

A Year in North Carolina.

BY REV. JOHN LEWIS.

A year is not very long to learn much about a whole state. Globe-trotters are accustomed to pass through a country rapidly, form their opinions quickly and give their impressions to the world without delay. Your scribe is not an expert in this kind of work. Indeed I have heard of a man who, after spending ten years in the south, confessed that he did not understand it. A few weeks since one of our busy pastors in one of the Eastern counties went into one of the mountain counties to hold a ten days meeting. He received some information from friends about the county and wrote a letter to our denominational paper on the condition of the people. A week later there was a letter from a resident pastor contradicting almost every statement he made. Readers of the Missionary Review know how conflicting the statements about the condition of the mountain whites of the South, including those of North Carolina, have been. But if it is often difficult to get at the truth there may be some old friends in the Provinces who may like to hear from me and get my impressions of the country and the people. And there may be one here and there who would like to leave the frozen north for the sunny south, permanently or for a limited time, on account of their health. I will try to write a little with these two classes in view. Let me say at the outset that I have never been west of Raleigh, the capital city of the state, and for that reason can relate nothing from observation concerning the most interesting mountain region in the western part of the State. The climate is the great attraction of "The old North State" to any but the "Tarheels" themselves and a few enterprising and adventurous spirits. Here we escape in a measure the extremes of heat and cold, nine degrees above zero is the lowest on record in this place. Last summer was considered unusually hot, but one of the hotel keepers told me that he had not noticed that the mercury had gone higher than ninety-one any day. His thermometer was in the shade facing the north. There were a few days when the mercury did reach ninety in my study and it did not fall very much below eighty from the first of June till the first of October. On the fourteenth of November it reached seventy-two. During the summer we perspired freely, felt very lazy, did as little work as possible though we dressed as lightly as circumstances would permit and ate moderately as wholesome food as we could find. Now we are permitted to welcome cooler weather and look forward to a pleasant fall, winter and spring to furnish new vigor to tide us over another summer. We have heard of men overcome by the heat in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia and Boston, but our men have toiled under the blazing sun without a siesta and we have heard of very few sun or heat strokes. In this place we enjoy the Atlantic breezes in summer and the moderating influence of the gulf-stream in winter. In some places in the interior it is warmer in summer and colder in winter. A large portion of the eastern section of the State is not healthful. The land is low and there is much malaria in August and September. In a few places there is the deadly hemorrhagic fever. Towards the end of July I spent a week preaching a few miles from New Bern and did not feel the heat more oppressive than at this place. The "Sand Belt" in Moore county is considered very good for those troubled with throat and lung diseases. Southern Pines and Pinehurst are about the centre of the belt and are becoming famous winter resorts. On account of the character of the soil and the more moderate elevation I would rather winter there than in the mountains of the West, where the soil is somewhat clayey. But if I had to summer as well as winter in the South I would prefer the mountain region, for the sandy soil probably draws the heat while the greater elevation of the mountains would make the air more bracing. It may be to the advantage of tourists and healthseekers to consider that the Seaboard Air Line is interested in developing the "Sand Belt" region around Southern Pines and Pinehurst and the Southern Railway is interested in developing the mountain region around Asheville. I do not mean to say that either of these companies are circulating, in their advertisements, that which is not true, but it is natural to believe that they make the most of the best qualities of the respective sections. So also with all companies who have building and other lots to sell. Those who have to count their dollars very carefully would do well to inquire whether there is not another side to the picture. A friend of mine told me that if he had any throat, or lung trouble he would prefer the region around Hickory and Stateville to any other. The air is remarkably dry and bracing, more so he thought than in the vicinity of Asheville.

