

PAKEREMMA.

Pakeremma is the name of a Christian woman on the Vuyyuru field, whose story is well worth telling. She lived in the village of Kanamuru, situated about four miles from Vuyyuru, and belonged to the Madga, or leather-worker, caste. Kanamuru has a reputation, far and wide, as a rough and lawless village. The people at the village-proper belong to the Kamma caste, one of the wealthiest and proudest of Hindu castes. The Madaga hamlet was situated not far from the village, and was famous for filth, thieving, and drunkenness.

Amid such surroundings as these Pakeremma lived for many years. Her husband was a lazy shiftless fellow, with only a modicum of intelligence, yet he felt it his duty, like all Hindu husbands, to lord it over his better half. She had to work for her own living, and, day by day, might be found working in the fields like a man. Moreover, like the woman who bathed Jesus' feet with her tears, she was a "sinner" and bore an unsavory reputation.

An old converted Hindu priest named K. Samuel and I used to visit Kanamuru to preach the Gospel. Among the motley crowd of degraded men and women that used to come to hear the Gospel was Pakeremma. Being naturally somewhat intelligent, she used to listen with a great deal of interest to the truth. As in the case of Lydia (Acts xvi 14) the Lord opened Pakeremma's heart so that she received the Word of God and was converted—the first real convert in that hard village. She came out all alone, applied for baptism, and was received into the church. This on the part of a woman whose husband, relatives, neighbors, and villagers were all heathen and bitterly opposed to the entrance of the Gospel into that village, was an act of great moral courage and faith. With what fear and trembling she must have gone home that night after her baptism, to face persecution and scorn for the name of Jesus! But God was with her. She grew bold and began to testify for Christ to her husband and neighbors. God used her testimony to the awakening of several, and a number of new converts were baptized. Then she conceived a great desire to learn to read. Some one taught her the alphabet, and in a few months she could read the New Testament quite well, and knew several hymns by heart. She dearly prized her New Testament and hymn-book, and it is truly wonderful how much of the Scriptures she committed to memory.

While she was thus engaged in winning souls to Christ, the devil stirred up many enemies against her. He put it into the heart of one man to poison her. This man got a native doctor to prepare a poisoned rice cake which he succeeded in getting a woman, an enemy of Pakeremma's, to hand to her. She ate some of it and was poisoned. By God's grace she vomited up the poison and her life was saved, though she was quite ill for some days. The three parties to this crime were apprehended and spent some months in gaol as a reward of their deed. After Pakeremma recovered she began again, undaunted, to bear testimony for Christ and win souls to Him. Some time before I left India I visited Kanamuru, and, to my delight, I found that she had twelve or fifteen people under instruction for baptism, some of them her former bitterest enemies, and among them the very man that poisoned her. This is an example of the conquering grace of God, in India. Pakeremma, from a once worthless woman of doubtful reputation has been so transformed that she commands the respect of heathen and Christian alike, and has been the messenger of life to scores of her fellow-country-men and women. May the readers of this little sketch remember her and her testimony for Christ in that great, hard heathen village, in their prayers, and may the Lord speedily raise up many more such women to bear witness for Christ in India.

J. G. BROWN.

Leader.—Who has charge of the Vuyyuru field now?

Ans.—Mr. H. Stillwell. This brother went out with Mr. Craig when he returned to India after Mr. Timpany's death, and has been the Principal of our Samulcotta Seminary for a number of years. Mr. H. Stillwell is married to a daughter of Mr. Timpany, and the lady who has charge of the women's work now at Vuyyuru is her cousin, Miss Kate McLaurin, a daughter of our first missionary at Cocanada. Since Mr. Brown left, Mr. Stillwell has had the pleasure of forming two new churches—one with a membership of 103 and another with a membership of about 100. In the six churches in the field there are 1032 members.

Leader.—It is most encouraging to know that over two thirds of the preachers and teachers have intelligently and willingly decided to give one-tenth of all their income, from whatever source, unto the Lord. Are we all doing that? Now I am going to ask four different ones to tell us a little about the native preachers who are over the churches. The names will be separated in order to pronounce them easier, and remember that *i* is pronounced like *e* and the *a* broad.

First.—Samuel is the preacher of the Vuyyuru church and is ordained; "he is a rare man full of the spirit of grace, a wise counsellor and an excellent pastor."

Second.—Sampson, an ordained evangelist, ministers to the church at Do-da-gun-ta, the oldest church on the field. His people are very poor but some of them are excellent Christians. "He is a godly, capable, well educated fellow," and has several evangelists and teachers to help him. It is here that Jane the bible-woman works.

Third.—Jacob is the chief preacher in the Sri-ran-ga-pu-ran church, "a noble, gentle, unselfish soul. He is greatly beloved by his people and highly respected by all.

Fourth.—Kru-pa-nan-dam is the pastor of the Go-lo-pal-i church. Mr. Brown writes of him: "he is an excellent fellow, one of the most simple and devoted men I ever knew. He is devoted to his people and they to him. He has been a great help in fighting the remnant of caste feeling among the Christians."

Leader.—These people were once sinful heathens, but since they have turned to Jesus Christ and looked at Him, He has changed their natures. It is a grand thing that God has chosen Canadians to be the means of turning these people to Him. When He asks us, Will you help, we ought to answer, "Yes, yes, it is an honor to do such work."

Let us now hear what Miss McLaurin writes about the bible-women and Christian-women.

Extract from November LINK, bottom of page 37.

AMELIA MUIR.

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