

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, Godavari. 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 helplessness and vagrancy.

The town of Ramachandrapuram is situated in the rich delta of the Godavari, midway between and a little to the south of the canal that runs in an almost straight line from Rajahmundry 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 Godavari District showed only 1000 lepers 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 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 Vatchavaya Roy Jagadpatirazu Bahadur Garu, the Zemindar, Mr. Rykadambari, Narasimham Pantulu Garu, B. A., the tahsildar, 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, but he and his sister, similarly afflicted, in despair at their hopeless condition, threw themselves into a tank to end their misery. This sad occurrence deeply moved Miss Hatch. In one of her letters to a Canadian paper 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 verandahs 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 care-taker'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 too, will 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 named "The Dr. 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. Laflamme of Cocanada spoke. The meeting then closed. These are the humble beginnings of what must come to be a great institution if it at all meets the requirements of the loathsome and fearfully afflicted community for whose good it will exist.

At a distance from the assembled company and seated on the grass were the twenty-three lepers already in the home. They sang very sweetly during the meeting. They are all outcasts or Christians; but provision will be made to receive caste lepers. The proportion of the sexes is four women to nineteen men. This is not the proportion that generally holds throughout the pres-

idency; that is 337 females to 1000 males. But there may be no significance in the proportion of the sexes as now existing in the asylum.

In this connection it is interesting to note that in the twelve coast districts of this presidency, seven show a higher proportion of lepers on the seaboard than in the inland taluks, whereas the reverse is true of the other five districts. The Godavari is one of the latter. The disease is generally prevalent to a greater extent in provinces with a high rainfall and a damp climate, while on the other hand dry climate seems to favor exemption from leprosy.

The prevalence of leprosy increases with the advance of years up to the 55-59 period after which the proportion falls, this fall being attributed to the fact that lepers do not live so long as other people.

Cocanada, India, 12, 9, '00.

H. F. LAFLAMME.

The Fire and the Hammer.

BY REV. S. E. WISHARD, D. D.

Such is the Word of God when the Holy Spirit uses it upon the human heart. Under another figure, it is "quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." It is the mighty instrument which the Holy Spirit has used in the transformation of this world. All the changes in the individual life, all the uplifts of nations and peoples have been wrought by the power of the Word of God. No other instrument can take the place of this mighty agency. "Is not my Word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" Why should we turn to the feeble instrumentalities of our own invention, when God has put in our hands the hammer of his truth? It has smitten to death all the vain philosophies, the lusts and idolatries of the world. It has dragged from their concealments all the deceptions of the human heart, reduced them to powder and dust and scattered them to the winds.

The Word of God has power, in the hands of the Spirit which gave it, to enlighten the ignorance of the mind. The God of this world has blinded the minds of them that believe not, and hung the pall of ignorance over all the heathen world; so that men have changed the truth of God into a lie. "Professing themselves to be wise they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corrupt man."

The same Word that is able to enlighten is able to instruct, to lead us on, step by step, out of the mental and moral darkness that has enshrouded us. For we need instruction as much as illumination—"line upon line, line upon line, precept upon precept, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. It is all found here in this treasury of truth. What is to be known of God, of ourselves, of sin, of redemption, of service, of glory, of the eternal future and its preparatory present—all this is here made known to us.

With its light and instruction, this Word of God is able to convict men. They may hide for a little season, may try to run away from the truth, as did the first sinner. But it is able to overtake the fugitive and arraign him at the bar of his own conscience. It is able to thrust him through, wound him unto death. Three thousand souls were slain by the truth on the day of Pentecost, when Peter wielded the sword of the Spirit. It was not the power of Peter's oratory that wrought the glorious victory, but the keen edge of the truth, when he showed them from the Scriptures that they had slain their long-expected Messiah. Their bitter prejudices vanished, their obdurate hearts were broken under the hammer of God's Word, and they turned for healing to him whom they had crucified. For God's truth not only convicts, but converts. It has regenerating power; is the instrument of regeneration. By it we are "Born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth forever." The Apostle James declares that "With his own will begat he us with the Word of truth." Here the new life begins, the life of Christ within us, who was himself the Incarnated Word.

