We were much impressed with the advantages at Queñuani for reaching thousands of Indians. It had boat connection with Bolivia and with Puno, our railway station to the coast; and there was a large market located at Yunguyo, only three miles away, where the Indians of Bolivia came in great numbers to do trading. The Indians pleaded most earnestly that a missionary be sent to them, and

they wanted a school also. We promised to send them help as soon as we had any one to send.

While we were lecturing among them, and treating the many sick they brought to us, we heard rumors from the town near, that the priests were inciting the people to kill us. The Indians about us seemed to be quite nervous over the matter, and told us there was great danger that the priests would raise a mob against us; but we replied that as we now had religious freedom in Peru, there was no likelihood that harm would come to us, much less that we should be killed. We did not realize the viciousness and ignorance of the priests, nor to what extremes they would go.

After we had been there for nearly a week, one morning we saw coming toward us, away out in the valley, a great crowd of people. As they came nearer, we distinguished two priests leading them. Many of the people were on horseback, and some were armed with rifles and shotguns. As they came nearer, we recognized among the crowd men of authority from the towns about. We could not believe that harm was meant for us. Near us was a building where the priests usually held their

religious feasts, and we thought they were coming to celebrate some such service.

We noticed Indians coming from all directions, until there were fully five hundred gathered together. The priests talked to them for two hours, and gave them alcohol to drink, then led them within one block of the hut where we were staying. Here they addressed the mob again, and we afterward learned that they were inciting the people to kill us, telling them it would be an honor, and that they would not be punished.

After talking to them about an hour, the priests set off what is called the *fugata*, a sort of large skyrocket, which is a signal, in these savage sections, for attack at a bullfight, or anything of that sort. What was our surprise to see that insane mob led by the lieutenant governor, the authority that should have protected us! He was mounted on a large horse, and was calling to the people to surround our house.

We thought even then that they were only trying to frighten us; but on they came, gathering large stones as they approached. Many were armed with long, steel-tipped whips and with clubs. The first thing they did was to

cut loose our five horses, and stab them with knives, so that they ran frightened down a ten-foot bank, and galloped wildly off across the valley. I tried to stop the horses, but was attacked by some of the mob, and struck several times with stones. One stone wounded me severely on the head, and the blood blinded me. I almost fell; but Mrs. Stahl pulled me into the hut and closed the door, just in time to avoid another terrible volley of missiles.

In another moment, however, hundreds of stones crashed through the door, smashing it into bits; and the yard was filled with shouting, frantic Indians. We quickly piled our baggage in front of the opening in the door, to prevent them from forcing their way in. They were shouting now loudly in the Indian language, "*Pichim Catum*," which means, "Catch them and burn them," all the while trying to push the baggage aside, and striking at us with their steel-tipped whips. The very fact that so many were trying to force their way in at one time, retarded them. Above the yelling of the Indians, we could hear the laughter of the priests.

In all this time, we had not forgotten to seek the Lord, and we were ready to meet

death for Him if He so willed. I hastily wrote a few lines to our coworkers and children at the home station, asking them to go on with the work. Mrs. Stahl prayed with and comforted the two Indian women who were with us in the hut. Our three native young men were brave and true, and were only concerned for us. With great difficulty did I restrain Luciano from rushing out upon the mob. Had he done so, he would have been torn to pieces in a moment.

At this juncture, the priests called loudly to the Indians to set fire to the straw roof; and soon some were coming with torches to obey the command. One of them climbed up on a pile of stones to light the roof; but as he applied the torch, the Indian woman who owned the hut jumped up on the stones beside him, knocking him off, and pulled out the burning straw with her hands. Just as she succeeded in tearing out the last of it, she fell down, and some of the straw fell upon her bare head, burning her severely. She afterward proved to be a very important witness because of this.

At this moment, when others of the Indians were making ready their torches to set fire to

the hut, and we had given up all hope of rescue, the whole mob, priests and all, withdrew. We came out of the hut in time to see the priests mounting their horses quickly, and fleeing across the valley, the mob following them.

We asked a frightened-looking Indian who stood near why these people had fled so precipitately. He said, "Don't you see that great company of Indians coming, all armed, to defend you?"

I did not see them. I turned to Mrs. Stahl, and asked her if she did. She said, "No." The Indian insisted that there was a great army of Indians coming to help us. We looked around, but could see no one. We know now that God sent His angels in that form to rescue us. There is no other way to account for what occurred.

As I was feeling very weak from the loss of blood, I lay down on the floor of the hut to regain my strength. Just at dusk, an Indian woman came bringing our horses. She had followed them for six miles, running "in the strength that the Lord gave," as she herself expressed it. We quickly saddled our horses,

mounted, and under cover of a fierce storm, left the place.

We suffered intensely from cold, and our clothing was wet through. But we rode on and on, the lightning sometimes blinding us, and at other times showing us the way. We had heard that the people in the next town also had risen up against us, having been influenced by the priests; so our Indian brethren led us by a road that did not pass near this place.

