

AN ENCOURAGING MESSAGE FROM INDIA

In describing the work of the past year in South India, Dr. W. L. Ferguson says: "There are times of ploughing, times of sowing, times of cultivating, times of rain, times of drought, times of waiting, times of harvest. The temptation is to want it all harvest, for this is the time of joy. But it is always well to remind ourselves that the invisibilities are after all the most important things. The presence of Christ in His people, the working of the regenerating, transforming and indwelling Holy Spirit, the forces combining for the production of worthy life and character, the opening of secret springs of love and service are the most real of all things and the most necessary in mission work. And these are the things it is impossible to tabulate in the form of statistics. That a mighty force is at work among the people in this old land is beyond question; and that they are being prepared for a new day, a day of emancipation spiritually, is beyond doubt. The invisible Spirit of God is abroad and moving mightily. Christ was never so much the desire of India as He is today. Vast numbers welcome His message and long to follow Him but the old life holds with a firm grasp as yet. From caste and custom and vested interests, from family ties and alluring prospects of worldly success there is no open road through which to escape. The great day, however, is coming. Christ will yet have India and India will yet have Christ." —Sel.

DIFFICULTIES OF DOCTORING IN INDIA

A medical missionary often has cause to wonder how many of her medicines are administered according to directions. After repeating her orders again and again, a dialogue something like this sometimes follows:

"Now how is this medicine to be taken?" the missionary asks.

"It shall be taken just as you say," the patient replies.

"Well, what have I said?"

"Please say it again and I shall know."

No neat phial is brought for the physic, but a piece of coconut shell or a little brass saucer. To prescribe a "teaspoonful" or a "tablespoonful" is all one to people who eat with their fingers and have no use of knives, forks or spoons.

If a quarter of the medicine does them good one day, they drink up all that is left the next day, and make themselves ill.

A whole bottle of medicine intended for three or four days is frequently taken in one dose, in spite of ample warning and explanation.

If the doctor should mix the medicine with water from the dispensary, the patient would not touch it, as it would break their caste. All prescriptions must be made up with water brought by them in vessels of their own.

Some time ago a woman came to a dispensary complaining of a fever and a cough; but she spoke of the fever as a snake, and the cough it had left behind as the trail of the snake.

Amusing incidents sometimes occur. Outpatients of a hospital come and show their own tongue and pulse when they want medicines for others. "Give me the same medicine as you gave my friend just now," is a frequent request, irrespective of difference in malady. Others put the doctor's power to the test by refusing to give an account of their symptoms. "If she is a clever doctor she will find out for herself," they declare.

Their hekims (priest doctors), they say, can find out the diagnosis and treatment without any inquiry. They can tell what is wrong by feeling the pulse of one hand, and whether the patient will recover by feeling the pulse of the other. Patients hate examination, and as their hekims do not trouble them with this they object to the methods of the medical missionary in this respect.—Irene H. Barnes, in *Missionary Monthly*.

ASSOCIATION

The Oxford-Brant Association will meet at Scotland, June 9th, 10th and 11th. June 9th will be Mission Circle day. Please send a large delegation.

Anna Layman, Director.