

A Sketch of Mission Life and work in India.

Mrs. M. F. Churchill gives the readers of the Missionary Link the following lively picture of herself and her surroundings:

"If the readers of the Link were with me this morning, they would just now see one of our work-women and her little boy squatting down on a pile of chunan stones, in the shade of one of the buildings, taking their morning meal, which consists of cold congee. Perhaps it may be asked, What is congee? As it is the universal breakfast throughout India, for natives, I will tell you how it is made. In the evening they boil their rice, pour off the water, and leave the two till they are cold, then pour on the water again, and that is congee; this is left till the morning, when the people eat it with only a little salt sprinkled over it, though some of the richer people eat with it chutneys, or pickles, or onions, or perigu (thick sour milk), or chillies.

The natives here in Bobbili are very much interested in the way we eat, often coming on to the verandah and gazing in at the door during the whole meal, and no doubt the performance is quite entertaining, considering the simplicity of their own way of eating. Perhaps you would not mind looking on to see how they do it; once would be sufficient to learn all the details, though it might require some practice to get the food into our mouths as nicely as they get it into theirs.

The woman and her son are squatting on a pile of chunan stones, as I said, between them is a brass dish (for these are caste people) something like a soup plate, and near a small black chattie, in which the congee has been cooked, kept all night and brought here just at the eating time by an old woman of the family, and a small brass drinking dish filled with water brought by themselves, complete the outfit. The congee is poured into the brass plate by the old woman, for this woman who has been working here all the morning, may have been touched, or had her clothes touched by my dress, or some of the pariah work people, and so must not touch the cooking pot, lest she defile it, until she goes home, takes off her clothes and bathes. The congee poured out, the mother and son, each with the fingers of the right hand formed into a kind of spoon, take it up and convey it to their mouths, into which it is tossed by the thumb placed behind it. After the mother has eaten a while, she evidently does not think her boy is getting on fast enough, for she puts her left hand at the back of his head, to keep it steady I suppose, and with the other feeds him until he objects to any more, then they each drink in turn some of the congee water left in their dish, after which, the meal being ended, some water from the drinking dish is poured on the hands, and their mouths and fingers washed, and some water tossed over the boy's body with no fear of wetting his clothes however, for there are none to wet. Thus the performance being finished, the little boy walks off home with the old woman who brought the breakfast, carrying the empty dishes on her head in the same order in which she brought them when full, the brass plate underneath, then the cooking chattie in this, and in the mouth of it the drinking chattie.

Would you care to take a walk around our compound this morning and see the work that is going on, or has been done? I know you will be much less interested in it than in the direct work of saving souls, but if the missionary has no comfortable or safe shelter from the burning rays of a tropical sun, this work is necessary, and the sooner it is completed the better. As this is our work at the present time, it may not be amiss for you to take a look around so that you may understand how so much of a missionary's time is taken up while the building is being done. At our station more work falls to the missionary than at the other Canadian stations, for here we have to prepare the materials for building, while at the others they can be purchased ready for building. In that large shed to the north were some thirty or more men and women two weeks ago making tiles. They all and their children lived here, worked, ate and slept on the compound for a month or more. Mr. Churchill had the mud

brought, and they came and made the tiles and burned them, under his supervision. There are nearly 300,000 in all, and every one of these I have counted, evening by evening, as they became dry, to save Mr. C. that much time for other things. Since these were finished, we have made some thousands of arch and pillar bricks on the same ground, and yesterday finished piling the last for burning.

In another large shed is our saw mill and carpenter's shop. The former consists of a deep trench dug in the ground, and above it a frame, on to which the logs are rolled, one at a time, marked for sawing with chalk and line by Mr. Churchill, and sawed by two native men, one standing on the top of the log, and the other in the trench. In the carpenter's portion are two native workmen, sitting on the ground, hewing, or planing, or cutting, and holding the piece of wood steady with their toes; this is their way. Mr. C. is standing at his work-bench, marking, or planning, or whatever is necessary to keep the work moving, all the day, except when he must see after other work. He has had to give a great deal of attention to this work, as he could only secure very inferior workmen.