Every true work of grace is wrought by the truth of God, used by the Holy Spirit. Genuine revivals of religion, that are not gotten up, but come down, are the result of preaching the truth in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. All human machinery is futile, is incapable of making one hair white or black. "Power belongeth unto God," and he makes it manifest through his Word. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." And when the work of regeneration is accomplished, this truth is able to feed and nourish the new-born soul. We turn to this Word for sustenance, desiring the sincere milk of the Word. The child of God turns to this source of help and strength as certainly as the opening flower to the sun. We cannot feed on feelings, emotions, excitements, frames of mind. These are only passing incidents, coming and going, but not spiritual nourishment. Said the old prophet, "Thy words are found, and I did eat them; and thy word was

unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart; for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts."

This Word of God has also keeping power. The strong Christian is the kept Christian—strong in the strength which God supplies. He stands fast in the new life, kept unspotted from the world; because he can say, "Thy word have I hid in my heart that I sin not against thee." The declaration of God is that because "The law of his God is in his heart, none of his steps shall slide." He stands on the promises; he walks in faith, and therefore walks securely. Then all Christian hearts learn the lesson of the power of God's Word, and go to it continually for strength and sustaining power, a new era will dawn in church life. Many who are feeble will become strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. This is the truth that we are giving out in our gospel tent to many who have not known it, except in corrupt and perverted forms. It is the fire and hammer with which all false religions are yet to be destroyed, and Christ's kingdom established in all the earth.—Herald and Presbyterian.

Minister and Audience.

Despite the increasing power of the press, the dominant force in the Christian church today is the pulpit. Its influence in convincing, in molding, in training the minds and hearts and lives of Christian people is beyond estimate. For the due exercise of its influence the minister is popularly supposed to be, and is to a very large degree, responsible. This popular view of his relationship is not wrong. The pulpit is the minister's place of power. It is his throne. He is the one to determine whether its position shall be high or low, and whether or not it shall touch its audience as it ought. If he regards it as something by which he may entertain or amuse, or as a medium by which to expound his own peculiar views, or as something which he may use professionally, without, as Martineau says, the "flow of soul that is not professional," he and he alone will be held responsible for the failure that inevitably must follow. The minister therefore must have high conceptions of his position as the occupant of a pulpit in the church, and he must to the utmost of his power prepare himself heart and mind and spirit for the most efficient exercise of its functions.

But the results flowing from the contact of minister and audience do not depend alone upon the former. The audience itself has something to do in determining whether success or failure shall be the result of any single service. A celebrated actor has just been telling in the public press of the influence of the audience upon him and others of his profession. Many a "first night," he says, has been a total failure because of some special manifestation on the part of the people. Many a play has been killed almost before it was born, by the same cause. Chill, disaster, defeat have emanated from the audience whom it was the actor's desire to please. The same influence exactly may not be exerted upon the minister by those before him. He is, if he is in his place rightly, God's messenger. He has in his keeping his truth and for the time he is its exponent to the people. This therefore to some extent puts him in an attitude of independence occupied by no other speaker. Lack of sympathetic response, antagonism, it may be unexpressed but real, indifference, etc., communicate themselves to him who has upon him the burden of conducting public worship. The more sensitive a man is the more emphatic is this reaction. There is a mental atmosphere that communicates itself, even as there is a material one all about us. Sometimes it imparts sympathy and help; sometimes the reverse. Everyone knows, who has experience in this public ministry, the help of a single intelligent, sympathetic, responsive face. This one multiplied by numbers will make almost the dull speaker eloquent. There are ministers who do not look at their audience. They are impeded rather than inspired. But even they will be responsive to the mental and spiritual atmosphere surrounding them to their help or to their hindrance. While, then, the minister is the chief factor in the production of uplift, or the reverse, in his relation to the audience, we who hear have reason to heed the New Testament injunction: "Take heed how ye hear." Oftentimes when there has been comparative failure we should share the blame and not load it all on him. At both ends of the line all this is "worth thinking about."—Ex.

Do not regard iniquity in your heart; if you do, the Lord will not hear you. Keep that before you always. Wait on him. Believe on him. Expect great things from him. Faint not if the blessing tarries. Pray, pray, pray! And above all, rely only and alone upon the merits of our ever-adorable Lord and Saviour, that according to his infinite merits, and not your own, the prayers you offer, and the work you do, will be accepted.—George Muller.

Difficulty, struggle, progress—this is the law. By this we conquer, by this it is that the spirit gradually obtains ascendancy over the flesh, by this we aspire to be children of God.—J. Walker.