

Somalingam became a Christian, crossed the threshold of that Christian home. It was a red letter day for Somalingam. His face glowed with joy and gratitude. A very appropriate programme had been arranged. The boys from here had violins and played and sang; the school children sang two hymns learned in the school, the little Christian children sang another, Easvora Rao told in a clear concise way the meaning of Christmas; Somalingam had prepared a dialogue which he and one of the school boys gave. He began with the year 1904, what it meant, and after a little touched upon the great Hindu festival in memory of Krishna's birthday, compared Krishna and Christ and then closed with our need of a Saviour and Christ that one. This was listened to, not only by the Rajah, but by the crowd that had come in to see the Christian feast.

"Veeracharyulu Garu gave the address of the morning and a fine one it was too. It seemed as if he could not help talking and that the earnest words would not come fast enough while he held up Christ the Saviour to the people. As I sat there I enjoyed all this that had been planned and arranged without a single hint or suggestion from us.

"But to return to the programme. A small boy read a short account of the school, then the names of the prize winners were read and the Rajah gave away the prizes. Finally Somalingam Garu asked the Rajah to speak, and he responded, speaking in praise of the school which was the successful rival of his own, and despite all his threats when it was first started, had grown while his had *died*. He also paid a passing tribute to Christianity and to Christ; but we fear that as yet it was simply with his lips he said this, while his heart is still wedded to his heathen worship. Still it was a great thing for him to say what he did. He had brought sweets and plantains for the children, which were distributed. Miss Clarke and I distributed the treat and presents we had, in which you have a share; and Somalingam Garu passed around the dates and plantains he had bought for the occasion; so it was a great day for the children who gave three cheers for the Rajah with evident satisfaction. Finally Somalingam Garu, in a very tactful way, referred to the British Empire and its greatness, the secret of which Queen Victoria had said was the Bible, and turning he presented the Rajah with a Telugu New Testament which must be the secret of India's greatness as well.

The exercises were opened and closed with prayer. A servant bearing a small tray of plantains and another of dates followed the Rajah home, and thus closed a most successful affair.

"With glowing face Somalingam Garu said to us—'Very different were his words to-day from those uttered when I became a Christian. Then he said I would better leave the whole village for my staying would defile the whole place.' Today that same man presided at the closing exercises and prize-giving of the school managed by that very man, and held in his own house. May the Rajah's first words come true, and the heaven that is at work continue until the whole village has been defiled, as the Rajah would express it—that is *Christian!*

"After the school had been dismissed the women began to prepare the meals while Miss Clarke and I eagerly devoured our home mail that had reached us when the exercises were in progress. How I did enjoy my Christmas mail! Twelve letters besides other remembrances. You do not know what that means, but let me assure you it means very much indeed.

"My letter does not do it justice at all. I am very tired and my head aches rather badly, but I want you to get your report of what we did with your helps, as soon as possible, and knowing if I failed to write to-night, I would not likely get a letter done for some time, I have hurried through with it.

"Thank you, oh so much for what you have done. I am only sorry not to be able to give you a better description of it all.

"With hearty thanks, best wishes and love, I am yours for the Master and the Telugus,

"IDA M. NEWCOMBE."

Bimlipatam,
Dec. 26, 1904.

We are told that the missionary business is hopeless. We are told that the darkness of the earth is increasing in a ratio that is greater than the ratio of increasing light. Well, my answer to that criticism always is this: remember when you say these things you are not criticising the missionaries or the missionary method; you are criticising the missionary principle, and in criticising the missionary principle you are criticising Christ. Say He is mistaken and have done with it; say He was wrong and say no more, or else in the face of every appearance of defeat, hope right on—and that, my brethren, is what we are bound to do.