

At Ramapatam.

[The following extract from Mr. Clough's new book, *From Darkness to Light*, cannot fail to be of special interest to many of our readers, describing, as it does, the seminary over which Rev. A. V. Timpany formerly presided. The Theological School, in connection with our own Canadian Mission, shortly to be established at Samulcotta under the charge of Rev. J. McLaurin, will, we understand, be conducted on a precisely similar plan.—Ed.]

About one hundred and fifty miles north of Madras, and thirty south of Ongole, near the seashore, is the little village of Ramapatam. In front the blue waters of the Bay of Bengal roll in and break incessantly on a white-sand beach. All about the flat, sandy shores are groves of Palmyra palm-trees, with their straight, pillar-like trunks, and dark, bunchy tops; and here and there a few tall, slender cocoanut-palms sway their long feathery leaves in the wind. The Buckingham Canal, which runs from Madras far into the northern districts, passes close to Ramapatam, and forms the principal means of traffic and conveyance along the east coast.

Quite near the village, on very gently rising ground, and facing the sea, is Brownson Theological Seminary, an institution where a large number of Telugu converts are gathered to study the word of God, and prepare themselves for Christian work among their countrymen. The compound (enclosed premises) is quite large, and has the full benefit of the fresh sea-breeze. The fact that the grounds are so broad and airy is very favorable to such an institution in the matter of health; and it was indeed fortunate that this fine location was secured, and the seminary established here.

Out in the broad lawn before the mission house, as we look toward the sea, is a sacred spot. Within a circular thorn hedge stands a beautiful date palm; and under its graceful, drooping branches, a white marble slab marks the resting-place of Mrs. Williams, wife of the principal of the seminary. In the year 1876 she fell asleep in Jesus; and the spot where she rests was appropriately chosen in view of the institution she loved so well.

It was this seminary at Ramapatam which American Baptists were called upon to endow in 1873. It has since then prospered greatly. The students number about two hundred at present, and the number is increasing every year. Many of the young men are married, and their wives come with them; and those who are able study in the same classes with their husbands, thus fitting themselves for usefulness as school-teachers and instructors of the women in the fields of labor which they and their husbands will occupy.

Besides the principal, there are four regular teachers in the seminary. These have all been selected from among the students themselves, and trained for this very purpose. They are faithful men and good teachers. The first three are ordained.

The seminary is a busy place: there is no room for idleness. The motto inscribed over the door of the school-house where John Milton went to school would be appropriate here: "Doce aut discere aut discere" ("Teach, or learn, or leave"). Every morning at seven o'clock work commences; and recitations and lectures fully occupy the day till four o'clock, with the exception of the noon recess.

The course of study commences with Genesis and the Gospel by Matthew, and the first year is spent on the first books of the Old and New Testaments. In due time the whole Bible is gone over in regular order, much of it being committed to memory. And in the fourth year instruction is given to a certain extent in church history and

pastoral theology. Many of the students acquire a very commendable knowledge of the word of God and the Christian system.

The houses where the students live are of brick, laid in lime mortar, with tiled roofs; and most of the work on these buildings has been done by the students themselves after school-hours and on Saturdays. The houses were almost all destroyed by the great cyclone in November, 1879, and were built up again by the students. Wood is exceedingly scarce and very high-priced in this part of India; hence bricks and tiles are used. That the students should work, is desirable in various ways. It economizes the funds of the seminary; it is conducive to the health of the students; and it teaches them that even preachers and teachers must be ready to labor with their hands if necessary.

Now that we have become somewhat acquainted with the place, let us take a walk round among the cottages. It is towards evening, and we may walk out without danger from the sun. As we go along from house to house, the students seem very happy to see us; and among them we soon notice Lukshmiah and Papulama. As we approach, Lukshmiah rises from his seat by the door, where he is reading, and Papulama comes from where she is boiling the rice for the evening meal; and they both greet us with a loving smile, and with that graceful salaam which is so natural to the Telugus. We find that Lukshmiah is studying his Bible-lesson for the next day. He is happy, and studies diligently; though often, when speaking of his heathen relatives and friends, a cloud of anxiety and sorrow comes over his face, as he thinks of their condition, and his separation from them. And as he realizes that the religion of Christ often brings a sword instead of peace, and that "a man's foes shall be they of his own household," he says it is hard; but, as it is right, he submits gladly to all that discipleship to Christ involves.

Day by day he and Papulama, in a large class of sixty-five, follow the regular course of Bible study. They are highly esteemed by their teachers and fellow-students: their conduct is upright, and their influence good.

We will suppose now that it is Saturday morning. At the ringing of the bell at seven o'clock, all assemble as on other days for morning worship. After the devotional exercises, all the students bring forward their regular weekly contributions, and place them on the table before the teachers. Besides this, many of them make special offerings: one perhaps will bring a fowl, and another some vegetables; these are sold at auction among the students, and the proceeds put into the fund.

After these exercises, about seventy of the students go out, two by two, into the surrounding villages within a radius of ten miles, to hold meetings on Saturday evening and Sunday forenoon. One of the senior students and a younger man generally go together, one to preach, and the other to conduct Sunday school in villages where there are Christians.

On Sunday morning at eight o'clock, all except those who have gone out to the villages assemble in the seminary for Sunday school, attired in their clean clothes. The school is conducted very much as Sunday schools are at home; the International Lessons, translated into Telugu, being used. After the opening exercises, when all have separated into their different classes, we will walk through the rooms among them, and see what they are doing. Here and there they are seated in groups on the mats, each class forming a circle around its teacher. There are about fifteen classes, arranged according to age and attainments. The teachers are full of earnest-