

Sights and Sounds in India for Boys and Girls in Canada.

DEAR GIRLS AND BOYS:

Our last letter closed with Gurriah on his way home carrying a letter telling of Narasimbulu's baptism. No sooner does Narasimbulu's father hear the news than he grasps a big cane, calls a friend and his two daughters to help him, and starts for Bimli in great fury, declaring that he will beat both his nephew and his son for what they have done.

We are about retiring for the night when we hear an unusual uproar at the house of the native preachers. Mr. Gullison and I hasten over to see what is the matter, when we come upon the enraged father dragging his son along the road toward home. "What is your name?" we ask him and stand in front to bring him to a halt. "I am the father of this young man," he replies, gasping with anger. "See what he has done and done! Isn't he a pretty bird? And he has done it all without my permission!" "Do not be angry!" we reply. "When Narasimbulu's Father in heaven speaks to him he does not need the permission of his sinful father on earth. Are you greater than his Maker? If your son had gone and got drunk or committed theft or something worse, you might well be grieved; but now he has come to the Saviour of the world to have his sins forgiven, to be made a good man, a child of God and an heir of heaven. Rejoice man! Rejoice! and do yourself surrender to Christ and he will forgive your sins, give you a new heart and His spirit will come and dwell in the new heart which He has made. "I don't want any of your preaching" he retorts, with high words and more wrath. "Show me your Christ! Bring him along! Let me see him with my two eyes and then I will believe on him, but not before! All you know about it is what you read in your old book! Did you ever see Christ? Show him! Bring him along! I want none of your preaching! Show him! Show me your Christ and I will believe."

This sermon of his gives us a good opportunity to show the way of salvation to him and the gathering crowd: "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed." We try to teach them the truth about the spiritual presence of that blessed Saviour, "whom not having seen we love," and "though now we see him not; yet He is with us and within us "always," so that we believe in him, rejoice in him, receive through him the salvation of our souls. To the humble, child-like believer, Jesus is more real than anybody whom he can see with his eyes or touch with his hands.

Then we say to Narasimbulu, "Do you want to go home with your father to-night or stay here? He answers, "I want to stay here all night." Then the father's hold is unloosed and Narasimbulu is led safely back to the preachers' house, happy to be rescued from the cruel mercies of his relatives. Turning to the father we say: "We sent you word that we would bring Narasimbulu home in the morning. That is what we will do. We cannot let him come with you now, you are angry. You will beat him. He is our brother now and it is our duty to protect him. If you strike him you strike us. We do not intend to let you vent your wrath upon him. God will help us and we will defend him. You better go home and go to sleep."

But I cannot tell you all that was said, nor write the angry tones, nor paint the father's features as they appeared in the moonlight distorted with passion. At length, followed by his daughters and his friend, he started for home, thumping the ground with his cane and muttering words of wrath and grief. These things have come to pass that it might be fulfilled which was written: "Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth. I am not come to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father. . . . and a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me."

Early next morning we accompanied Narasimbulu to his own village and Mr. Gullison goes with us. The father's house is closed against him. But there is a Christian Telugu man who holds an important position in the factory. He does not belong to our mission, but he is greatly rejoiced because Narasimbulu has come out boldly and confessed Christ, and until we can make further arrangements gives him a home in his own house.

A week has passed and Narasimbulu and Gurriah are still working in the factory, earning their own living. Yesterday was Sunday and both walked to Bimli to meeting—three miles. Narasimbulu stayed to dinner with the native Christians, but Gurriah went home and then walked back again in the afternoon. He is praying for his wisdom teeth to come quickly so that he can be baptized. He is a very bright convert and we all love him very much.

There will be another chapter of this history. This is a new break in the weaver caste. Large numbers of these people are working in the factory. The native preacher, who was once a weaver caste man, is so greatly encouraged that he seems like a new man. His name is K. Appalawamy. Indeed a break like this always gives a new lease of life to us all. We see the walls of Satan's kingdom beginning to crumble in many places. We are glad we are here. Let us close by singing the doxology.

Yours in His name,

L. D. MORSE.

Bimlipatam, India, March 22.

"Like the Palm Tree."

