

minister has not yet come, I being the only missionary, the poor people think I can help them, if no one else can. So this morning, as two of our little school-children had died in the night, their parents, although nominally Catholics, asked if they could bring the children to the church and have some sort of a service over them, if only a prayer. We did the best we could, for it was too late to get help—brought all the school-children together and read the burial service, sang and prayed. It was a touching sight to see the small coffins side by side, and the little flock of children bearing flowers.

I could hardly command my voice to offer the prayer especially as the church was filled to the very doors. But it was a little thing to do after all, and if it brought consolation to any heart, we feel well repaid. It is things like this we are doing all the time. We have conducted several church services also (for want of some one to do it better), and have opened our house for prayer-meeting. So you see we are very busy, very happy, in our hearts, in a especial manner, full of God's peace and His blessed presence.

A poor old woman from the town came up to the mission one day, saying that her husband was dying, and asking with tears for some one to come and speak a few words to him, and make a prayer before it was too late.

They rarely send for a priest in the presence of death, but almost always call for us. I told her we had no minister, but that I would gladly go with her and do what I could. It was the old story; they were old and out of work, and so poor. She said, for want of nourishing food, her husband was dying. She herself was barefoot, dressed in rags, and so old and thin and wretched it made one's heart ache to see her, without hearing her sad story. I followed her to her little hut, some distance down the road, a place often passed before, but which, it so happened, I had never visited.

I have seen a great many poor homes in Miraflores, but never one quite so poor as that, where, in one room of the little hut, there was not one article of furniture.

You cannot imagine what a terrible responsibility it is to feel that you must say some last words to one who in a few hours will be in eternity. At home it would be different for there they would

have heard it all before, but here they are neither Catholics nor Protestants, and totally ignorant of all that concerns their salvation.

The dying man lay on some rags on the floor, which itself was of earth—cold and damp. They were very anxious that we should pray with the poor man, but when I knelt beside him and took his feverish hand in mine, he was too far gone to be able to here the Scripture read or the prayer made, and only wistfully turned his eyes upon me, as though trying to hear. I shall never forget how dreadful it made me feel to know that he was, perhaps, then dying, and we so helpless to say or do anything that might help to save his soul. I went away thinking: "How can we take life so lightly."

The next day it rained so hard I did not see him. The following morning, as early as I could, I went to the house, but on entering saw at once that he was dead. There stretched on the cold earth, wrapped only in a sheet, lay his helpless form, while watching at his side were his wife and daughter, dressed in rags and pitiful to behold. The little money I had given them the day before had bought a caudle, which stood lighted at his head; the poor old wife at his side was silently wiping her eyes with the soiled and torn fragments of her dress. A little later Galdino and I went again to pray with them, and found the house quite full of sympathizing friends, who listened gladly to all that was said concerning the death of Lazarus and the hope of the resurrection.

How I wished that those who speak lightly of missions might have seen this pitiful death, the solemn service for the body and the mournful burial that took place upon the hill. His poor old wife, half naked, followed the coffin, carrying on her shoulder the spade to fill in the grave and the ropes with which to lower the remains in the ground. And all without the blessed consolation we Christians have in such an hour. If I could only believe that the prayers at the dying hour were heard at last I would feel relieved of a weight that has been pressing on me for days. If I could but have heard the assurance, "This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise!" It is only because we believe God came into the world to save sinners that we can go about our work as we do.—*Missionary Review.*