

Twenty-five Years Ago and Now.

Bishop Thoburn in his admirable book, "My Missionary Apprenticeship," a title he applies to the autobiography of his first 25 years in India, seems to indicate that as the time necessary in which to master the missionary's calling. The Census Report of '91 for South India records the fact that at birth the Indian infant looks out upon the possibility of 25 years as a life expectancy. This statement of a veteran missionary and this startling deduction from life statistics solemnize us as we realize that the Telugu Mission of the Baptists of Ontario, Quebec and Western Canada passed its 25 anniversary on the 12th of March, 1899. On that day, 25 years ago, John McLaurin, his wife and two little girls landed at Cocanada and took over from Thomas Gabriel, an ex-telegraph operator and an ordained minister of the regular Baptist persuasion, the mission with 150 church members, a handful of native agents and a debt of Rs. 10,000. At that time from Narsapar 56 miles south to Vizagapatam 105 miles north and to Rajahmundry, 40 miles inland, there was no other Protestant mission station.

On the 9th Feb., 1890, the venerable founder looked over a sea of 400 faces upturned in eager, intelligent and sympathetic interest to catch his every word, as he reviewed the gracious dealings of God with the mission. These were but the representatives of 4,000 in the membership of the 33 churches of the mission which he had established 25 years before. And these again were but the vanguard of a great host, the noise of whose coming mutters like the roll of distant thunder throughout the length and breadth of the mission field. The mission has passed its apprenticeship; it has attained its majority, it now stands with head erect and shining face toward the future where all the bright promises of God lie; and henceforth it will race with the strong.

The Semi-jubilee celebration, held at Cocanada, extended through 4 days and a Sabbath in February. The mornings were entirely occupied with devotional and spiritual exercises of great power and blessing. The afternoons throughout were devoted to the history of the mission. The evenings' programs were varied and consisted of reminiscences and experiences and on the last night of a consecration meeting that has marked an epoch of new power and higher living in many souls and has increased the spiritual pulse beat of the mission. Services of song brightened periods. Rhythmic histories of Joseph, Moses, Esther and Christ, chants by small choruses to the accompaniment of the guitar gave great enjoyment and large instruction. One night a phonograph reproduced amongst many things messages from the founder, from the sonorous and musical voice of Pastor Jonathan Burder and some Telugu hymns to the great amazement of many. An acetylene gas magic lantern was a feature of some evenings.

The first day was given up to the veterans. The bitter truthfulness of the census statement that 25 years is the average life in South India received sad confirmation in the absence of all but a little handful of charter members, Thomas Gabriel's grave received his earthly remains 24 years ago and his spirit went home to God, after what seemed to be the completion of his life work in the handing of his loved mission over to the Board. Currie Samuel, baptized among the very first, 30 year ago, away down in his village near the Colair Lake was not able to be present. He is the mayor of his village. But his vigorous, dearly loved and honored brother Peter, the pastor of Gunapudi, the banner church, was present and told of the beginnings. In the place of their first 60 rupee meeting house they now have a Rs. 6,000 chapel, of which he and his two brothers gave 1,200. Other friends in India and Canada and the native Christians are clearing off the balance. They have 480 members and raised Rs. 620 last year to support church expenses, 5 teachers and 4 village schools and to help in other directions. The church is one of the two declared self-supporting in the mission. M. Mark, the Tarnil butcher, a deacon in the Cocanada church and one of the charter members related his early experiences. Brother McLaurin spoke with power about beginnings.

The second day covered the first 12½ years, 1874-1886. Brother McLaurin and his daughter Kate, who represented her mother, and Pastor Jonathan Burder and Karri Peter spoke. In the commencement, the first converts had come from the villages about Colair Lake and so the missionaries and workers were at once led to the heart of India's agricultural village. They preached and taught and pleaded with the villagers. Amongst them they established little schools for the children of their converts. Out from these villages and up through these little village schools came the bone and sinew of the mission's life and growth. Four mission stations were established by 1882 at Cocanada, Tuni, ('78), Akidu, ('80), and Samulkota, ('82), with boarding schools for boys or girls at each, for the brighter scholars from the village schools and for such as could not get to school in any other way. A literary and Theological department was added at Samulkota for the education of teachers and preachers and their wives. A boarding and day school for Europeans and Eurasians was opened at Cocanada. As the vision of a successful