The Psalmist tells us "the righteous shall flourish like the palm tree." In order to understand this highly figurative language, we must acquaint ourselves as far as possible with the nature and habits of the palm tree. To the people of the East, the beauty and wonder of the palm was a daily object lesson, and the circumstances under which it grew were well understood by them—so when the Psalmist said: "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree," the people knew the meaning of his words. Few of us, perhaps, have had the privilege of seeing a palm tree in its native soil and air. We have all seen pictures of them with their long, straight stems reaching up into the blue sky, without leaf or branch until the top is reached, then only a thick tuft of leaves or fronds, forming a crown or head for the long stem. They often grew to the height of one hundred feet, and standing as they frequently do in the midst of some sandy desert, with a tropical sun pouring his perpendicular rays upon them, we see the wise provision of that long stem which has so attracted our attention. For, by means of this long stem or trunk, the green leaves and fruit are lifted so high into the cool air that the terrible radiation of the sun's heat cannot wither and destroy them. There stands that prince of the vegetable kingdom, the palm tree, from generation to generation, unchanged by the changing seasons—an evergreen amid the scorching heat of summer or chilling blasts of winter. All this but adds a beauty and significance to the words of the Psalmist, "the righteous shall flourish like the palm tree."

The palm tree grew under adverse circumstances. It flourished in the desert. It grew in spite of its surroundings. There was nothing in the visible environment of the palm to add to its grace of stem and beauty of leaf. For while the palm tree grew out of the desert it was not of it. Scorching sands cannot meet the full demands of a palm tree. In yonder mountain, skirting the sandy waste, lie hidden great reservoirs of water which constantly send out their streams, broad and deep, beneath the desert's sands, and by the peculiar nature of the palm its roots can penetrate these arid wastes and draw supplies from beneath, though the heavens be as brass. This was the secret of the palm tree living when all other trees and shrubs withered and died. It had a hidden, an unfailling source of supply. How highly figurative all this of the righteous in the world's desert. He, too, has a hidden supply, resources unseen by the Man of the World, from the everlasting hills in glory there flows the river of the water of life clear as crystal. Though the sands of earth may scorch him, the streams of grace divine shall refresh him. Though in the desert, like the palm he is not dependent upon it, only to ripen his fruit. Complain not of the desert's heat, only see to it that your roots are deep planted in the soil of grace, touching the divine sources of supply, and you, too, will grow "like the palm tree." The Christian is not likened unto the lily that demands green pastures, or the willow that flourish only by the water courses, but he is like the palm that grows in the desert. Such was Joseph amid the cat-worshippers of Egypt; or Daniel in the voluptuous Babylon, or Lot in wicked Sodom, or Obediah in the licentious court of Ahab. These were palm trees flourishing in great moral deserts, drawing life and moral beauty not from their surroundings, but from the hidden supply of divine grace. Let us learn the secret of being in the world, but not of it.

Again, the palm tree is an evergreen. When all other trees lose their beauty of foliage, the palm remains green, lifting its thankful head toward heaven and waving its fronds even more gracefully in the cutting blasts of winter than in the gentle zephyrs of a summer's eve. How suggestive! When the life of the sinner shall become like the sacred leaf of autumn, then "shall the righteous flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon." The evergreen Christian thinks as much of his church obligation in times of declension as in times of revival, and the prayer and conference meetings are as dear to him when there are only six to take part as when there are one hundred and six.

Once more, the palm tree bears its best fruit in old age. From fifty to one hundred years the date palm was at its best—its fruit is richer and larger. The truly righteous man becomes more fruitful as he grows older. He has better judgment and knows better how to use it. He understands himself better, he knows more of his own faults and is more patient with the faults of others. He becomes like unto Elana, where the Israelites found twelve fountains of water and seventy palm trees. The contrast between saint and sinner grows sharper in old age. What sadder sight on earth than a gray-headed sinner? While on the other hand Solomon says: "The hoary head is a crown of glory if it be found in the way of righteousness." Young Christians enjoy the testimony of those who are advanced in years as they speak out of a wealth of experience which the young possess not.

The conversation of the righteous is food to the hungry and water to the thirsty in this desert of a world. The scientists tell us if the palm tree had only one-third its length of stem that the radiated heat of the desert would wither its green leaves and scorch its fruit. They would be too near to earth. We bring but little heavenly fruit to perfection, we are so near to earth. We are so low down that our leaf withers and our fruit scorches in the very blossom. We are without fruit.

