

OUR INDIAN STATIONS.

Chicacole.

(From Miss Hammond.)

MY DEAR READERS OF THE LINK,—When I wrote you three months ago, I little thought that I would next address you from Chicacole. The fact exists, however, and from it I learn a lesson, which requires daily repetition,—that my knowledge of even the near future is as nothing.

Ere this you are aware that Mrs. Armstrong's failing health necessitated her return to her native land. It was not considered advisable either to stop this work in a summary manner, or to leave it wholly in the hands of the native assistants. So I with all my inexperience and unfitness am here. Even the probable length of my stay is yet unknown. I was exceedingly sorry to leave Bimlipatam; have seen times, when owing to discouragements in my work, I would not have felt it so deeply. I think I wrote you before that the clouds seemed lifting.

The sun never shone so brightly upon my work nor was I ever happier in it than when called upon to lay it down. I thoroughly enjoyed teaching a daily Bible lesson to my class of girls. I was constantly adding a little to my scant knowledge of the language, which enabled me to teach them better. Then I could see marked improvement in two of the girls. One was Nellie, a boarder, well known to a certain mission band in Nova Scotia. The other was Seethama, a pupil from the town. I have not a very extensive acquaintance with the Hindu children, but among those I do know, Seethama occupies a place in my estimation second to none. Through all Mrs. Churchill's difficulties with the school, this child was one of her firm friends, and she stood just as steadfastly by me. No inducement from the Rajah's school was sufficient to draw her away; and her record of attendance is something of which she has not the blightest occasion to be ashamed. In these two girls I was hoping for future Bible women. Please do not think that I expected to accomplish this. Looking over an old note book the other day, I found the following sentence which I copied some years ago: "We are to ask God's blessing upon our efforts, and then work for the desired end as if we expected to accomplish it ourselves." That is how I felt about Nellie and Seethama. Without the first we will surely do nothing. If after asking the blessing we fold our hands and wait for it, how much will we do? But who has ever yet measured the extent of God's ability and willingness to do? Oh my friends if we had faith what would it accomplish for our work both at home and abroad?

You have already heard so much about Chicacole and I am such a stranger here, that I scarcely know what to tell you.

Perhaps you will be interested in knowing that I occupy a large house all alone,—not that exactly either. A Christian woman stays with me nearly all the time, and my boy is never very far away. Very few of you have heard of this boy whom I have had nearly a year. He was sent to me by a friend; his name is Subriadi; he is sixteen years old, and hitherto has proved himself a very good boy indeed. He is a Christian and I hope the Lord has something for him to do in the future. Sometime I may tell you more about him.

I am keeping house, and though it requires more of my attention than boarding it does not rest very heavily upon me. The two schools require a great deal of attention. In them I daily spend between three and four hours, and feel that they ought to have more. I teach a Bible lesson in each and have a class of boys in some English studies. This is my first experience in boys' schools. The girls' school is about as large and in some respects resembles the one I left in Bimlipatam. There is no Rajah's school to contend with here, so I feel that this girls' school should become a power in Chicacole. Beside school work, there is much requiring attention, and I regret to say that I am not studying as much as I would like, still I daily spend an hour or two with my books. I must do that much, if something else has to be neglected. Now my friends will you pray for me? Were any of you ever in a trying situation? If you were then you know what weakness our own strength is. Ask that in every particular I may be supplied with strength and wisdom from on high. Pray also for these schools, for the teachers, that each individual may learn the way of salvation. Ever yours sincerely,

C. A. HAMMOND.

Chicacole, July 8th, '80.

-Bobbili.

A HINDU FUNERAL CEREMONY.

April 3th. The young Rancee whom I mentioned in my last, died this morning, and as I had not seen a burning since I came here, concluded to go and witness the ceremonies connected with the burning of her body at 8 o'clock.

I have just returned, and while the event is fresh in my mind, will pen a few lines concerning it which may give the readers of the LINK a peep into another of the scenes which (except in some of its details) is a daily occurrence in this land of India.

They had brought the corpse from the palace in a palanquin, surrounded by torches and accompanied by music, and had dipped it in the tank at the end of the town, when I had arrived at the other side of the tank. The bearers had also dipped themselves in the water, and as I ascended the bank and saw the thousands of people assembled on the opposite bank, down to the water's edge, it reminded me so forcibly of a baptismal scene at home that I could not restrain the coming tears, and my heart went out in earnest prayer that I, or if not I, some other missionary might witness such a baptismal scene some time in Bobbili.

They had torches burning around the palanquin, and were performing some ceremonies but I could not get near enough to see all distinctly. A cow and a calf were brought into the tank and presented to an old Brahmin, who, having dipped himself, led the way to his house, the cow and calf following. This Brahmin is one of their learned men who consult the stars and tell the Rajah which are lucky days and which unlucky, &c.

Soon after this, the music again struck up and the palanquin was lifted,—surrounded by the torch-bearers, and carried to the place of burning.

Here the wood was not all in readiness and we stood looking on as they cut and piled it. They also brought two baskets of sandal wood and a large brass pot full of ghee (fat), and some parcels of resin and camphor, &c. When all was ready the palanquin was carried around the pyre three times and then placed near the side of it, the doors opened, and the corpse, rolled in an old silk cloth and covered with saffron, taken out and laid upon the wood amid the din caused by the beating of drums, the blowing of horns, and their other barbarous music; and the yelling, screaming and surging of the crowd to get a sight of it. All seemed so inhuman and heathenish to me that I was quite overcome by my emotions, and when in my mind I compared it with one of our decent burials in a Christian land the contrast was appalling.

