

FIND, EMBRACE US, BEAR;

A HOLIDAY AT KODAIKANAL.

Off for "Kodai!" Twenty-four miles by houseboat or ox-cart, three hundred odd down to Madras by the East Coast Railway, then after half a day's shopping in the southern metropolis, off again by the South Indian Railway three hundred more to the nearest station for the Palnai Hills (at the southern extremity of the Western Ghats), then a jaunt of thirty miles by ox-cart again to "The Tope," the point where the road begins its ascent to the beautiful hill-town twelve miles beyond—it is a hot, tedious, uncomfortable journey, but bright with anticipation! Heat, noise, dust, glaring sunlight, weariness of body, all combine to intensify the enjoyment of the peace, greenness and fresh beauty of the hills. As one follows the hill path up those last twelve miles of the journey, carried in a canvas chair by four stout coolies, the green trees, the singing birds, the very coolness of the air, and higher up the scent of the eucalyptus trees, give a sensation of rest, and tears come to the eyes, as the blessed promise of renewed bodily vigor and joy of living steals over one. Up, up the winding road swing the coolies, and with the melodious chant, "Hungogan!" make at a dash the last few curving stretches of the way, until one is deposited in front of a hospitable door and welcomed in true "home" fashion by some gone up perchance a few weeks before, and we realize again the joy of being with white people! And behold, Kodai life has begun!

The first few days are spent in rest, and one is content to sit quietly on the verandah and let the peace and loveliness of the scene fill the soul. The gentle slopes on every hand, clothed in trees of vivid green (not thick with a six months' coating of dust, like those just left on the scorching plains below) are a veritable balm to the spirit. Cradled in the centre lies the lake—Kodai's special charm—while on the slopes

everywhere, on the upper, middle and lower lake roads and on others running off unexpectedly around charming recesses in the hills, nestle the houses behind sheltering foliage, each house a harbor of rest for a number of Europeans fled, like ourselves, to the hills, to escape the worst of India's fiery heat. Though Kodai is several hundreds of miles south from our Telugu mission field, an altitude of seven thousand feet makes it decidedly cool, and at nights even cold.

Then begin the walks. Oh, the joy of being able just to walk, and speak English to one's companions, and be comfortably cool! Out from town, over the hills, lead the bridle paths, and away from the town, around and over the hills follow we. Many charming spots call, and day after day, week after week, we answer, paying our grateful respects to them in turn. Silver Cascades, Bear Shola (wood), Fairy Falls, Coaker's Walk, Pombar Woods, and others. But the favorite picnic place is Pillar Rocks, a wonderful formation, where one approaches on the level from the plateau of the hills and finds that the plateau is buttressed, so to speak, by a group of three tremendous "pillars," rising hundreds of feet sheer from the valley beneath. An ideal place for a picnic this, the mysterious pillars being full of surprises in their recesses and caverns, the most wonderful of all being the yawning cave and tunnel called the "chimney," through which it is the ambition of every newcomer to crawl!

And what delightful friendships are formed here! From Canada, the United States of America, England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Germany, Russia, Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand, and other countries, God's children, representing all denominations, have come to India with the blessed Gospel story. And up here, one season or another, one meets them and learns to know and love them. What can equal such friendship?