

MADRAS, INDIA, Dec. 12th, '87.

My Dear Miss Buchan.—Since my last letter to you a change has come into my life and plans, the Rev. Mr. Drake, one of the American missionaries who sailed from Boston, has asked me to become his wife and work with him here in Madras.

This will involve my severing my short-lived connection with our own Board. I write at once so that the place I was to have taken may be soon filled. I feel leaving our own mission and the special work I was looking forward to, but after considering the matter prayerfully I think I am right in the step I am taking. I am not laying aside mission work, only taking it up in a different place and among the same people to whom I was coming in the first place.

I expect to leave on Thursday of this week for Cocanada and give over all the various articles sent out for the missionaries and schools into the right hands and fulfil that trust. After considering the matter carefully in every light it does not seem wise for me to remain long in Cocanada, as I would simply be learning the language for some time to come and doing little or no work. Under these circumstances it would not be just to our Board to remain there unless I can do a fair amount of work and accomplish something. I shall probably leave some time in January, but that is not decided yet.

This is one of the most difficult letters I have ever been obliged to write, for I feel keenly the position in which our Board is placed, and the lack of workers on our own field. Believe me very sincerely yours,

BELLA ALEXANDER.

An Incident,

Related by a returned lady missionary from India, at the annual meeting of the Canadian Women's Board of Missions suggested the following lines.

One of India's closed zenanas
Opens to the gentle tread
Of a faithful Bible-teacher,
Who for months the word had read
Here a dark-eyed, tender woman,
A fair daughter by her side,
Listens to the old, old story
Of the Saviour crucified.

And it seemed as if each barrier
To the truth was swept away,
Yea, that Christ, Himself, had entered,
Would our sister bid Him stay?
Blessed fears were slowly falling,
And the teacher's eyes grew dim,
As she asked in pleading accents,
Can you give up all for Him?

Angels waited for the answer,
And it came so soft and low,
"May I keep one sacred custom?"
'Tis too precious to let go;
When the first faint shadows gather
At the quiet twilight hour,
When the hush of coming nightfall
Still the song-bird, shuts the flower.

"Then is lit the candelabra,
With its arms of branching light,
And, beneath our household idol
Maidens place it, shining bright.

Next two cocoa nuts are broken,
Such the offering that is made,
While around fresh fragrant blossoms
Pere white jessamine are laid.

"Thus we make our evening worship,
Husband doffs his turban gay,
Little children cluster round us,
Coming in from happy play;
Hands are clasped devout and silent,
'Tis a time so strangely sweet:
Must I pass it by for Jesus,
Lay this offering at His feet?"

"Ah, my sister," said the teacher,
"These are symbols faint and dim,
Of the perfect loyal service
You must render unto Him:
Keep the flowers, the glowing lamplight,
For the solemn evening prayer,
But the idol-shrine abolish,
If the Lord of light be there.

"Step by step His hand will lead you
To the light around the throne,
Where the King in wondrous beauty,
Holds all glories into one;
There, when closes life's brief day-time,
May we meet a ransomed throng,
Earth's mistakes and pain forgotten
In the new, unending song."

Then, methought, there comes a question
To our Christian homes to-day,
Have we not some goodly treasure,
Some fair idol laid away?
Safe enshrined and worshipped often,
Garlanded with light and bloom,
Where we bow and render service,
Which belong to God alone.

Father we ask and erring,
Make the sort complete,
Some, perchance, have broken idols
And would lay them at Thy feet:
Take our best, our full allegiance,
Consecrate each heart to Thee,
Perfect faith her all surrenders,
Resting safe on love divine.

Mrs. G. B. M.

My Hindu Helps.

MY MUNSHI.

This individual put in his appearance a few days after our arrival. A Bohemian, a queer mixture of arrogant pride and cringing servility. He is about five feet six inches in height; slightly built and yet more slightly clothed. He wears white cotton cloth gathered about his loins and falling loosely so as to form a species of bloomer about his knees. From the waist up he wears a flowing robe of muslin or a cotton jacket. His head is swathed in eight or ten yards of coarse muslin; over his arms he carries a great cotton handkerchief, necessary to assist him in the ever recurring nasal explosions by which he ejects the quantities of muck being perpetually injected into his nose. His features are a compound of a thrice foiled attempt at the Grecian, Roman and Jewish types. His face is walnut-color badly pitted by small-pox and covered with black blotches, the evident abortions of small-pox marks.

The munshi is not handsome. He comes along each