

MOTTO
FOR THE YEAR
...
"WORKERS
TOGETHER
WITH HIM."

W. B. M. U.

THE
MARITIME
PROVINCES

Prayer Topic for September: For Bimlipitam, its Missionaries and native Christians, that they may live consistent, devoted lives and bring many of the heathen to Christ. For a great blessing to follow the meetings of the Conventions and that the interest awakened may lead to increased efforts on the part of all.

LETTER FROM MISS CLARKE.

IT HARDLY seems possible that seven months have passed since I bade farewell to the home church and the many kind friends in the dear homeland. But such is the case. They have passed quickly, and have been on the whole, pleasant. Have been in my new home for five months. The feelings of strangeness and of isolation from all I hold dear are to some extent passing away. So far I have been very well indeed, and am able to study every day. God is so good to me. With all my heart I would thank Him.

And now, dear friends, what can I tell you about this strange land and people that will be interesting? Things are somewhat different from what I had expected. I had heard of the thousands of villages in India, but had no idea that these villages consisted for the most part of low mud huts, closely packed together, containing very often only one small room, in which human beings by the dozen eat, sleep and live. I did not expect to find the poverty as deep and widespread as it appears to be. I did not know that thousands of men, women and children never in all their lives, knew what it was to have a bed to sleep on; but no matter how sick they were never had anything but a thin straw mat and the hard mud to rest on. They do not seem to mind it, but seem to be quite satisfied as long as they get enough to eat. Even the best off among them have no idea of home life and comforts, such as even the poor in our land enjoy. They will have a number of gold ornaments to adorn their persons, but their homes are destitute of furniture. They sit on the floor and eat off leaves with their fingers.

The men in this country have a very exalted opinion of themselves and dearly enjoy being waited on. I had a Brahmin Munshi (teacher) for a few days. The first day he came the carpenter was busy in my room, so I took my chair and books and

went to the little chapel. It is right beside the mission house. In the afternoon I preferred to remain in my room, so asked Munshi if he would please bring the chair from the chapel. He gazed at me and said, "Madam! is there not a servant here who can do that?" I told him there certainly was not, and that I wanted him to bring the chair. He reluctantly went, but catching sight of a small boy got him to carry it. He told me he was a Brahmin, that all the other castes worshipped them, for they were equal with God. As I looked at him the thought of worshipping him (reeling as he was with tobacco) struck me as rather comical, and I laughed outright.

The father of my regular Munshi died. The body was at once burned. Then followed twelve days of funeral ceremonies in which fasting and purifying were indulged in. All who were in any way related to the family were declared to be defiled and no one must touch them. Every day for twelve days Munshi said he had to prepare food and take it to the place where the body had been burned that the spirit might eat. I asked him if he really believed in what he was doing? His answer was, "No; how can I believe it?" Did I not see that neither spirit nor devil touched the food, but at last the dogs eat it?" "Then why in the world did you do it?" I asked. "Custom" was the reply. "Do not dare to do anything else." At one time the missionaries thought he would become a Christian, as he attended the services regularly and appeared to be deeply interested. He lacked the moral courage necessary to take a decided stand, and still continues to do that in which he does not believe, because he is afraid to do otherwise. It would mean the loss of home, and lands; of family and friends. It would mean bitter persecution and hard work to get a living.

Oh, sisters! These people are bound, bound