After we had gone about fourteen miles, Mrs. Stahl told me she was cold and weak, and feared she should fall from her horse, and not be able to go on. We had eaten scarcely anything that day. So we stopped out on the side of the mountain, spread our wet blankets on the snow, and thus passed most of the night. At daylight, we gathered up our frozen blankets, and continued our journey to the next large town, which was Juli, where we arrived about midday.

The authorities there had already been informed of the attack upon us, and were considerably exercised over the affair; and they promised to bring the guilty parties to justice. We did not push the matter, however,



HIGH MOUNTAIN INDIANS

because we believed that all was permitted for the advancement of the work, and we were of good courage. One of the largest mission stations we have is now flourishing near the place where we were attacked.

As showing how this occurrence was regarded by many Catholics even, I append a translation of an article published in the *Puno El Siglo* of June 21, 1916:

“CONCERNING THE CRIMES IN ONE OF THE VILLAGES OF THE PROVINCE OF CHUCUITO

“The scandalous events that have just happened in one of the villages of the Yunguyo district, profoundly exasperate the mind of every sensible person.

“The priests, Don Julio Tomás Bravo and Don Fermín Manrique, on the fifth of the present month, go to Queñuani, together with twelve citizens, heading a great multitude of Indians; they celebrate mass in the chapel; they preach to the ignorant multitude the extermination of the unfaithful; they frighten them into setting out to victimize Mr. Fernando Stahl and his wife, who are engaged in establishing a school for the native children, in the house of Clemente Condori. The

mob break into the house, they attempt to burn it, they throw stones, they howl, they break the head of the Protestant missionary, who miraculously escapes with his life; with knives they hack and cut their horses, making flight impossible. Meanwhile, the Catholic priests, those sainted(?) men, with the instinct of Nero, rejoice over their work, laugh, and celebrate the mortifying and criminal scene.

“Such is the savage act which, to the shame of the province of Chucuito and of the republic, has been committed by those who style themselves representatives of that benignant apostle and martyr of humanity called Jesus Christ.

“Without any doubt, there will be none, however strong an apostolic and Roman Catholic he may be, who will fail to denounce and condemn the brutal outrages that have been committed, after the celebration of a mass in which justices of the peace, lieutenant governors, and other notables, implored the Most High to kill, rob, and burn the human devils, and this in the twentieth century and in the full light of day.

“Now we wish to know: What sentiments, what ideals, what passions, what motives, or what commands have been fulfilled or interpreted in this form?”

“The Indian does not even forebode that his religious sentiments—if such name may be given the gross fanaticism in which the clergy have maintained him for so many centuries—may either suffer detriment or find support, in the inoffensive establishment of two Yankees, who generously cure sickness, dispense remedies, and teach the people to read, gratis; and who prohibit the vicious dances at the festivals, the use of alcohol and coca, etc.

“Is it perchance true that the doctrines of Christ authorize, teach, and give rules to burn, spoil, and kill those who do not believe in the holy Gospels?”

“No! In its blessed teaching, we have the greatest liberty as concerns the observance and preaching of its doctrines. The Nazarene said, ‘Let him that will, take his cross and follow Me.’ So that whoever oppose these principles are nothing less than the eternal Pharisees, who also merit the *eternal punishment*.

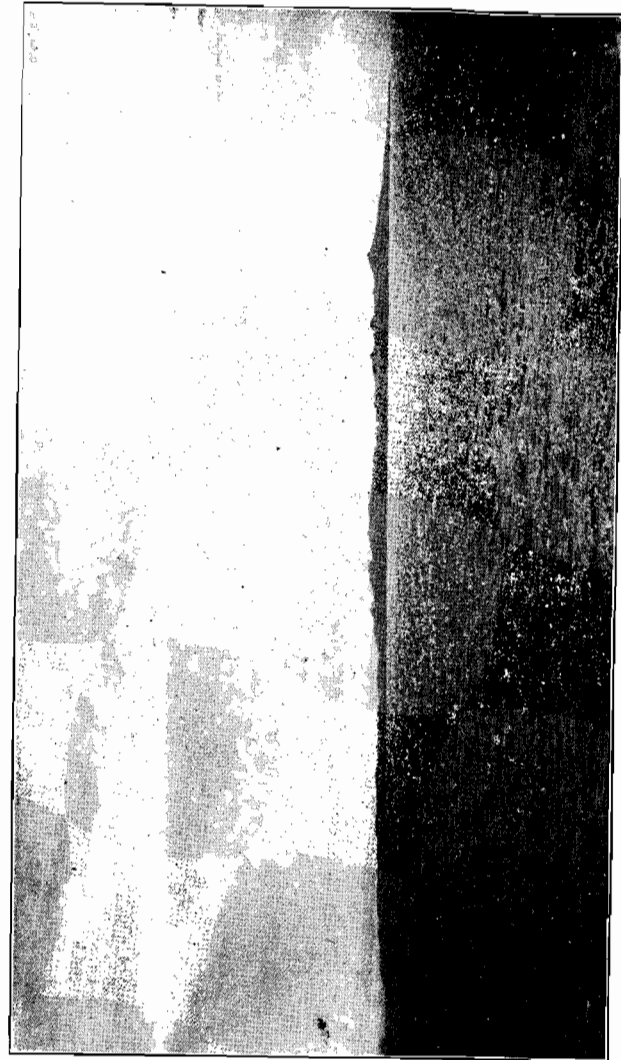
“The passions of the people have not been aroused, however much they may be susceptible to exasperation, on being wounded in their pride, in their desires, or in the faith they profess. Their temperament and psychology are only too well known. They are not capable of assuming intemperate or criminal attitudes, in defense of or against questions whose consequences the majority do not understand, and of which the rest care little, and some have even clear ideas, about the benefits experienced by those of the evangelical mission, with the humanitarian work being done at La Plateria, for example.

