

found with its roots or a number of small stones or wooden images (of the rudest kind) at its roots, daubed over with rouge and saffron applied by the poor people as *pūja* to propitiate the *sekti*. *Amma Varu* is the village goddess pre-eminently in this part of the country—due probably to the fact that to her are ascribed all deadly diseases such as cholera and small-pox (the latter being, in fact, commonly called *Amma Varu's* disease) with which the country is always more or less afflicted. *Amma Varu* is to the poor ignorant people the personification of all that is fiendish and terrible. She is always ready to plague or kill; and their one object in making offerings to her (which they do frequently) is to appease her wrath. They live in the most abject and degrading fear of her. This is the demon *Kali* to whom it was formerly thought necessary to offer human sacrifices. Even now it is with blood only (not human blood, thank God) that she is satisfied. When a fowl is offered to her it is esteemed more meritorious to kill it by biting the neck through with the teeth than by cutting it with a knife. This is done by the person whom the demon is supposed to possess or afflict. He loosens his hair, smears his body with saffron, puts on a lower cloth only, and kills the fowl while performing a half-wild dance. The idea is that the demon in the person of the man or woman slays the victim.

For a felon on the finger the Telugu use the *tonda* or chameleon. A live one is caught, cut open and tied on the affected finger, where it is allowed to remain until the finger heals—a process which it does not hasten. To one in whom the olfactory sense is more acute than in the oily-skinned low-caste Telugu the remedy might seem worse than the disease.

On Saturday while speaking Telugu I was twice mistaken for a native—once by a blind man in day light, and once in the dark by a man who had his sight. I consider this some ground for encouragement.

The state of the country just now is not enviable. Indian famines are said to recur at intervals of eleven years. Next year will be the regular time for the commencement of another famine; and present appearances are very much in its favor in this district. The south west monsoon was much lighter than usual, while the north east (the latter rain) was delayed so long that it did little or no good. This district is wholly dependent upon rivers and tanks for its water supply. If no rain falls, these fail. The country about me presents a most lamentable appearance. Where last year a plentiful harvest was ripening in the mellow sunshine, nothing is now to be seen but immense stretches of stunted paddy, burnt brown, and without a single head of grain, or at the best likely to return only the seed sown. Some few acres of the lowest lying ground only give indications of a crop. So deficient has been the rain that in this *taluk* alone the cultivated ground is some 8,000 acres less than last year. What, you ask, will the people do? Trust to the mercy of the collector to have their land tax abated, raise what they can in the way of dry crops, and go on short rations until the next plentiful harvest. But the failure of one crop does not necessarily mean short rations for all. The *ryot* who farms a piece of land of any size is able to lay by during a succession of plentiful harvests enough to tide over any ordinary scarcity comfortably. Scarcity of rice and consequent high prices fall heaviest on those who live from hand to mouth by day's work. Rice is now Rs. 60 per *garise*—the ordinary price Rs. 40. This means insufficient food for the masses. At such times this class seldom eat rice. Their common food is a bluish colored thin porridge called *ambali*, which they eat at least twice a day. It really does not taste bad;

but eaten as the poorer natives eat it, with the hand and from a black earthen dish, it does not look appetizing. This year late rains have fallen, and if the *ryots* had any enterprise they might get a second crop of paddy. But they never attempt it, at least not in this part of the country. When the crop falls they have of course little or nothing to do, crowds of men, lean, hungry, and idle, may be seen in every village street. When asked why they do not work and dig wells instead of laying their time away, they reply that it never occurred to them, or that they haven't the capital, or that it's too hard work—which last reason is, probably the true one in nine cases out of ten. The Telugus have a peculiar habit of calling a person by the article he is carrying. Thus a woman with a basket on her head is, 'Ho! you of the basket!' A coolie with a *kavadi* is 'Ho! you of the *kavadi*!' and so on. Sometimes the mere name of the article is deemed sufficient. A person driving a cow would be called thus, —'Hallo! cow.'

J. R. HUTCHINSON.

THE WORK AT HOME.

To the Circles of Western Ontario.

My dear Sisters.—Once more I address you through the LINK, but the words that must now be said are parting words—words of farewell. Necessity compels me to resign the office of Secretary into other hands. In the good providence of God, our home has been transferred to one of the far Western States. It is gratifying to know that our Society is in such a prosperous condition. The report of last year showed marked success, both numerically and financially, while it also betokened a more wide-spread interest in the cause of Missions. We have among us many earnest, active and enthusiastic workers; would that there were more such; for our aim must be to push on, to persevere, until we gain the ear, and reach the heart of every Baptist woman in Ontario. It is sad to think of the number that still remain indifferent to the fact that the gospel has been entrusted to them, and that it is at their peril it is withheld from those who are in darkness. Many of you will rejoice to hear that Miss Buchan, who conducted the financial business of the LINK for nearly nine years, and who is therefore well known to most of the Circles, has consented to take the Secretaryship. We may therefore look forward confidently to the future. Be faithful, be diligent, remembering that it is God's work, and if we do our part, we may safely leave all results with Him.

Very faithfully yours,

C. E. ROSE.

Union Meeting in Toronto

The Union Meeting of Mission Circles in Toronto was held in Jarvis Street Church, on the afternoon and evening of the 18th, Mrs. Castle presiding. Programme as follows:—A paper on "Home Missions," by Mrs. Newman; a paper by Mrs. Wardell, on "Consecration"; a very interesting reading by Miss Lobb, on "What the Heathen teach us"; Mrs. Hubbard read a poem. Mrs. Castle stated that the chief feature of the programme would be an address from Mrs. H. J. Rose, our corresponding Secretary, who has served the Society so faithfully for three years, and who is now about to leave for a new home in California. Mrs. Rose's address was partly a fare-