

## Youths' Department.

### LOOKING BACK.

**D**O you know, boys and girls, that this little paper has a birthday just as each of you do? The very first LINK was printed in Toronto, on July 1st, 1878. This was only a sample copy sent out by Mr. Timpany to see if one thousand people wanted such a missionary paper. It had only four pages about twice as large as these pages are now. Shall I tell you some of the news in it? "The church of Ongole, India, is the largest Baptist church in the world, and eleven years ago there was only one Christian in the place." That is the first special item of interest I see, and here is one you will like, "One third of all the money that was given for Foreign Missions in 1877 was given by Sunday Schools and children." I wonder if that could be said of our Canadian Baptist Sunday Schools in 1903! Then here is one about the good a little money may do. For \$125 a girl may be clothed, fed and educated for five years in India. At first she does not know one letter, but at the end of five years she will be able to take a Vernacular Third Class Government Certificate to teach."

The next copy of the LINK was published in September, 1878, so this paper you are reading now is the birthday number. How many will give it a birthday present of one new subscriber? The editor's book can hold a good many more names yet. "Sister Belle's Corner" used to be on the very top of the fourth page and was written from Brantford instead of from Ottawa, but as I read over these little talks to the boys and girls of twenty-five years ago, they sound very much like the talks we have in the "Young People's Department" now.

I wonder if the good seed given me by the Master month by month so long ago has brought forth any fruit in the world's great harvest field! Perhaps when we are all at home in "Our Father's" many mansions, some one may come to me and say, "Your little talks in the LINK made me a missionary, but you did not know it on earth so I tell you now."

In January, 1881, the LINK put on a new dress, and that year it contained pictures of two of our Indian mission stations. We must not take up too much room in our "looking back" but my five bound volumes of this little paper are very much prized, and have often helped people to get some information that they could

not get elsewhere. May God continue to bless this LINK connecting Canada with India!

SISTER BELLE.

Ottawa, September, 1903.

### COBRAS IN AN INDIAN COMPOUND.

By S. P.

The missionary had just returned from furlough in the United States to the Mission Compound in Mandapasalai, South India, with a reinforcement of young ladies, and for the first time a station boarding-school for girls had been opened, and the girls were going through the initiatory homesickness, in their unwonted surroundings. The mud school house, with its thatched roof, stood in a little walled enclosure to the eastward of the bungalow, not far from a bit of cactus hedge that was afterwards replaced by a mud wall.

"Pampu! pampu! Ammal!" panted one of the little girls at recess, rushing with distended eyes to her missionary teacher. "I saw a serpent in the hedge as large around as that," making a circle with her two hands.

"Hush!" said the missionary teacher, thinking the child was drawing upon her imagination, and that it would alarm the whole school, "you must not tell such big stories as that."

Only a few days had elapsed when a subdued babel of voices was heard on the verandah and another voice called "Come and see the cobra!"

Yes, there was his majesty, venomous, fierce, deadly, but a helpless prisoner. His captor had impaled him through the neck on a sharp pike at the end of a pole which he held erect, thus allowing the cobra to hang at full length, which was as great as that of the man who held it. His hood was extended to its full size, and pain and excitement brought out the "spectacles" upon it in brightest yellow. Even then he was making a fight showing his fangs and darting out his tongue in a way that would have meant death to somebody had he been free.

When out after his prey, he had been intercepted on his way home to his den in the cactus hedge. No wonder the child had fled in fear from the sight of such a deadly foe.

One cobra seldom lives alone, and such a reward was offered by the missionary for the capture of cobras that three more were, ere long, taken and killed, and their den broken up. In the absence of the family, the growth of weeds in the hedge had proved for them a shelter and a hiding-place.