Having placed the corpse on the pyre, they immediately threw baskets of mango leaves over it so as to hide it from view. The sandal wood was placed around it, a heap of wood piled upon it, and a part of the ghee poured upon the wood that jutted out beyond the head. The relatives and their caste people then stood in a semi-circle near the head, and one man, the young Rancee's brother, after placing a pot of coals near the head of the pyre, took a chatee of water in which was a small hole so that the water might run out, placed it upon his shoulder and walked around the pyre three times; each time as he came round another hole was made in the chatee, so that more water flowed out. Having completed his rounds, he allowed the pot to fall upon the ground behind him and break to pieces, and without looking back he made poojah, walked away to a distance, sat down and covered his head. Here he remained till the fire had partly destroyed the body when he went to the tank, without looking again at the fire, bathed, and proceeded to his home.

Others poured the remainder of the ghee over the top of the pile and threw on the resin, etc., and as it flashed and crackled and blazed, the friends walked away to their homes, bathing themselves in the tank as they went along, and I came home too. How long the thousands of people who were looking on will remain I do not know, but there will be little to see in a short time.

April 4th. I took the children last evening and drove around where the burning was in the morning. Two tents had been put up, one for the sepoy who will guard the place for three days, and the other over the ashes—a little bed of ashes—all that remains here of the young Rancee, who died not sixteen hours previous. The friends will return in three days and move all the ashes and perform some ceremonies, and this brother who set fire to the pyre will gather some ashes, which will be put away in safe keeping till the Rajah can take and throw them in some sacred river; then, they think, the young Rancee's soul will be received into Paradise.

I believe she was only fifteen years old, so soon has her young life gone out into darkness!

I have never been allowed to see her, though I had the promise of it more than six months ago. Yesterday was the twelfth day after the great rejoicing over the birth of the little Rajah. More presents will be distributed on the day of the feast, twelve days after this event, when I fear the recipients will feel more joy on account of the bounties received than sorrow on account of the cause of it. Your sister in Christ,

M. F. CHURCHILL.

THE WORK AT HOME.

Ontario and Quebec.

ANNUAL MEETINGS.

MONTREAL.—The Annual meeting of the Women's Baptist Foreign Mission Society, Convention East, will be held in Montreal, on Thursday Oct. 7th at three o'clock, in the parlor of the First Baptist church.

TORONTO.—The fourth annual meeting of the Women's Baptist Foreign Missionary Society of Western Ontario and Manitoba, will be held in the Alexander Street Church, Toronto, on Friday afternoon, the 22nd of October, at half-past two o'clock.

Mrs. H. M. N. Armstrong, so well known to readers of the LINK, has promised to be present if sufficiently strong to undertake the long journey from Nova Scotia. It is earnestly desired that all the Circles should be well represented and that as many of the active workers as possible should be present at this meeting. Ladies expecting to attend are requested to send, not later than the 8th Oct., their names and addresses also the railroad by which they will travel, to the chairwoman of the billeting committee, Mrs. Lillie, 73 Homewood Avenue, who will furnish them with billets and certificates for reduced railroad fare.

We also call special attention to the treasurer's request which appears in another column.

THE ANNUAL PUBLIC PLATFORM MEETING of the Foreign Missionary Society of Ontario and Quebec will take place at 8 o'clock on Friday evening the 22nd of October in the Jarvis Street Church. A most interesting meeting is expected. The Women's Societies will be ably represented by Rev. J. L. Campbell.

NEW CIRCLES.—During the summer months, circles have been organized at Georgetown, Lakefield, Selwyn, and the Line Church near Peterboro'—all in connection with the Western Society.

Maritime Provinces.

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE W. M. A. SOCIETIES, HELD AT HILLSBORO', AUGUST 23RD.

In the absence of the President, Mrs. G. M. W. Carey, Mrs. John F. Masters occupied the chair. The meeting opened by singing the hymn, beginning, "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun." After reading the Scriptures, prayer was offered by Mrs. Blackall; Miss Duffy presided at the organ, and Mrs. Dr. Lewis led the singing. An address of welcome was then given by Mrs. Allwood, after which the minutes of the last Annual Meeting were read and adopted. The annual report of N. B. was read by Mrs. John March, the report of N. S. by Mrs. Parsons, and of P. E. I. by Mrs. Foster.

These reports showed that over \$1600 had been raised during the year and that \$400 had been expended from the general fund for buildings, schools, and Miss Hammond's salary. They also gave an account of the nature of the work done by the wives of our missionaries, and our own missionary, Miss Hammond, who is now taking charge of the Chicacole station, in the absence of Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong, who are at home on account of Mrs. Armstrong's failing health. On motion, the reports were adopted.

A number of reports were read from the local Societies by Mrs. James E. Masters, Mrs. Parsons, and the Secretary.

The following note was read from Mrs. Armstrong, returned missionary, who was not able to be present: "I deeply regret not being able to meet with you this afternoon, as I had expected, neither have I had time or strength to prepare such a paper as the occasion deserves, but must not entirely miss the opportunity of expressing my heartfelt gratitude, to the sisters of the W. M. A. S., who have so nobly sustained me by their contributions, their sympathies and their prayers, during the years of my absence from you.

"It has been an unfailling source of help and comfort to me that in whatever straits I might be, whatever help I might require, hundreds of my sisters were ready and waiting, needing only to know what I required in order to do all possible to assist me.

"I wish also to say one word with regard to the education of orphans—a subject which has given us