

Our Mission Work in India.

In noticing the names of our missionaries and mission-stations, I have often thought that in them we really have our "a b c" of missions. The friends at home who do not know the names of our mission-stations and missionaries have no excuse in these days, when the LINK presents them to its readers almost every month. As I said above, in them we really have an "a b c."

A stands for Armstrong and Akidu; B stands for Bimlipatam and Bobbili; C stands for Churchill, Currie, Craig, Chicafole and Cocanada. The initials of these southern stations read from south to north, present us with a good motto. Here it is; read it; Akidu, Cočanada, Tuni. Some time ago I saw a statement made by a missionary, to the effect, that although thousands of non-caste people had been converted in Southern India, still Hinduism had scarcely been touched. I fear there are some missionaries whose work is chiefly among caste-people, who have so set their hearts on the conversion of those, that the conversion of a Mala or Madiga is of small account to them. Now to my mind the case stands in a different light altogether. First of all, we may note that Brahminism cannot retain its proud position when the masses of the people learn to disrespect it, and especially when they secure an education which will surely put them on the same footing intellectually with the Brahmins themselves. Ignorant people are content to be slaves; educated people must have freedom.

But there is another thing to be considered. Suppose that the Brahmins and Shudras came first, what kind of a time would we have when the Malas and Madigas began to come; First, suppose we have a church of educated Brahmins; after a time some Shudras with their ignorance, and meat-eating habits, etc., wish to enter the church, I mean to become members. It would not be at all strange if the Brahmin converts opposed the reception of the new comers. Again, suppose a church is composed of Shudra converts, and Malas and Madigas come seeking admittance, need we wonder if there is some objection on the part of the Shudras? On the other hand take the case as it is, the first to believe on Christ, and profess their faith in Him by baptism are Malas and Madigas. No matter how coarse the habits of these have been, they are gradually refined and purified by the influence of the Gospel, their persons, their clothing, their houses and their food are all cleaner and neater by reason of the change. They go to school, and gradually vic with the Brahmins themselves in point of education. These changes require some years, but they surely come about. Suppose then that we have a vast company of converts in this happy condition, and the Shudras are moved to profess their faith in Christ. Is it any great condescension for them to mix with people who are quite as clean if not cleaner than themselves, and who are certainly far better educated? Assuredly not. So also with the Brahmins.

I am well aware that God can convert Shudras and Brahmins without waiting till he has called all the Malas and Madigas in, for He has converted a few here and there, but we find that He generally works in conformity with natural law, and hence to my mind there is nothing more certain than that the Telugus will come into His kingdom more or less in accordance with their castes, beginning with the lowest. Hence I maintain that the conversion of thousands among the lower class is having its effect on Hinduism, and is surely opening the way for the coming into the Christian faith of those who now seem untouched.

Furthermore I doubt not that hundreds of Shudras in some districts, are true but weak believers in Christ. Their time is fast coming, and then we shall see what an influence Christianity has already exerted on them. At present however it is sad to see in some villages the different spirit manifested by the Shudras and Malas. The former in their pride reject, what the latter in their low condition receive with joy. "To the poor the Gospel is preached."

I want to say a word about our proposed Theological School. I sometimes wonder where we are going to get men and women of the right stamp to study in such a school, and then two thoughts occur to me. One is that God can and will call people to His work. The other is that men sometimes get their true call while studying in such a school. I know that my call came to me while I was at Rochester. Apart from being a call to preach the Gospel in a foreign land, it was such a call to preach as I had never had before. It seemed to produce as great a change in me as my conversion produced. So when our Telugu Theological School is opened, I expect we shall receive many into it without looking for very high aspirations in them, but firmly believing that they will not leave the school without receiving a baptism from on high.

Oh! for more workmen! the harvest is so great and the labourers are so few.

JOHN CRAIG.

Weeks of Prayer.

BY MRS. H. M. N. ARMSTRONG.

Weeks of prayer are not unknown to the heathen. Every idol has its special season of worship, when, year by year, its devotees meet together to present their offerings and their prayers; and to spend a longer or shorter period in united efforts to propitiate their God and obtain his favour. Here we have an omnipresent Deity, there the God they worship has a local habitation, and while we meet where it pleases us to pray, Hindus must travel far beneath a tropical sun in order to reach the place where the idol dwells,—the only place whence their prayer will be acceptable. Here we meet the Invisible, and offer Him spiritual worship, realizing the presence and power of His Spirit as we draw nigh to Him. There they bring fruits and flowers, rice and oil. they offer the priests money and other gifts, they repeat words which have no meaning to them, and, having done this, they listen to stories of the wicked deeds the idol took delight in, when he lived among men; they watch the music and dancing, and feast at the refreshment stalls, always provided for such occasions. They give themselves up to every species of indulgence and frivolity, and when the time is past they