



The "Dr. Kellock Home."

THE OPENING OF THE DR. KELLOCK HOME FOR LEPERS, RAMACHANDRAPURAM.

Friday, the 7th of September, was a day of good hope for the lepers of the Ramachandrapuram Taluk, Godaveri. It will be remembered in the Taluk capital as the day of the opening of the Dr. Kellock Home for Lepers. No other such home is known to exist on the East Coast of India, between Madras and Calcutta. This is the pioneer effort, in these parts, to provide for that segregation, without which it is impossible to stamp out the disease, and for that care and provision which so ameliorate the condition of the sufferers and brighten all the remaining days of a life which would otherwise be given over to helpless suffering and vagrancy.

The town of Ramachandrapuram is situated in the rich delta of the Godaveri, midway between and a little to the south of the canal that runs in an almost straight line from Rejahmundry to Cocanada, a distance of forty miles. It is surrounded by wet cultivation and is the capital of one of the richest revenue bearing taluks in the presidency. The villages round about seem to be honey combed with leprosy. As many as twenty-three cases have been found in only a few of the many villages of the taluk. The census returns of 1891, for the Godaveri District showed 1000 leper out of a total population of 2,000,000. In that proportion this taluk with a population of one quarter of a million would seem to contain about 125, lepers, that is, if the distribution of lepers is in proportion to the population, and if the census returns are correct. The startling revelations of the leper census made in the few villages referred to above seems to cast a cloud of doubt on the official figures.

Besides being the taluk capital with the regular government officers, Ramachandrapuram is the home of the local Zemindar and one of the stations of the Canadian Baptist Mission, Ontario and Quebec Board.

To the west of the town three quarters of a mile

on a rising swell of land three acres in extent, and completely surrounded by wet cultivation, is the site of the new home of hope for the lepers. Thitherward, on Friday evening at five o'clock, a little company of one hundred or more from the town wended their way for the opening. The Rev. John E. Davis, the missionary of the station, took the chair. Sri Rajah Kakalapudi Ramachendakaru Bahadur Garu, the Zemindar, M. Ry. Kadambari Narasimham Pantulu Garu, B.A., the tahsilda, and other prominent officials and townsmen were present, Mr. Davis in explaining the genesis of the undertaking said that Miss S. Isabel Hatch, the lady missionary at the station, had discovered leprosy in one of her household servants three years ago. She at once discharged the man providing him with a little house and a monthly allowance. His mother and sister, similarly afflicted, in despair at their hopeless condition, had thrown themselves into a tank to end their misery. These sad occurrences deeply moved Miss Hatch. In one of her letters to a friend which was published, she vividly described the leper's woeful lot. The letter made a profound impression. The widow of a Canadian doctor with means was, in turn, deeply moved, and in consonance with a life-long effort in relieving suffering, determined to devote a moiety of her inheritance to the erection of buildings for Miss Hatch's proposed leper asylum at Ramachandrapuram. She has sent six thousand rupees. With these, two small buildings of five rooms in all, with verandas front and back, roofed with Egesu wood and Mangalore tiles, and to be floored with cement, have been erected. One of these is used as a caretaker's house, the other as a ward for women. A new ward of five rooms for men and a little dispensary, which will be used as a chapel, will also be erected at once. At present there are four women and nineteen men living in leaf-roofed wattle sheds till the permanent buildings are ready for occupancy. The institution will be called the "Doctor Kellock Home for Lepers," in memory of the late husband of the lady whose generosity has made the erection of the buildings possible.

Miss Hatch has become responsible for the support of the present number of lepers with funds on hand for them. Her ability to continue this labor of love, and to extend it to others coming daily in ones and twos begging admission, will depend entirely upon the freewill offerings of a generous and helpful public.

The home will be connected with the well-known Mission to Lepers in India and the East, which has stations all over North India and of which Mr. Bailey, of Edinburgh, is the secretary.

At the conclusion of Mr. Davis' remarks, the Tahsildar, Mr. Narasimham and the Rev. H. F. Flamme, of Cocanada spoke. The meeting then closed. These are the humble beginnings of what