work pressed upon them the missionaries pleaded with the home churches for re-inforcements. But from '78 to '80 none were sent. In '84 two missionaries were sent home on furlough. The intense strain precipitated a great calamity. In '85 enthusiastic, devoted, hopeful Timpany died. Returning prematurely to take his place, Currie died in '86. Craig came back just in time to take over the entire burden of the work falling from the almost lifeless hand of McLaurin who was compelled home in 1887. Miss Frith, the first and only single lady in the staff, after five years' service was then invalided home. Thus the Seminary was closed, boarding schools broken up, half the stations left vacant and the burden of the work largely thrown on one man. Thus the first half of the mission's history closed in clouds, darkness and great distress.

The third day dealt with the second twelve and a half years, 1886-1899. It was not till the end of '89 that all the old stations were fully manned and the mission prepared to advance into new territory. In that year a memorable meeting of the two Canadian missions under a profound conviction after long prayer that this generation of Christians were demanded by the commission to give the gospel to this generation of heathen issued an appeal to the home churches for one male missionary to each 50,000 of the people and single ladies in proportion. They prayed that God might greatly multiply the native agents and strengthen the native churches. The history of the second period has been the answer to that prayer. The 5 male missionaries and 5 single ladies of 1889 have increased to 10 of each in 1899. The native agents from 92 to 182, the 17 churches to 33, the 2000 church members to 4000 and the native contributions from Rs. 2300 to Rs. 3766. There is a doubling almost all round. Praise be to God. What might the response not have been had the appeal of '89 received a fulfillment.

On the 4th day of the semi-jubilee the future, its prospects and need were looked into. The gigantic proportions of the need are apparent from the following facts: 1,500,000 Telugus are dependent on this mission alone for the Bread of life, of these 400,000 (not including little children) pass out to eternal death each decade. The 4000 converts are from the lowest castes who represent only one sixth of the entire population. The remaining one million and a quarter of higher castes present an almost unbroken phalanx to be pierced and possessed for Christ. Were the 1,500,000 equally distributed amongst the evangelizing forces there would be 150,000 souls to each mission station with 18 mission agents, preachers, teachers, Bible women and colporteurs. Amongst them would be the care of and help from 375 church members. Out of 2000 villages only 262 contain Christians. In most of these the Christians are a mere handful from the lowest and most despised castes banished to the outskirts of a rampant and overwhelming heathenism. With the utmost endeavor of the entire mission staff only about one half of these 2000 villages are receiving anything like regular gospel ministrations. In many of them only very meagerly is Christ given. In 1000 of them a few only occasionally and some never hear the gospel message. This distressing need so impresses the missionaries that they are calling for 20 more male missionaries and a proportionate number of single ladies to be sent out as soon as possible and are urging the native churches to increased effort.

The Sabbath of the semi-jubilee was a high day. The morning congregation of 400 raised 100 rupees toward a superannuated ministers, widows and orphans fund. The women met in the afternoon. Their aids are branching out in supporting Home Mission Bible women. The Home Mission in 10 years has helped struggling causes to Rs. 4,000. What hath God wrought?

Cocanada.

H. F. LAFLAMME.

Clark's Theology.

Regarding Clark's Theology, to which Bro. Chute has called attention in the MESSENGER AND VISITOR, I venture a suggestion. The American Council of Theology, first quarter current year, contains a review by the sainted Dr. Hovey. He speaks highly of Dr. Clark, but first points out the lack of proof texts in many parts of the book; second he notes the absence of the doctrine of the atonement—that doctrine which is at the heart of Christianity; third, the teachings and conclusions of the last chapters. Dr. Clark has no general judgment (page 465) and there is, he thinks, a possibility of a moral change for the better and so of advance for men in the next world (page 475). Dr. Clark wrote on Mack in the Am. Com. and his work is considered excellent, but there is a danger of following a man too closely.

