

FOREIGN MAIL BAG

Dear Link.—I thought you would be interested in hearing about the course for the wives of the theological students.

For fear some have not heard about the union of the Canadian and American Baptist Missions in their theological work, just a word about that first. The two missions have just joined in this work. The Americans have two missionaries and two Indian teachers on the staff, and we have one missionary and one Indian teacher. There are three courses: Junior, ordinary and advanced; each course is a three-year one.

It is felt that the women as well as the men need training, so that they can be fit helpmeets to their husbands. Their work consists of work in Bible, Sunday School methods, kindergarten, midwifery, physiology and physical culture.

Mrs. Longley has charge of the women's course and teaches the kindergarten work, assisted by two Indian teachers, whom she is training. The Bible is taught by two Indian teachers, midwifery by an Indian woman sub-assistant surgeon from a nearby American mission hospital. My special work is the physiology and the physical culture.

I am writing this just before a class in physical culture, and I wish you could come along with me when I go to the class. First, we have some simple wand exercises, then breathing, then bending. It is very funny to hear the "Oh's" and "Aha's"! as the women feel the pull on the different muscles. "Bah! but my legs pull," they will tell you. Then comes marching in a fancy drill, with heads well lifted and shoulders back; they enjoy this. One woman at each lesson takes the drill, so that when they return to their villages they may teach the children.

Physiology, as I said before, is my other subject. It isn't because I am at all learned in this that I was chosen, but because there was no one else to do it. I couldn't refuse, but my heart failed me when I was shown the skull and different bones that I would have to use, but I couldn't back out of it, and now I really enjoy the work, and the basket of bones is right here beside my table as I write. This has meant studying not only in English, but in Telugu, as I had no idea what the Telugu words were for the different parts. Mr. Bhanamurti, a fine young man, educated at Serampore by Rev. Ralph Smith's family and our Indian teacher here, helps me with the Telugu.

Now you will wonder what is happening to the children while their mothers are attending classes. Well, there is a nursery for the babies, a kindergarten for children of kindergarten age, and a school for the older ones.

Mrs. Boggs, the Seminary President's wife, looks after the nursery. Then, too, she sees after the cleanliness of the students' quarters, has an inspection of them and teaches the women how to keep things clean and neat.

Some time ago I had a letter from a lady who wanted to support a student, but she wanted a boy, as girls only get married and were of no further use. I gave her the name of a boy, but at the same time protested against the idea that girls only get married, and therefore are not worth the money put into their education. I have often thought of that as I have been teaching. I have primary and secondary trained women in my classes, and oh the difference! The secondary trained girls have a foundation on which to build this special course. The primary students find it difficult to grasp an idea quickly and to express their thoughts. Those who have no education at all are sent to school and get as much of the special course, along with their ordinary school one, as they can. We hope that there will be fewer and fewer uneducated workers' wives, for we need women as well as men who can be leaders.

There is much more to tell. There is the sewing class, the special women's prayer meetings, and so on, but this will give you a little glimpse of what is being done here.

Yours in His Service,

Ramapatam, October 5, 1920.

MARY STILLWELL McLAURIN.