Here we have a kiln for burning the lime. The large piles of coal and chunan stones are mixed equally, and then put in and burned; afterwards taken out and spread on this side, and water poured on till it is slacked; then these eight women mix it and this great heap of sand together, so many baskets of one to so many baskets of the other, and then with long clubs, on the bottom of which are iron rings, they pound it in little troughs made in the ground of stones and chunan, and it is then ready for the masons, to whom a woman carries it in a basket on her head. Here is the mission house, two-thirds of its walls up above the windows and doors, and the masons working on the other third, with a number of women coming and going, bringing bricks, water, etc., and handing them up to them on the staging. On the south and west of the house are three large heaps of bricks, standing where they were burned; two of these are fast melting away as the walls rise higher and higher. On the north and south, four large heaps of tiles burned and ready for the roof; and the last heap of tiles and bricks combined, and waiting to be burned, when these piles of wood lately bought shall have got somewhat drier.

Daily we have some fifty or sixty work people to look after, keep to work, and see that they do not spoil what they are at, and to pay in the evening, for their daily pay is all their living. This might not seem much at home, where people are not all eye servants, but when you remember that each one of these is a careless, unprincipled heathen who will shirk his work, sit down, do nothing, or do his work very badly, when he thinks you do not see him, you can imagine a little of the constant watchfulness, pushing and labor that is required, to build a house that will stand against white ants, India storms and other injurious influences in this land—and to build it economically.

You can too, perhaps, understand how anxious we are to get done this secular work, and to get at the real work of saving souls, on week days as well as Sundays.

Our Sunday morning services were quite largely attended while the tile people were here, but are smaller gatherings now that we have fewer people living on the compound. Of the four women whom I had coming regularly for instruction on two afternoons in the week, one went to her friends in Vizag, on account of sickness, and has not yet returned; another has gone to her husband's house to live at a distance from Bobbili; a third has had sickness in her family, first measles and now small-pox: she has it herself now, so she has been absent for weeks; and the fourth does not care to come alone, I suppose, so absents herself now; but I hope for better things when I have a little more time to go out visiting than I have at present.

Last Sunday when I was teaching my class of Brahmin boys, we heard the life and drum suddenly strike up, and guns also were being fired in the town. The boys became very much excited, so I asked the reason, and they said a young rajah was born at the palace. "When?"

I asked. "Just now," they said, "they knew by the music." "How do you know that the child is not a girl?" "O," they said, "they would not play that music or fire guns if a girl were born." We had almost finished, and as they seemed so excited over it, and asked leave to go, I dismissed them and they ran away with all speed into town. I afterwards learned why they were so anxious to go. At such a time it is the custom to give every man, woman, and child among the Brahmins one rupee, and when Mr. Churchill was in town in the evening, he found crowds of them assembled near the palace gate to receive their present. The next day, bullock carts of cocoa-nuts, plantains, and sugar, were sent round to the houses of the Brahmins, each household getting an equal share. My boys came home to see me yesterday and told me each had received a rupee, and that when the child was twelve days old, the Brahmins would each get two rupees more, but am not sure this last is true, as it was not confirmed by a Brahmin young man who came to see us last evening, when I asked him about it. Any way I suppose the Maha Ranees has spent on the Brahmins since the birth of this child, enough or more than enough, to build our mission house.

The happy mother is only sixteen years of age, and the minor Rajah not yet eighteen. When he comes of age, in a few months, the Maha Ranees will have to pass everything over into his hands, I hope he may use it more wisely than she does.

It is odd and something melancholy to see a man trying to "make up his mind" when he has no material on hand to work with.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger. The Baptist Anniversaries at Saratoga.

SECOND ARTICLE.

By REV. W. S. MCKENZIE, D. D. BOSTON, June 3rd, 1880.

