

## Youth's Department.

### LETTER FROM MISS SELMAN.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS:—

**I** HAVE not written to you before, but I think of you often, and perhaps you would like to hear about some children I have met while in Peddapuram.

S. — is a bright little girl of the farmer caste. She is about nine years old and has been married two years to a little relative two years her senior. She was one of the first pupils in the children's class in her street. From the first she attracted us by her happy face and bright answers. Then too, we saw at a glance the "marriage token" on the little yellow cord about her neck, and our hearts went out in love to her, as we sought to impart a knowledge of the "Friend of little children." She is now attending the girls' school, can read nicely, is one of our most attentive scholars, and enjoys the singing very much.

Her school life must soon give place to duties of home-life; but if she truly learns about Jesus he will be her Helper in her every need.

R. — is an older girl. She attended the girl's school until about ten years of age; was then given in marriage to a wealthy relative, a man older than her father, and a widower. I first met her in her own home and found her very shy. She listened in a very pleased way to our singing, soon began to join, and then learned to sing the hymns alone. She soon had to go to her husband's home and our lessons were discontinued. She has twice since come home for short visits and has called on us. We were so pleased to find that she remembers the hymns and the lessons we had given in Luke's Gospel.

Our prayer is that she may cherish the teaching she has already received, and let her light shine in her new home.

K. — is a little ten-year-old child-wife, the second wife of a middle aged man. She is living now in her husband's home, having been brought from her own home in Yellamanchilli at the time of her marriage. She is usually very sad, but sometimes brightens up and smiles. Not so apt a pupil as many, yet she can sing several hymns, and recite some scripture portions.

S. — is a little girl of the poorer (Barber) caste. A romping, mischievous girl not yet married, because her parents are too poor to perform the ceremony. She is nearly always about the streets, with her rough hair hanging all about her face, and her scant clothing black with dirt; but in spite of all she is one of the kindest playmates, and has a loving heart. How do I know? Why, from the first day we started a children's class in her street she has been my right hand helper. Calling the children together, running for a mat to sit upon, helping to get the little ones in order, and often taking a heavy baby from a little girl's arms, saying, "You sit down and learn, I'll lift the baby." She herself standing at the back, joining heartily in all the lessons. Last week she had certainly put into practice one of our practical songs, for she came with clean face and combed hair.

C. R. — was a student in the Cocanada girls school, a child of Christian parents. She also confessed Christ, and was baptized. Her father, like the Prodigal, wandered far away, yielded to Satan, denied his Master, and has dragged his little daughter back into heathenism. Although entreated with, prayed for, he went his own way and gave his little daughter in marriage to a heathen man and a widower. Oh! how many sad things we see in India, God is merciful and He can yet bring the wanderers back to the Father's Home.

One day while going to a children's class we passed a house where a young girl about fourteen was sitting on the ground crying most bitterly. On enquiry, the women of the house said, "Oh, we are going to send her to her mother-in-law's house and she doesn't want to go."

Think of it, dear Canadian girls! You, who are at the age of fourteen, are so happy in your home and school-life, and can look forward to many happy years in the home nest, there, if you go to another's home, it is the one of your choice, with one who loves you and whom you love. We love, most of all to give to the women and children of India the precious Gospel of Jesus, and then, though through customs and caste their lot is hard, they will have a Helper in all; for there is "no friend like the meek and lowly Jesus, no not one, no not one."

MARY R. B. SELMAN.

Peddapuram.

Aug. 29th, 1905.