This town is remarkable for the dampness of the atmosphere, wood swells, iron rusts, books, shoes and clothes mould and food spoils in spite of all the care that can be taken of them. I have known two persons to die from consumption within ten months, one of them the clerk of our church. The water is not good and there is some malaria, but not nearly as much as there is a few miles from the coast. But my throat has not given me nearly as much trouble as at Sydney or Antigonish. Last

winter was mild, but the houses are so built that we found the fur coat on the foot of the bed adding to our comfort. The great majority of the houses have no cellars and the vegetables are kept buried in the gardens. Grooved-and-tongued boards, waterproof paper, sawdust, seaweed and many other articles and expedients used in the north to keep out the cold are not thought of here. The clapboards or as they are called here, weather boards are nailed directly to the frame on the outside and the laths for the plaster or the thin sheathing boards are nailed on the inside. So the air has very little difficulty in entering through the floor and through the walls. On a very cold day one must keep pretty close to the fire in order to keep one's toes warm. However there is not that strain on the lungs which you have when the cold fresh air is shut out and the warm foul air within is heated to eighty or ninety degrees. We have no zero weather to go out into after such an ordeal as that. Our pumps are outside and sometimes freeze in the winter, but if the rays of the sun have a chance they are often thawed out towards noon without the aid of hot water or kerosene and rags set on fire. We never take the trouble of winding up the pipes with straw in order to keep them from freezing. Often times in midwinter there is an open fire on the hearth, or occasionally in a stove, while the doors and possibly the windows are wide open. Many believe that consumption is rare in the South for this reason alone—people are able practically to live out of doors, enjoying the pure air during the greater part of the year. But consumption is found here also and seems to be increasing. I am told that the dread disease was not known among the negroes until they had been set free, now many of them die from it and a sanitarium for negro consumptives is being established at Southern Pines.

Some who have been at the winter resorts and have seen only city houses in addition, may be inclined to question my statements about the building of houses, but the houses at Pinehurst and Southern Pines, at least, have been built by northern men, after the northern fashion. I have been told that the tendency is to build houses after the northern fashion throughout the state, because it has been found that what keeps out the cold in winter, keeps out the heat in summer. Very many of the houses, especially those of the negroes, are very small and often the lack of paint is very conspicuous.

In travelling from Norfolk to Raleigh on the Southern Railway, I was surprised to see so many houses suggesting poverty and so few suggesting wealth. When Mrs. Lewis left Richmond on the Atlantic Coast Line, she was struck with the same thought, but when we come to speak of the people this will be better understood. It can now be understood that the climate enables people to get along with houses smaller and less substantial. The long and hot summers, explain why most of the better class of houses are well supplied with verandahs.

Morehead City, N. C.

Some Notes on Heathenism as Seen in Bobbili by a Native Christian.

DEAR FRIENDS.—Though I have not seen you, and know you not personally, yet, I wish to address you a few lines through MESSENGER AND VISITOR. It has been my pleasure and joy, and I might say my salvation to meet those who represent you here in India.

I have heard of Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world and rejoice in Him as my own Saviour. This fact is a result of the Christ-like friendship which you have shown in sending us the Gospel. Hence, I feel justified in addressing you as dear friends.

Mrs. Gullison tells me that you are always interested in hearing about the customs of the people, and so I will write some things I know and have seen.

The town of Bobbili which is a Mission station about 18 years since, is the residence of the Rajah of this town, with a population of about 15,000, consisting chiefly of Brahmans, Vishnavites, Valamas, Komatus the merchants, Kapus who are the cultivators, weavers and pariahs, who are subdivided into so many classes. I will tell you a little about the chief classes. Many of the Brahmans are priests. They are very cunning people. In the time of Manu the law giver, the Brahmin was simply an assistant at sacrifices. Afterwards he became a family priest, constantly employed in teaching religion to the people. But "by degrees after investing the caste system with a sacred character in the people, they expanded it into an immense spider's web, which separated class from class, family from family, man from man, and which while it rendered all united action impossible, enabled the watchful priests to pounce upon all who dared to disturb the threads of their social tissue and to wither them to death." In consequence of this, whenever a Brahmin appears, whether he be a man of letters or not and even if employed in inferior occupations he is considered a mighty god, a supreme divinity and is venerated by other caste people. The following rewards are promised in the Puranas (a romance mythic poem) for reverencing a Brahmin: "Whatever good man bows to a Brahmin is blessed with long life, sons, remown and prosperity. But whatever foolish man does not bow

down to him in earth, Kaśava (one of their gods) desires to behead him. A good man who worships a Brahmin by walking round him, obtains the merits of going round the world with its seven continents." If a man sells his cow it is a crime, if he gives it to a Brahmin he will go to heaven. When a member of a rich family dies, the priest tells them to get a cow and rub saffron and rouge powder on its forehead, and forelegs, and to place four rupees on its four hoofs and six or one rupee on its back in proportion as they are rich, and to give it to a Brahmin. If they give it that way the dead one would reach heaven holding the cows tail, his sins being pardoned. The other day one merchant here did so.