Dear Brother Selden,—

Since mailing to you my letter, in which I attempted to convey to the readers of the Messenger a few facts from the May Anniversaries at Saratoga last week, it has occurred to me that I ought to follow it with another, or request you to withhold that from publication, as it gives such an appearance of partialism. I wrote only of the Society with which I am officially connected, and of that society from no design to slight the other two societies, but simply because the space which it seemed to me my letter should occupy in the Messenger was filled, and filled before completing what I had in mind to write when I began to make up a letter for you. If you deem it worth while to publish what I have already forwarded, would it not be advisable to give in your next issue this also? But discard them both if in your judgment that is what should be done.

The American Baptist Home Mission Society, which held its Anniversary immediately following that of the Missionary Union, and which also had four sessions, is one of our great missionary organizations, working in a wide field, and doing a work, the magnitude and importance of which give it a commanding position and influence among the Baptist Churches of the Northern States. Hon. Wm. Stickney of Washington, D. C., was last year, and is again this year, its president. It was organized in 1832. As its name indicates, its sphere of operations is North America. Dr. Morehouse, the corresponding Secretary, chosen one year ago to that position, a man who is evidently endowed with the ability and energy required for such a service, in making last week his first annual report, took occasion to restate the aim and scope of the society's mission. I may cite a few of his sentences. "The general terms of its Constitution," says Secretary Morehouse, "clothe it with full power to engage in every kind of missionary work." That Constitution defines the object thus—"The object of this society shall be to promote the preaching of the Gospel in North America." The Secretary says, "There is no limitation as to race, color, condition or age; no

limitation as to the agencies to be employed, . . . no limitation as to kinds of missionary work, . . . no limitation as to place. . . . Not a segment, but the whole circle of missionary work is committed to it." A recent controversy has been going on in some of the weekly religious journals of the denomination between the friends and functionaries of the Home Mission and the Publication Society, the latter society being charged by the former with overstepping its limits, and intruding itself upon the ground which the Home Mission Society was designed to cultivate. It is said that the Publication Society takes upon itself some of the legitimate work of the Home Mission Society, putting itself into the same field, to do the very work, or some of it, which is already taken up and prosecuted by a body organized for the purpose. But I need not trouble your readers with the drift and merits of this debate. It is this discussion which led Secretary Morehouse to re-define in his annual report the aim of the society in whose service he is employed. When the Publication Society followed with its anniversary, its Secretary, Dr. Griffith, and the speakers in its meetings, had something to say in the way of a vindication of the course it was pursuing. Everybody was cool, and the best of feeling ruled in the dispute. All seemed disposed to let each society do all the good it could, even though each should encroach upon the others work.

The Home Mission Society is working not only among the English speaking people in the destitute Western States and territories, but also among the Germans, the Scandinavians, the French, the Chinese, and the Indians. Its mission among the Freedmen of the South is to give religious and secular education to those who are to become the teachers and preachers among the liberated negroes. Its total receipts from all sources during the past year were \$213,821.81, and its disbursements were \$182,998.72. It began last year with a debt of nearly \$31,000. It begins the present year with that debt reduced to about \$13,000. Among the results of the last year's work, I find the following reported; weeks of labor by the missionaries employed, (numbering 281 including teachers in schools) 9,096; sermons preached 20,762; preaching stations occupied 836; religious visits 54,275; converts baptized 1,160; churches organized 67; Sunday schools under care of the missionaries of the society 461, with an attendance of 27,031.

The Secretary publishes this year an estimate of the extent of this society's work since the date of its organization. It is, in brief, as follows—8,301 commissions have been given to missionaries, including teachers; 275,433 weeks of service rendered; 718,217 sermons preached; 385,141 prayer meetings attended; 1,667,813 religious visits made; 84,077 converts baptized; 2,704 churches planted. Surely a work of large extent and of great value has been done by this society. It is also engaged in aiding churches to build meeting houses by loaning money from its church edifice fund. Loans from that fund have been made to 213 churches, in 34 states and territories.

