

Work Abroad.

KANIGIRI.

RAMAPATAM, Aug. 15th, 1892.

Dear Mrs. Newman:—My last letter to you was written just after my arrival in India. The months since then have been full of interest. No doubt you will be interested in the field to which I have been appointed by the Missionary Union.

LOCATION.

My field is part of the present Ongole field and lies about 50 miles west of Ongole and about the same distance from Ramapatam. It is 40 miles east of Cumbum the nearest railway depot. The Missionary of this place, W. E. Boggs (of McMaster Hall), will be my nearest neighbour. The town is situated at the foot of a mountain of about 1,500 feet-high, which was in times past like so many of the mountains of India strongly fortified.

INHABITANTS.

Kanigiri is the chief town in Kanigiri Taluq or county, and has a population of about 6,000, composed of Hindoos and Mohammedans and corresponds to the county town at home.

THE RIDE TO KANIGIRI.

Last week in company with Rev. J. Heinrichs, who has charge of the Ongole field, and Professor McKay of the same place I visited the field. Leaving Ramapatam in my pullman cart (which is drawn by six men) at 3 p.m., I proceeded 14 miles North where I was joined by my brethren from Ongole, they having come 18 miles South in another pullman. Here we had 20 minutes for refreshments. My friends changed cars taking seats in mine and together we proceeded to Kandukore, 8 miles West. Here we tarried for the night and slept as best we could on a verandah of a Government shed, being serenaded all night by a Mohammedan tamash, as this was the last day of the Moharam. When they ceased for a moment the jackals as they feasted on a dead Hindu not far away, kept us awake with their horrid yells, and then the thermometer being at 100 degrees did not help us sleep any. Tarrying there another day and night to meet Christians of this place we rose at 6 a.m. and after coffee and toast started on our journey, our tents having preceded us.

The ride was a very trying one. In the first place the coolies gave out, being utterly unable to go faster than a slow walk, whereas their custom is to run at about five miles an hour. Then the road became bad, the wind rose and by noon was like the blast of a furnace. Our food and water gave out and altogether it was a ride that we shall not soon forget. As a result Mr. McKay was taken sick and it is a wonder that we were not all sick. The hardest part of the journey, to me, was that I was compelled to ride behind the poor, starved coolies, but it would have been death to us to have ventured to walk in the burning noonday sun. At each change of coolies we paid them extra for their work. It was 3 p.m. when we reached Kanigiri just 30 miles North-west of Kandukore.

FAMINE AND STARVATION.

On every hand we heard tales of the deep distress and suffering, the country having been entirely without rain for about a year and a half. In this part the famine is being felt about as sorely as in any part of India.

Cholera has broken out and many of the people have fled from the villages seeking refuge where they might under the trees along the roadside. We saw many of the poor creatures as we passed by.

As we neared Kanigiri the country had a better appearance, rains having fallen recently. Still, even here, the grain that was up had a parched appearance and looked as though it would not stand the present drought.

ANOTHER PRAYER MEETING HILL.

On Saturday morning being cloudy we climbed the mountain up the old winding path, by no means an easy task, but really a delightful one for young people. Reaching the first fort 1,000 feet high on a bald rock we had a most magnificent view of the surrounding country. As we stood here gazing upon the scene below talking of the famine and cholera the Native Christian teacher who accompanied us informed us that on this very spot for many weeks past a number of the Christians from the villages had gathered nightly and joined in prayer to God that He would send rain upon the thirsty land and stay the plague from among the people. This fact cheered our hearts and strengthened our faith in our native brethren. While we talked the first-drops of the blessing came upon us and ended that night in a heavy rain, while the following night the flood gates of heaven seemed to be opened. For this we praised the Lord. Never was rain more welcome.

A fact worthy of notice here is that although scores of the heathen have died of that dreadful disease cholera, very, very few of the Christians have died. For this also we praise His name.

Failing in our purpose to buy more land (we have already a small lot), we delayed building operations. However, we are digging a well and so we have turned the first sod at this new, large and important station. I expect to return in a few weeks, build a small temporary house and lay the foundations of my bungalow before the North East Monsoon sets in, so that the work may be pushed on with vigor afterward in December.

On our return trip we found the people much more hopeful and farmers were at work everywhere ploughing the fields and preparing to sow, while the crops that were up had a strong healthy appearance. One more such rain and this crop will be saved and the famine broken, but it will be weeks yet before the poor people will be relieved from their intense suffering.

INCIDENTS IN OUR CAMPING.

Water and bread had to be carried to us 56 miles on the heads of coolies. All the town officials called on us bringing presents of sugar wrapped in pieces of newspaper. We called on the native judge and had a pleasant time. He gave us much information about building materials which will be of much value to me. Our conversation was in English, which he spoke with freedom. A Mohammedan of whom we wanted to buy land asked, as we thought, too much for it. After our talk with the Judge, or Tahsildar, as he is called, this Mohammedan called on us and offered to give us the land for nothing. He is a contractor and would like to have the contract for my buildings. This explains his generosity.

Another incident about the land. Last February we purchased a small piece of land at this place and tried to buy a mango grove adjoining it; but the owner would not sell. At that time the fruit trees were all in good condition, but when we saw them last week every mango tree was dead. The reason was the long-continued