The Vishnavites are priests who are distinguished from the Brahmans by wearing broad perpendicular caste marks on their foreheads, where as the Brahmans wear horizontal or other marks. However there are a few exceptions. The Vishnavite too wears a sacred string which is a sign of second birth. Valamas of this town wear their hair coiled on the crown of their heads whilst some others cut their hair close to their neck. This custom separates them from others. I know little of the customs of their women, as they are not seen. They say that they even do not see the faces of their husbands, or other relatives except of their fathers.

Valama men are fond of dignity and honor. They like to be addressed *Dora garu* which is an honorific term. Many of them do not address others in a respectable way. When they meet a respectable man of other caste their conversation would be like this, "Going home? Whence coming? Taken meals?" and so forth. Where as others speaking to them must say "Mr" or "your honor." It is said since H. H. the Rajah came to the throne much of their pride was suppressed and they were brought to civility.

The merchants make their livelihood by trading. The greed and unbridled avarice of these people, who were quite deaf to the groans of the starving hundreds, was the more manifested during the last famine. They make their money generally by means of fraud. Their religious rites are performed by the Brahmans. They wear a sacred string. Their women thickly rub saffron on their faces, and put a rouge caste mark which is called a *botta* on their foreheads, wear nose jewels, ear-rings, anklets and toe-rings. They dress like the Brahmin women.

The pariahs always look dirty. They make their livelihood by sweeping the roads and latrines, making shoes and selling all sorts of vegetables, fruits, etc. In summer a sect of these pariahs called Relies are fully given up to spirituous liquors. Forming a small choir, dressed in a piece of a rag around their loins and they, arm in arm as they generally are at such times, walk up and down the long streets singing some filthy songs, now taking a nap, now falling in the gutter on the road side, one of them disturbs the whole singing party; whilst another of them bursting into a fit of foolish laughter, calls this one a fool, that one a donkey and the third one a monkey, and stirs up their anger; they then abruptly fall upon him, and while beating him black and blue, a policeman who by chance passes that way being attracted by the busy crowd, leads them all to jail.

There is a fresh water tank here. On its bank there is a kind of fig tree, called the *ravi*. One day an old man was turning round and round the tree holding it with his right hand. Sometimes a husband and wife move around it. By doing so the educated people say that they are calling upon God. But in general they do this to obtain children. There is a story regarding this. If I write it here this paper will be defiled. Some *ravi* trees and margosa trees grow together closely joined. In order that their conjugal affections might continue as these trees, a man and his wife sometimes turn round those trees.

The chief temple is dedicated to Gopalaswami the tutelary god of the people. I daily meet the priests when they carry food, which has been offered to their gods, to their own houses. The anger which they manifest and the reason of it I might be permitted to write about some other time.

Though the people grow in such a foolish way, yet there are some in whose hearts the light of the Gospel shines. There is a mission girl's school here. Many Hindoo girls attend it. The Christian teachers teach them the Word of God. Some who finished their course in the school and were married to heathen husbands, study the Word of God and pray to him. There was a girl who previously had been in Mrs. Layman's class, who died some time ago. Before she died she used to read the Bible and pray. Her mother said that in spite of all their pleading she refused to utter the name of the heathen gods, and repeated the Name of Jesus only on her death bed. If she had not been a believer in Christ Jesus would she have repeated His Name in her dying hour? Will you not ask our Heavenly Father to open the stony hearts of many more? I shall have to ask you to excuse my many mistakes I made in idiom and grammar owing to my imperfect knowledge of English.

Yours sincerely,
Eobbili.
CHOWDHARI JOHN.

He that sacrifices his ideal to his bread finds, when it is too late, that man does not live by bread alone.—Moscomdar.