

Work Abroad.

THE GRADUATING CLASS OF 1897.

Six men were sent out from the Seminary last December to preach the gospel to their own people. Their course extended over four years. During the last two years I met them two hours daily, during which period we covered the Theological field—of course in broad and simple outline only—and read together the great doctrinal books of the New Testament, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, Hebrews and Romans, the last to the end of Chapter viii. only. With M. Jagganaikalu they read Mark, John, Acts, Corinthians, Philippians, Thessalonians in the New Testament, the Historical Books in the Old Testament and Homiletics as applied to village preaching. With N. Abraham they read other portions of the Scriptures along with Evidences, Moral Philosophy, Church History. Their literary qualifications to enter upon a Biblical and Theological course were meagre, so they were given further elementary instruction in the Literary department.

They comported themselves well, manifested invariably a good spirit, and did the work assigned with commendable success. They are true men, men of God, and will be a material addition to our native ministry. At times there were eight in the class, but two fell out, namely, Philemon and T. Abraham. Philemon may return to join the next class, but Abraham is in the midst of a great work in one of the Vuyyuru villages. It is scarcely a year since he left us—about ten months—but the whole village has been affected by his work, and forty converts or more of the real genuine kind, are the Divine approval of his labor.

But to return to the six men. A brief characterization of each will be acceptable to all interested in F. M. work, which, of course, means every reader of the LINK. I have briefly outlined their studies, I shall now attempt to give you an idea of the spirit that moves them.

1. Ch. Ramaswamy, a man of marked character and clear-cut Christian experience. He has narrated his conversion several times and several other experiences of another nature. You will give me space for one. "Some years ago," said he, in one of our meetings, "I was in Burma, and one night I got lost in a terrible forest. The forest was full of wild animals, tigers, jackals, snakes, full of brambles, dark, with no path, and I was feeling my way along. I did not know where I was or whither I was going, and I was in great danger, in danger of stepping on some poisonous reptile, of being bitten by some jackal, or torn to pieces by a tiger. As I was feeling my way in the dark my hand touched a man. 'Who are you?' he said. 'I am lost in this

terrible forest,' I answered, 'and do not know how to extricate myself.' Thereupon the stranger took me and put me in a little path, with the instruction that if I followed that path I should reach my destination in safety. This I did, and escaped from the wood and all the things of terror in it. This world is like that terrible forest, full of wild animals, tigers, elephants, jackals, snakes, brambles, but I have found a path! Jesus has shown me a path through the forest. 'And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness, no lion shall be there nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon; it shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there.' Such a way Jesus has shown me and I am walking in it, and hope to arrive safely at the end."

2. T. Lazarus. The students' estimation of him appears in the fact that they chose him as deacon of the Seminary church, and also committed to him the distribution of our weekly alms to the poor of Samulcotta, some score or more big and little. He has spoken several times in our Wednesday night meetings. On one occasion the burden of his speech was as follows:—"For a long time," he said, "I did not understand in what manner we enter heaven until one day in the class it was remarked that Christians pass into heaven just such as they are here. This startled me. I wasn't ready to pass into heaven after that fashion. I began to correct my conduct, but found that I continually came short. It seemed as though I must prove a failure. But one day it came to me that Christ makes all the difference, that He indwells and keeps us. This was a revelation to me indeed. Here was the secret of it all. I am very happy now, for Christ keeps me, and my difficulty has disappeared." Lazarus goes to Akidu.

3. T. Appanna isn't very easy to characterize. He has passed through varying phases of experience. For instance last hot season vacation, while on a preaching tour, he sat down upon a fallen tree to rest. It had been torn down by a recent cyclone. Upon striking the tree he discovered that it was hollow. Ah! then that explained its fall. He meditated. What if he should be shown to be hollow also in the judgment! It troubled him a good deal, the thought did. Later he narrated an experience of another character. "I have heard in the class and in the preaching," he remarked, "a good deal recently about being in Adam and being in Christ. At first I did not understand it at all. But it has come out plain now. I realize that I am in Christ."

In sermonizing, his plans were generally superior to those offered by the others, and his criticisms more relevant. At first in the class he seemed almost an interrogation point, but later he asked fewer questions, and seemed to think more. He will make a good worker, I think. He goes to Tuni.

4. K. John is a good man and one who will preach the