

Missionary Link.

CANADA

In the interest of the Baptist Foreign Mission Societies of Canada.

INDIA

VOL. I., No. 12.]

"The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."—Is. lx. 3.

[Aug., 1879.

The Canadian Missionary Link.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY AT TORONTO.

Communications to be sent to Mrs. M. Freeland, Box 8, Yorkville, Ont.—Orders and remittances to be sent to Miss J. Buchan, Box 8, Yorkville, Ont.
Subscription 25c. per annum, strictly in advance.

Subscribers not receiving the LINK regularly will confer a favour by first enquiring at their own Post Offices and if not there communicating the fact without delay to P. O. Box 8, Yorkville, Ont.

OUR PAPER.

With the present issue of the LINK the first volume is completed. As was stated at the commencement "this work has been undertaken in the Master's name and for His sake," and those who have had the management of it feel assured that their labour has not been in vain. Beginning the year with a subscription list of something over a thousand, we close it with between eighteen and nineteen hundred. Our expenses have all been met and a considerable surplus remains, which, as soon as a sufficient amount of the second year's subscriptions has been received to carry the paper on to its close, will be handed over to the treasurers of the various women's societies in proportion to the number of subscribers from each province. Will our friends note this, and renew promptly?

Many improvements have been suggested in the shape and appearance of the LINK, but, as they would all occasion an increase of expenditure it has been thought unadvisable to adopt any of them just at present. If every subscriber will send with his or her own renewal subscription 25 cents for one other new subscriber we will soon make the LINK an eight page periodical, printed on paper of a much superior quality to that we are now using.

That the LINK has been the means, under God, of doing good and bringing money into the treasuries of our societies we know, and from Nova Scotia to Manitoba many cheering letters have been received testifying to its usefulness in awakening and maintaining an interest in the work of our own CANADIAN BAPTIST TELUGU MISSION.

To all our friends; to those who have contributed valuable articles and items of information; to the missionaries for their interesting letters; to the editors of the Baptist papers of the Dominion for kind words; to the brethren and sisters who, for the sake of the mission cause, have acted as agents; to Mr. T. Bengough for occasional help in proof reading; and to our printers Messrs. Dudley & Burns, we return our most sincere thanks for acts of kindness; for valuable assistance; and for forbearance with us in our inexperience and inefficiency.

We thank God for the measure of success He has vouchsafed to us; we take courage, and will endeavour to make the LINK more worthy, in future, of the cause it represents and seeks to aid.

THE mines of gospel truth invite to labour; labour should be coupled with prayer; and these together will be sure to increase our spiritual possessions.

Last year's work at Ongole.

From the Indian Evangelical Review.

Probably the question which all the friends of Indian Missions will be most eager to have answered is, How far do the large numbers of Hindus received during the year 1878 within the Christian pale promise to be permanent and genuine gains to the cause of Christianity? To this question it may be too soon to give a wholly true and satisfactory reply; but the information thus far in our possession enables us to give an answer which may indeed require revision and correction hereafter, but which, for the present at least, may be accepted with thankfulness and joy. We do not now propose to give statistics; we are as usual collecting from the reports of the various missions the number of baptisms during 1878, which we hope to give at another time. The reports of some of the missions are still in the press, and it would be useless to attempt to give now a numerical summary of results which have not yet been made public. The extracts from reports already published, and from letters which have been sent us, which we present below, will afford our readers the means of judging—not indeed of the numbers who have been brought within the fold of the church of Christ—but of the character and probable results of that wide-spread movement towards Christianity which last year excited so many ardent hopes and not a few reluctant fears.

The fact that a large number of persons had been baptized during the latter half of 1878 by Rev. Mr. Clough, of the American Baptist Mission, north of Madras, among the Telugus, has not been forgotten by our readers. All rejoiced over the news of so great accessions; some feared that among such a large number of persons so rapidly baptized there must be more than the usual proportion of spurious converts. In an article which we print elsewhere, a missionary of Mr. Clough's own society gently intimates that he himself cherishes such fears; while he charitably hopes, rather than confidently believes, that his fears may hereafter prove groundless. We have from Mr. Clough's own pen a narrative, which press of work alone prevented him from furnishing for a previous number of this Review, which will, we think, go very far to allay any such fears and to increase the confidence of all in the genuineness of the work which has been done in his district, and of the results there attained.

The beginning of the year 1878 found the district in which Mr. Clough labors in much distress. The famine was indeed officially declared to be over, but its effects remained, as they long must remain. Thousands were unable to get work—thousands more were too weak to do any work could they have got it; many were sick of divers diseases, and many really starving. Such was the physical condition of the district. "The spiritual outlook," writes Mr. Clough,—

"Was very different in many respects from what it ever had been before. The whole mass of Hindus of this section had been preached to time and again by faithful, though unlearned men, the Bible, or portions of it, and tracts had been offered for sale at a mere nominal price in every village and every bazaar within the limits of the Ongole Mission field frequent-

ly for the previous eleven years. The great doctrines of Christianity were well understood by the mass of people of whatever caste. In fact, the general opinion was that Jesus Christ was the God of the English and Americans, and as such was entitled to a niche in the Hindu Pantheon, and might be worshipped along with the 330 millions other deities if any one chose."

The people lost faith in Hinduism and in Hindu gods. They saw the difference between Christian charity and Hindu charity. They remembered, without longing, the hard lot assigned them by the Brahmanical priesthood. Tired of their Hinduism many abandoned it, and embraced Christianity. "By the beginning of 1878 about 2,000 had asked for baptism upon profession of faith in Jesus." But Mr. Clough, "fearing that some in their zeal might deceive themselves, and that others might try to deceive me with the hope of getting in some way more famine relief money, and lacking time and strength to examine personally the candidates," postponed all applications for baptism indefinitely, hoping to be able at some future time to examine the candidates carefully, and also thinking that in the interval the false converts would be gradually winnowed out and disappear.

"In the mean time the native preachers kept a careful record of all believers, and taught them as well as they could. Each preacher seemed to have, and no doubt did have, special help from on high to meet the demands of the occasion. Weak men, just able to read the Bible, preached with earnestness and power, sometimes continuing their evening meetings until morning, while the able preachers of former years each became a host.

"The converts were not encouraged to go to Ongole. It was understood that I would not see people from a distance who wanted to become Christians. They might send letters or a delegation, but must not come in large numbers. These letters and delegations poured in upon me for months. The petitions generally read in substance thus:—'Preacher—has preached in our village more or less for several years, but we did not believe what he said. The famine came, and many or several from our village worked on the canal. By this aid and the loving words of the missionary, urging us to work and not be discouraged, or not to give up, we are now alive. We have learned about Jesus Christ, we now believe in him as the only God, and our Saviour. We are very poor—our huts are fallen down, and we have not much to eat but leaves, but we do not ask you for money. We will not ask you for a pie even though we starve to death, but we believe in Jesus, and as he commanded us we want to be baptized. We can die if it be God's will, but we want to be baptized first. Be pleased to grant our request, and do not put us off any longer! May the Lord help us all!"

There had been no baptisms for the space of fifteen months—from March 1877 to June 1878. A few persons at Ongole, Mr. Clough's own station, whom he had known well for years, he regarded as true converts, and thought he could no longer refuse them the rite which they were so eager to receive. These he baptized—how many we do not know—and he adds:—"I only wanted to keep the multitude of converts off two or three months longer, that all the friends of missions might be free from doubts, although personally I had been convinced for above a year that the work was of God. But to delay was impossible, for God's time had fully come to glorify himself."