

to conceal from the missionaries' view. The people crazily crowd about it. One by one the clothes are made to touch it, then handed back to the owner, and now that all the clothes have thus been dealt with, and a blessing thereby assured to the owners, the man raises his burden and passes on amidst the shouts of the people and another storm of flowers and fruit.

But what is there about the common basket that makes it the centre of so much attraction, and the object of such worship? You will perhaps be surprised to learn that it contains nothing less than the village goddess, in whose honor this great festival is being made. The worshippers who are so careful to keep their goddess hidden from the unbelievers' (Christians sight, little suspect that the missionaries are in possession of the very idol which in a previous year was actually worshipped by them. But such is a fact. It is made of the same material and has precisely the same form as that lifeless thing they are now worshipping. And what is that? An unsightly spear-shaped bit of iron about four inches in length. This is the goddess whose anger must be appeased by their continual offerings, and yearly feasts, lest their crops fail, or small-pox, cholera, or some other terrible disease be sent them in punishment for their sins.

"See," said Veerahalamma, Somalingam's wife, "there is a man with a woman's dress on." Why, is that," I ask. "Oh, he and others seated on a large car, drawn through the street, are going to receive offerings on behalf of the goddess." We hear much about those wonderful cars; and in due time they appear—one—two—three—four of them! What queer looking things! They are the common country bullock carts on which is built a high wooden frame supposed to be the representative of an elephant, with the part representing the face and the trunk gaudily decorated with paint and red and yellow powder. On top of the frame work sit four or five men, to all appearances enjoying very much their ride through the street. The carts are drawn by men, and as they pass along what shouts and discords rend the air! "None of these is the car," Somalingam says. But there it comes in the distance! Just see the fruit and grain and flowers being thrown towards it! The men on top of it are making good use of the woman's dress. There are four of them facing North, South, East and West, and each has his dress spread to catch what-

ever comes near. When their laps get too full they throw the fruit back to the people and in eating the fruit thus offered to the goddess they believe they receive her blessing.

Mr. Gullison and his helpers who were in tent at a touring centre not far distant arrived about four o'clock. We saw that it was useless for us to think of giving the people the Gospel message while they were so intoxicated with their excitement, so we waited quietly until there were signs of the crowd dispersing. Then, with the little organ to attract attention, we went out into the street and began to sing. The music had the desired effect, and soon we were surrounded by a number of people. Immediately the music stopped, the preaching of the Word began. Some among the number listened very attentively. But darkness fell upon us and we had to return to the house.

Our dinner of rice and curry was awaiting us, and together with our native brethren we sat down in the open air and partook of our repast in true native style. No table or chairs, table linen or cutlery, were necessary. A large pail of warm water stood near at hand with which we might wash our hands before and after our meal.

After dinner we gathered on the verandah in front of the house. The little organ and violin and some good strong voices were soon ringing out upon the night air. Again people began to collect, and after a quarter of an hour or so, we had quite an audience.

As the music ceased a man with a flaming torch in one hand and a cruise of oil in the other, came forward and stood on the steps near by us. We knew what this meant, for Somalingam had told us before that he was planning to tell the people about the wise and foolish virgins. He was not strong enough to speak to the people himself so he asked Appalanarasayya to tell the story which he did in a masterful way. As he spoke the man with the torch kept renewing the flame every few minutes by pouring on more oil. At last the oil was exhausted and the torch light vanished. And yet the people stayed and listened. As soon as they showed any signs of restlessness the music began again, and immediately quiet was restored the music ceased, and thus one after another Mr. Gullison and his helpers did their work.

But the time came when we must go home.