"Ah! who shall thus the Master meet,
Bearing but withered leaves?
Ah! who shall at the Saviour's feet,
Before the awful judgment seat,
Lay down for golden sheaves,
Nothing but leaves?"

It is said the palm tree grew best when loaded down with weights. The cultivation they gave them was to hang heavy weights to the branches. One of the old Scotch martyrs had on his crest the motto, "*sub pondere crevit*," (I grow best under a weight) on this crest was a palm tree, with weights hanging from its fronds. Thus this Martyr testified, that he like the palm grew best in his spiritual life under trials. This is a law of spiritual growth. There must be struggle, conflict, resistance, in order to healthy growth. We are inclined to pity the poor "shut-ins" those whose lives are one of trial and toil, the angels do not, if only they are victors at last. All heaven's rewards lie beyond some battle-field. "Spiritual life calls for a struggle. "We grow under a weight." The trials we dread most are the best angels. Thus only can we develop character. One writer says: "The word 'character' is from a root which signifies to scratch, to engrave, to cut in furrows. In life, therefore, it is that which experience cuts or furrows in the soul. A baby has no character, its life is like a piece of white paper, with nothing yet written upon it, or it is like a smooth marble table, on which, as yet, the sculptor has cut nothing; or the canvas waiting for the painter's colors. Final character is what a man is when he has lived through all his earthly years." Character then is the outcome of life's conflict. The real man, the one that is and shall be. Hence a devout Christian in the midst of an evil generation is like the palm tree as it rises fresh and green out of a sandy waste, lifting its head up to the blue heavens, waving its green leaf and bearing its most luscious fruit in old age. Thank God for the saints they are the excellent in all the earth. God is their supply. Take hold on God by faith, and you too shall flourish like the palm tree, you shall grow like the cedars of Lebanon, you shall bear fruit in old age, your leaf shall not wither and whatsoever thou doest shall prosper.

Fairville, N. B.

Our Name.

An essay written by Miss Celia Steeves of Hammondsdale, and read at the Baptist Sunday School Convention, held at Hillsdale, June 16th, published by request of Convention.

The name Baptist has no direct reference to any human leader, for we acknowledge none as master save Jesus only, nor would we have it understood that we make Baptism the central doctrine in our religion. We stand on the solid rock Christ Jesus, and assert that His blood alone cleanseth us from all sin. Perish the thought that we should, put water in the place of blood, or for one moment hint that ceremony can save. Then why are we called Baptists? It serves an important purpose in distinguishing us from other denominations. Once they called us Anabaptists. This title was always objectionable to us inasmuch as it implies that we rebaptised those who came to us from other denominations. This we stoutly deny, asserting with Paul (Eph. 4:5) that there is "one Lord, one faith and one baptism," and that one baptism is immersion, Gal. 6:4, "we find all that were baptized were buried, therefore we assert that anything short of a burial is not baptism. But when they apply the word Baptist we accept the name inasmuch as it implies that we are baptisers not rebaptisers. This we firmly hold. Not every one, however, that believes in and practices immersion is a Baptist. There are great underlying principles to which we must rigidly adhere, touching personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, loyalty to His word, individual responsibility to Him, the absolute necessity of being born again by the Spirit of God, yielding our wills implicitly to His, and receiving all our marching orders from Calvary's hero. Without this no one can be a Baptist. Thus it is observed that to be a Baptist one must be a Christian or follower of Jesus Christ. If I follow Christ I find He studied God's Word, therefore to be a follower of Christ or a Baptist I must study my Bible. Christ's custom was to go into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. To be a follower of Christ or a Baptist I must attend God's service on God's day. In following Christ I find he was baptised, went down into the water, came up out of the water, was baptised in water, that He said it thus becomes us. To be a follower of Christ or a Baptist I must be baptised. To be a follower of Christ or a Baptist I must seek to do good, must bear the cross after Him till God is glorified thereby, finish the work he has given me to do and followed Him up out of great tribulation into the Father's presence where "there is fullness of joy, and at his right hand is pleasure forevermore." Such we understand to be the meaning of the word Baptist.

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