

MISS NEWCOMBE'S LETTER.

MY DEAR SISTERS:—These are the busiest of busy days. Have just been debating which is "the next thing"—a letter to you or the more immediate duties that seem to be legion. You see that in the present case I have decided that the duty farthest away lies nearest at hand. Does time really pass so quickly at home as it does here? When the program for *Tidings* came, my turn was months ahead and I laid it aside. The other evening I referred to it again, 'just to help me keep the date in mind so I might have my letter off in good season,' as I said to myself. Imagine my surprise to find the time past! The chances are against this letter reaching you, but I shall send it.

The school must be the subject of the letter, for during the past days it has monopolized my time and thought. I wonder if you understand about the school.

When Miss Gray returned to America, and her Girls' Boarding School was broken up, another was established for the benefit of the children of the Christian community, and thrown open to any in the town wishing to attend. It is well patronized. In May, '98, the number enrolled must have been at least seventy-five. At that time the first fruit of the Bible taught, was gathered—a shepherd boy from the school was baptized. Like leaves before an autumn wind our pupils were scattered. Parents suddenly realized that something other than secular knowledge was imparted in the mission school, and they feared the truth, for here was positive truth that it was calculated to rob them of their sons and turn the town upside-down. Gradually however, the pupils worked their way back and new ones entered, so that at the end of a year the attendance was larger than before. Opposition then arose from another quarter, and to the present time there has been almost incessant warfare. Notwithstanding many seeming repulses, the school has advanced until we feel we are correct when we say, that it so commends itself to the people of the town, that many are either indifferent to the Bible teaching that the pupils receive, or are willing for the sake of the secular to risk its effects upon their children. Whatever may be the cause, the fact remains that we frequently receive applications for admission from pupils attending the town schools, whose teachers are much discomfited

thereby, and have resorted to unlawfully withholding leaving certificates from pupils desirous of leaving them and entering our school.

But what of my connection with the school? At first it was only in the way of teaching Bible lessons, and I never thought nor desired that this step should lead to another, but various circumstances combined to make duty plain. As a central boarding school for the boys of our mission, it was advisable that the standard be raised from upper primary to lower secondary. The same was desirable that we might longer influence the town boys in attendance. A change in inspectors, giving us a Christian man to act for one year, in place of a bigoted Brahmin opposed to mission schools, indicated that the time was favorable for making application for recognition. But our teachers were not professionally qualified. Two must be sent for normal training, one of the two being Veeracharyulu, the head master. After much hesitation, prayer and thought, I offered if practicable, to throw myself into the breach, provided the work did not take all my time. My certificates were sent to the Director of Public Works and officially recognized. Easvar Rao, the second teacher, was sent for normal training. The requirements for recognition were met and application for the same made. We have had ample opportunity to grow in the grace of patience since the application was started on its way nine months ago, but we have been advised that it has passed through the hands of all the subordinates and reached the Director for decision. We feel confident it will meet his approval. Easvar Rao has just received notice that his last year's work was crowned with success, so he is now qualified for his position. Veeracharyulu is at normal school in Rajamundro. He will do faithful work in the school and be an epistle of Christ as well. On his return at the close of the year, our school will have its full quota of qualified teachers, and so far as secular work is concerned no help from the missionary will be necessary. Until then I am in control.

Yesterday we had a most interesting afternoon in the school. Because of my absence the Bible examinations did not take place before school closed last year, and were conducted the beginning of the present term. We had the results read and prizes distributed to those entitled to them. Mr. Gullison kindly took charge. Before the prize-giving he reviewed some of the work covered, with