

of an impersonal abstract character is of very little use in the pulpit. Men will dodge the essay every Sabbath without the least effort. The art of putting things, the art of bringing doctrinal truth so to bear on the heart and conscience as to influence the will and change the life, is really the main thing in preaching. The very highest work of the pulpit is to do what John Hall did that evening—present the truth so that a hearer has no chance to dodge.—*Knoxonian*, in *The Canada Presbyterian*.

Mission Notes.

THE PEOPLE OF SOUTHERN INDIA.

BY REV. GEORGE H. GUTTERSON, MELER, MADURA MISSION.

[The following striking account of the people in the Madura district among whom our missionaries labour is given in a familiar letter from Rev. Mr. Gutterson, who was, at the time of writing, on a missionary tour and in camp near the village of Mangalum.]

As I pen these lines, the village near my camp is astir. It is early morning and the day's work begins, for work the people must to keep body and soul together, although some of them are scarcely aware that they have any soul. Do they begin work with a hearty meal? Not they. A cup (earthen) of cold rice gruel, or a handful of cold boiled rice seasoned, with a red pepper, is all they have, and they are glad enough to get even that.

I wish that some of our good [Christian men and women from America could see this material out of which we missionaries are trying to build the future Christian civilization of this district. Let us look about us. A dozen men, more or less, and some young women are the first comers. They are sharpening their bill-hooks on the broad root of a banyan-tree near the tent, preparatory to their day's work of wood-cutting in the mountains, four or five miles away. The men are naked, except a scanty cloth about the waist and a few rags over their shoulders. The women are not much better off. They will work all day, returning at nightfall with as much firewood as they can carry on their heads, and to-morrow they will carry it from seven to ten miles to market, and receive from seven to ten cents for two days' labour! Not one of them can read; they are dirty and might be called ragged if they had any clothes at all!

Next appear the village cattle and the children who herd them, followed by the old women, shrill-voiced, and vile-tongued, who come to gather cow-dung for fuel! If one desires to see how wretched and disgusting it is possible for old age to appear, let him visit the Queen's dominions in India. These old women, haggard, unkempt, unclothed, makers of mischief, promo-

ters of quarrels, aiding in all sorts of sin, covetous, sticklers for caste and custom—how can one love their souls, or feel a Christian interest in their welfare sufficient to endure it all and work for their uplifting? These before my tent are quarrelling glibly over their respective shares in the fuel business aforesaid. I shall have to request them to leave; one can neither think, read, nor pray, with such a din in his ears. Yet they are not the poorest of the poor, and they have heard the gospel message many times, but they are as if they had not heard it, steeped in ignorance, yet so exalted by their caste that they would never allow a Christian, however clean, to even touch one of their cooking utensils! This is caste—the great barrier to our work.

I asked some villagers recently their idea of the hereafter, and they had never heard that there was a hereafter. Death ends all for them, and the present is useful in so far as it affords means of satisfying hunger, passion, and love of money and power. Yet I do not say that they are not a worshipping people, for they are, in a way. I was asked to visit and give medicine to the wife of the chief village official, who was dangerously ill. The man is said to be worth \$10,000, yet I found his wife lying upon the ground, with only a mat under her, in a little den so close that I could hardly endure it, a bundle of straw for a pillow, and an old crone sitting by, and her pulse at one hundred and twelve degrees! Her husband would not touch her nor scarcely approach her.

As I write this, the morning sun gleams from the white walls of their great temple three miles away on the mountain side—a temple built to the god Vishnu. They throng its great festivals and sacrifice to its royally appareled god; they raise the hands in worship to priestly Brahmins who minister in its dark recesses. From this, and other ancient places of worship in this strange land, goes forth an influence felt far and wide among a people who are naturally religious; but their religion is that of fear, not of love, and it is powerless to change the heart. Yet as the years pass away, our faith is that God's Word is here to stay, and that the heaven is working downward through the whole mass.

I should lose courage if I could not feel that promising attempts are being made to secure good ground by teaching the young.—*Missionary Herald*.

News of the Churches.

ST. THOMAS.—Received with thanks from the London, Ontario, Congregational Sabbath school, through Mr. Marshall, and Mr. Johnson, the Superintendent, for the Congregational Church, St. Thomas, \$31.76.

WILLIAM GLASS.

TORONTO, MOUNT ZION CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.—The contract for the addition to our church building