

for which you need a steady head—most of them have a single bamboo to walk on, and a more or less shaky one about on a level with your shoulder, by way of a handrail. So you see life is not dull out in the district!

But I was going to tell you about Christmas. We were at a little place about fifty miles from Barisal, where we had never been for Christmas before—the water had almost entirely gone there, so it was pretty easy getting about—there were only occasional patches of mud.

Of course I do not know enough of the language to be any good for teaching yet but I had learnt the Xmas hymns, while Sister Mary was giving lessons in one house, I had the people at another for singing.

It often made me think of the midnight Service at Yale when I was singing, "O come all ye faithful" in another different language—though the circumstances were somewhat different.

The people are not so unmusical as I expected them to be, but if you get three out of perhaps ten who get somewhere near the tune, you think you have had a splendid practice. They all manage the words somehow, but to various tunes of their own—the effect is very hearty—not so trying as it sounds!

The people all live on "baris" artificial islands built up to be above the water level in the rains.

On Christmas Eve we had a most lovely procession to all the Christian baris—it was one of the most striking things I have ever seen though it had its funny side!

Just at dusk we all collected on the Bengali Reader's bari—the Cross-bearer—Mr. Conway—in his cope,—two acolytes in red cassocks carrying lights—another man with incense—besides these a good number of men and a few women with Sister Mary and myself. Of course the women do not as a rule go about at all.

We began there with a "Litany for our country," for all the different people in India, and then began the form of Service we had on every bari. Mr. Conway recited in a loud voice in Bengali the words, "Fear not for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord," and we all responded, "Come and let us now go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is to come to pass which the Lord hath made