“The motives which the assailants have had are not mysterious. This is clear: They have pretended to frighten the missionaries, by means of an infamous rabble, without understanding the high purposes of their adversaries. Or perhaps they have maliciously and ridiculously belittled their work, without taking into account their great moral strength, their powerful perception, and how unconquerable they are in their enterprises. But have these who projected the scandal, measured the results they could produce by inciting a wild, ignorant, and drunken mob

to fall upon defenseless beings—or have they always taken into account that they feared the power of the devils?—It is a miracle that tragic consequences are not to be lamented at this time.

“In the disgraceful evil, no other force, then, has dominated than that which the worthless animal resorts to in his own stupid defense. It matters not whether it comes from the common priest or the highest church functionary.

“For more than three hundred years, the priests have kept the native race in the most deplorable and inhuman condition, reaping the profits of their work, worse than parasites. Nor can they or any one else say that the government is responsible for such a situation. The governing of the state has always been managed Jesuitically by them, who have never concerned themselves with establishing even a school to instruct the flock, which is their duty. The result is that they are to blame for the present situation: they have sold the sheep, and as Judas, they should pay for their sin and faults. It is only now that they are profoundly troubled by the awaken-



THE ISLAND OF THE SUN, LAKE TITICACA

ing of the race which for their own benefit they always wish to keep in subjection.

"If, as vicars of Jesus Christ and ministers of the holy mother church, they were moral, honorable, charitable, or even good spirits, they would merit respect, and would receive social consideration. But just look! They commit crime, robbery, and murder, to oppose the propaganda which they consider noxious, rather than rely on good example, doctrine, and virtue. It is clear that they must be denounced and repudiated.

"The same individual who at La Plateria joined in the attack with the imbeciles who accompanied Bishop Ampuero, to-day is committing assaults at the head of the armed band in Queñuani. Behold the fruit of impunity.

"The same one who in this city at least aided in plundering the church of St. Peter of its wrought silver, to-day directs the assault against the messengers of civilization. Behold the result of silence, of inaction, which sooner or later become accomplices of crime.

"The healing streams of the century have brought us the evangelists, those truly Christian spirits, who, better than the priests, have

a respect for the images of the saints and the faith of their enemies, for they are charitable, or, more than that, philanthropic and humane. Let us help them in their blessed mission.

"Now we know that the priests, for the greater part, by their frequent scandals, criminally intermeddling with the interests and business of civil and political life, have made themselves intolerable. Let us curb them in their abuses, demanding penal sanction, with the respect due to men, the laws, order, culture, and foreign sentiments.

"If a clergyman commit crimes like the pickpocket, like the robber or assassin, let him learn morality behind the bars of the prison, since from the pulpit he preaches iniquity.

"And if the evangelists show themselves irreverent, disrespectful, or if they demoralize and corrupt the Indians, denounce them without leniency before the constituted authorities. The laws guard, constrain, and protect everybody equally.

"June 18, 1916.

"(Signed by)

"Some Catholics that have always repudiated the attitude of the priests."

We cannot expect to go on with a work of this kind without meeting serious opposition from Satan, as he is angry when he sees the truth taking hold of hundreds of these poor, deceived Indians, and corruption and wickedness giving way to pure lives. "Go," is the command; and on we shall go in the strength of the Lord.

Those two priests have since died. Priest Manrique called upon us for help in his last illness. Everything possible was done for him, but it was of no avail. Priest Bravo, as yet a young man, and the leader of the assault at Queñuani, died at Moho in June, 1919, of a terrible fever, with only a few Indians to wait upon him; and because of fear of contagion, no friends accompanied his remains to the grave, three Indians having been hired for that purpose.

Enemies Disarmed

WE were now able to establish four new mission stations, and we found that persecution was growing less and less. Some of our former enemies from the villages near were sending to us for medical help.

A messenger came from a village some distance from the home station, asking me to attend a sick family at that place. As I called at the house, a servant opened the door, and the host approached me, asking if I remembered him. I confessed that I had no recollection of having seen him before. "Well," he said, "I was subprefecto in Puno five years ago, when you and another man called upon me, and I did not treat you very kindly." I remembered him then, but he had greatly changed in looks.

Elder J. W. Westphal and I had called upon this man in the interest of our Indian work; and as we explained it to him, he became very angry, savagely shaking his fist in our faces, and told us he would do all he could to hinder us. I had lost sight of him since.