

things, a way of living may be secured, even upon an occasional day's work or a chance job obtained now and then. This, it is true, does not touch the case of the sick and the aged, and those totally unable to work. They have to be helped by means of charitable institutions or by private beneficence. Yet the means for helping them is abundant, and lies everywhere close to hand.

While, then, there is much misery in seeing a strong man out of work, with a wife and several small children to support, with his little stock of furniture gradually diminishing, sold or pawned for food and clothing, yet there is some comfort in the fact that actual starvation can scarcely be the point that must be fallen upon.

The importance of this is emphasized when we see that a different state of things might be the case. We look, for instance, at the terrible distress that is now being witnessed in India, where people are languishing and dying from starvation by hundreds and thousands. Food in many places is absolutely not to be had; multitudes of these people, even in the best of times, don't know what a good square meal—such as our poorest people frequently get—really is. Scanty supplies of rice and meal, with a little fruit and milk and some light vegetable, is almost all they know in the way of food. But still they are content and even happy with it, when they can get it. Now, owing to the failure of the soil to produce anything, they are absolutely without even this meagre fare, and poor creatures for days and days together, in whole towns and villages, suffer the gnawings of hunger. They shrink to mere skeletons and then die. Death, so far, has been their only friend. It will not be so, of course, very long, for the whole of Christendom is even now sending forth its gifts to procure food for the poor famishing creatures. It will be a magnificent spectacle, when the wealth of Europe, the United States and Canada, will be utilized to save a perishing people. It will be in itself a splendid missionary object lesson, which cannot fail to affect for good the heathen multitudes of India.

But our chief object is to show that even in the midst of our own scenes of distress and poverty we have much to be thankful for. The supply never entirely fails us. We know that one crop will be succeeded by another. Provisions are to be had. It is only in a few extreme cases that children need cry with hunger, and no one in our midst, thank God, need ever die for the absolute want of food.

STILL VERY FEW.

AMY WILSON-CARMICHAEL.

I have come straight down from listening to a conversation between Sister Lucy, who is

with us now, and Dr. Lillingston (the "Lilian" of these letters).

"Do you mean that there is no one to work among the Mohammedans of Bangalore?"

"No one."

"And no one in the city of Mysore?"

"No one."

"So the men are quite unreached?"

"As unreached as if they did not exist."

"Do they know of this at home?"

"For years Miss Smith has been asking for someone to be sent to the men, but no one has come."

Then more facts of need come out. And Sister Lucy gets more and more astonished, and wonders if they really know at home.

"And that is what it means to us when we look out of this window. Need unmet!" We turn and look. Moonlight, stillness, peace. But through the dark belt of trees skirting our compound we see the lights of the town. There it lies, the dead Mohammedan city of Bangalore: dead, and yet alive to all which means its deepest death.

One day, lately, Dr. Lillingston was driving through the native streets when she met a procession. She thought it was a baby's funeral, for the men carried a small box, lifted high, covered with scarlet, and they chanted as they walked. It was something far more sorrowful. They caught her pony's rein and bade her stop—a very rare thing here. They were bearing a scrap of the prophet's cloak—a holy relic—and they looked at her, she says, with faces which were fierce as they passed on. A servant of Jesus was not welcome there.

One expects this sort of thing from the heathen. Yesterday we were visiting in a little street, a stone's throw from the hospital, and we were stopped by an idol excitement. The hideous thing, all bedecked and painted, sat scowling behind a tree, which was covered with mystic devices. Just in front, in the middle of the street, the sacred fire had been burnt; it was out, but no leather-defiled foot and no horse's hoof might tread on its ashes. A cart came rumbling down; there was hardly room for it to crush past against the wall, but it had to try, and great was the commotion until it had succeeded.

From the heathen, the poor, pitch-dark heathen, one expects this, but from the Mohammedans, the "enlightened Mohammedans," comes with a sort of shock. Can they really believe in it all, these grand, strong men?

What does the home Church think about it? What does the Master think about it? Can it be that another year must pass away before there is the slightest chance of His being glorified here? To-day He is being dishonored. We looked at the C.M.S. list of specially urgent claims for 1896. This one, the claim of the Mohammedan men of South India, was not