This recent attitude toward the atonement taken by Dr. Washington Gladden, *et al.*, is to my mind a dangerous one. Dr. Alexander said to his class at Princeton, "Young men, make much of the blood." The Rev. B. Fay Mills, when holding services in Montreal, was charged by the Presbyterian brethren with leaving out the doctrine of the atonement. It turned out in a short time that they were only too correct. There is a great danger lest we go too far with these great minds. It is well to remember that speculation is not revelation. It

comes to be simply a question of choice between Dr. Clark and Paul or Dr. Gladden and Peter. There is very much that is helpful in Dr. Clark's Theology and it is a good book to spend time and study upon, but on some questions it is apt to leave a total impression that is seriously harmful. Such passages as Gal. 2:20, Titus 2:14, 1 Peter 2:24 are to be kept before the mind's eye as one reads parts of this book. I tremble lest the cross of Christ be made of none effect by some of these writers. Mary said, "They have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid him." The readjustments which the acceptance of the teachings of recent writers demand as to the atonement are to my mind nothing short of a dethronement of Jesus Christ. There is an attempt to explain what God never intended or considered it necessary for men to know.

There are, and have been, writers who, like Dr. Bushnell, manage to find what they want in their own consciousness when the old book is silent. They are great men but it is not wise to take their words as final or to conclude that those who do not accept their teachings are behind the times. A Methodist brother spoke to me of a great book, naming the one, and I secured a copy. I spoke to him regarding some of the features of the book after being separated from him for some months. He said it was all right as far as I had gone then, but I consider it is seriously astray on many points. This man is a Boston University graduate and in June next he takes the degree of Ph. D. from the same institution.

Dr. Clark is to take part at the Harvard Summer School of Theology. The session lasts for some three weeks and the tuition is \$15. Some may be glad to know of this. His subject is "God."

I am inclined to say, regarding much which appears in this work *festiva lente*. If these things be of God they will stand. In the words of Jeremiah, it is well to say "What is the chaff to the wheat." If a man has a dream let us so receive it, but if it is truth we are after the Psalmist says thy word is truth. J. H. DAVIS. Georgetown, Mass.

Fanny Crosby.

Perhaps some of your readers who love to sing Fanny Crosby's songs will be interested to hear of her visit to Westfield, Sunday, April 9. She spoke before the Y. M. C. A. in the afternoon and at a Union meeting at the First Congregational church in the evening. She is in her 80th year but does not look old. Her voice could be distinctly heard all through that large building. She thanked the choir for singing her hymn, "Saved by Grace"; it brought back many tender memories. She said she was asked to give a history of her life. She did not like to speak of herself and it was only for two reasons she would do so now—that she might bring glory to God and encourage some one who needed encouragement. She was not born blind, but could see as well as any child until she was six weeks old, and from that time until she was ten years old she was able to see the light of the sun and moon. She dwelt particularly on the thought that that little babe was created for God's especial work. From early childhood she had a great longing to be able to study as other children did,—like a traveller in the desert longing for a stream of water. God had blessed her with a cheerful disposition and wonderful memory. At the age of nine years she was able to repeat the first four books of both the Old and New Testament. She made it a rule to commit to memory five chapters each week and now is familiar with every part of the Bible. When she was ten years old she visited her grandmother. One night after her grandmother had put her to bed and prayed with her and then left the room, Fanny arose and knelt by the old rocking-chair and asked God to make a way whereby she might get an education. She went to bed feeling sure that some way would be provided, for she was taught that it were better not to pray at all than to pray doubtfully. She went to school and learned a good deal by hearing the other children recite. When she was twelve and a half years old her mother received a letter from the Institution for the Blind in New York and Fanny rejoiced that the stream for which she had longed was so near at hand. After she had studied at the Institution a number of years she remained as teacher eleven years, but had to resign on account of throat trouble. Her life still has been a useful one. She has written five thousand hymns and a number of books. Some of her hymns were written by inspiration, especially "Safe in the arms of Jesus," while others had a history. One night while speaking in a Mission Hall she asked if there were not some young men present who had wandered from their mother's teaching. One young man arose and went to the platform, saying, you must mean him. She took his hand and they knelt in prayer; a great blessing came to the meeting and before she left the hall she wrote "Rescue the perishing." It was inspiring to hear her talk of God's wonderful goodness to her. She could say goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. She loved to speak of the Y. M. C. A. boys as her boys, and I have no doubt that all who heard her speak will appreciate her hymns more than ever before. S. R. E. Westfield, Mass., May 25.

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