A vast amount of work—if reading reports by committees on special features of the society's missions, and speeches thereon, may be called work—was crowded into the four sessions held last week at Saratoga. Among the speakers was our own Rev. Chas. H. Corey, the efficient and successful president of the Institute for colored preachers in Richmond, Va. I could not but envy this brother's position, power and influence. How far-reaching and valuable the service he is permitted, in the providence of God, to perform for Christ and his cause. I can see that it is not simply for the enfranchised race of Africans in the Southern States, that he is laboring, but for Africa also. For he is directing his students to the work of evangelization among the millions in their native land, now being so rapidly and signally opened for the propagation and triumph of the Christian religion. The speech at the Anniversary of the Home Mission Society was that by Rev. A. K. Potter—a frequent and spicy correspondent in our Baptist journals, over the signature of "Six". His subject was "The Duty of the Hour for American Baptists." The speech

was replete with wisdom, wit, vigor and eloquence.

Here I am again at the end, or what should be the end, of another letter, and nothing written about the Publication Society and its anniversary meetings. But close I must, or the editor of the Messenger will be called to an account for publishing long letters, and letters that look very much like a page in an arithmetic.

For the Christian Messenger. Valedictory.

To the Rev. J. C. BLEAKNEY, PASTOR OF THE LAWRENCETOWN BAPTIST CHURCH.

Dear Brother,—

The members of your church and congregation have learned with deep regret of your contemplated removal from us, and take this occasion to express the pleasure and profit received from your labors as our pastor. The Sabbath School teachers and pupils have been encouraged by your timely counsel and prayers. Our Prayer-meetings have been sustained with interest by your regular attendance, and in fact every department of christian labor has had your sympathy and co-operation. Your labors have been blessed, and although sorrowing because of your removal, we believe the future will show more and more of the fruit of your labors. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

We would also express our sorrow on account of the departure from our midst of your esteemed family; and we do most sincerely pray that wherever your lot may be cast, that you and yours may be the happy recipients of the abundant bestowal of heaven's richest blessings.

And, finally, dear brother it is our ardent desire that we may all "meet in the better land."

In behalf of the Church, ROBT. FITZRANDOLPH, Clerk. Lawrencetown, N. S., May 30th, 1880.

P. S.—The above address was presented to the Rev. J. C. Bleakney at the close of his farewell sermon on Sabbath the 30th of May, and replied to in substance as follows. R. F. R.

To the LAWRENCETOWN BAPTIST CHURCH AND CONGREGATION:

Dear Brethren, Sisters and Friends,—

I am thankful for the very kind and Christian address which you have just now favoured me with. There are but few circumstances in connection with the present life which are fraught with more responsibility and solemnity than is that of the severing of the pastoral tie. We have now reached that period in our experience, and I having already delivered my Valedictory, it will not be expected that many remarks will be needed in reply to your touching expression of feeling. There are many things, which have occurred during my pastorate with you, which are now suggested to my mind, but the following will suffice for the present.

I have had the opportunity of addressing you upon the most solemn and important matter of your being, and I have endeavoured to do so in the fear of God, and in the love of the gospel; and there is not one truth that I have declared that I do not with all my heart believe and expect to meet at the judgment. I have been permitted to mingle with you and your families, and have done so with the most earnest solicitation for both your spiritual and temporal welfare, and often prayed for you and them when you were sleeping. There has not been a joy or a sorrow experienced by the church or congregation, known to me, but that I have sympathized with you in them all. As to the amount of good done I am willing to wait until the Master shall reveal it, and while conscious of my own imperfections, I have no hesitation in leaving the whole matter with Him.

Permit me to thank you for your kind feeling towards my family, who, I can assure you, appreciate all your kindness.

And now, dear brethren, sisters and friends, it is my heart's desire and prayer that the Great Head of the churches will keep you all from the evil that is in the world; and may He sanctify you wholly body, soul, and spirit until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Yours, still on the field of battle, J. C. BLEAKNEY. Lawrencetown, N. S., May 30th, 1880.