

THE TRINIDAD MISSION.

Extracts of Letter from Miss Semple.

Tunapuna, Feb. 7th 1885.

My Dear Friend:—

I am in receipt of your kind letter which I should have acknowledged before this time, but could not get it done. The closing month of the year is always a busy one, then in January I was laid aside two weeks by an attack of neuralgia. Since that time I have answered home letters as I had opportunity. You can have little idea of the amount of work there is to go through with in the run of a week. The missionary life is truly a busy one. Well that it is so, for the want of society would make it very lonely living out here. I dearly love my work, and am never happier than when every moment is occupied with it.

The New Year has brought with it, new work for me, or rather a new field for work. The teacher, appointed by the Board, for Arica, being young and not having taught previously, it was thought better not to ask her to undertake the responsibility of a school four miles from the nearest missionary and live alone, as she would be required to do, there being no family in that quarter, with whom she might board. The same objections would not apply to me. I had had the experience of some years, had become accustomed to the work, besides being in a measure acclimatized.

I did not take the school that Miss Hilton was appointed to, as that had been, for some weeks, successfully taught by John G. Dharma. Mr. Morton thought as he was doing so well, I had better take Tacarigua, one which I much preferred, as it is two miles only from the Mortons and promises to be a much larger school. The village itself is thickly peopled, and then it is in the neighbourhood of four estates.

Miss Hilton entered upon her work at the first of the year. She has a nice school, though for some she will find the work pretty hard. My school at Tacarigua is comparatively new, having been opened in May last. It had been taught previously by Paul Buckhan. When I began there it had an average of about 40, but has been daily increasing in numbers until last week there was an average attendance of sixty one. That number, in the rude state in which they are, gives me, as you may suppose, my hands full. To open a new school with any number of Coolies is no small undertaking, but when you have sixty or seventy to break in;

what shall I say? It is certainly no fun. Wild they are, yet I love the dear little things, you would be amused to hear my little girls running round gabbling in a mixture of Hindustani and English, and every time they address me, calling me "mamma."

"As the school is new, the work is of a very elementary character. This makes it all the more difficult. There are seven boys reading in the fourth book, English, and in the second Hindustani, three reading in the third book, eight in the second and about fifty in the first book. The most advanced in Arithmetic are working in Long Division. We have not yet begun with Geography, but mean to do so orally next week. I take great delight in teaching Hindi reading. I often wish I could speak it. A much greater field of usefulness would be thus opened up to me, in meeting with the parents. I do try to do to do something at the study of it, but there is little time.

I have charge of the Sunday school at Tacarigua too. There are over forty in attendance. The monitor and Paul Buckhan assist in the work. I won't get on very well with S. S. until I get moved up, and settled down, as it is impossible to visit the people as much as I would like. I am still living with the Mortons going up and down to my work every day by train. This gives a little variety, but it is rather much along with the work, which is of itself heavy enough.

As far as I know our Mission staff are about as usual.

My letters are, and must needs be, very hurriedly written. *They are not to be published.* With love to self and all enquiring friends, I remain,

Yours Very sincerely,

A. A. SEMPLE

As will be seen by the closing sentence of the above letter it was not for publication, but the Editor having been shown it by the friend to whom it was written felt that if Miss Semple knew how eagerly people look for letters from the mission field, and the good that they do, she would withdraw that injunction, and he has taken the liberty after leaving out much that was very interesting, of publishing some extracts from it. He hopes that the little Coolies will be more obedient to her commands.