

Young People's Department.

MISSION BAND.

LESSON XII.

In March, 1912, we travelled to India with Mr. Scott, from New York City. This March we come back by the Pacific Route, with Mrs. F. S. McLeod.

"Our tickets for the home journey have long ago been procured, and our places on the 'Madras Mail' train have been spoken for, and we stand on the platform at Samalkot Railway Station. The missionaries from Pithapuram, Canada and Samalkot, and many of the native friends whom we have learned to love, are there to bid us farewell and God-speed. We talk of the home-going and the homeland, and catch the wistful look in the eyes of more than one. Then come the messages to dear ones at home. 'If you see my girls, tell them to look for us in two years,' says one; another says, 'Tell Mother only three years more.' Round the curve comes the long train, we find our places, the warning gong clangs out its message, and we say good-bye, and always will there linger in memory's gallery the picture of that group of brave, faithful men and women, every one of whom is carrying burdens far beyond his strength. The train glides out into the darkness, we make ourselves comfortable for the night, we open our shawl-traps, and get our rugs and pillows, for we have long since learned that Indian railways provide neither mattresses, pillows, towels, nor soap, and we carefully place our precious bottle of bottled drinking water in a corner, where there is no possibility of its getting knocked over, for how could we manage without water through all the long, hot April nights? Before we get ourselves fairly settled, the train crosses the long bridge that spans the Godavery River, and we wish it were daylight, that we might glimpse at the huge dam and the great locks at the head of one of the finest irrigation systems in the world. At every station there is a babel of Telugu voices, and hurrying of sandaled feet, as passengers find their places in the crowded cars. Every now and then a guard or conductor thrusts his head and his lantern into our compartment, assures himself that it is 'full-up,' and that we are all there, then passes on. When

morning dawns, we find ourselves passing stations with familiar names—Bapatla, Nellore, Ongole—American Baptist Mission stations, all of them. By noon we are in Madras, and have allowed coolies and gharry-men to take charge of us and our belongings, and get us across this 'city of magnificent distances' to the Egmore Station, where we take the 'boat-mail'—the comfortable corridor train, which makes the run from Madras to Tuticorin, a distance of 450 miles. Past acres and acres of cotton fields with hundreds of women and girls busy picking, and here and there great piles of the snowy cotton ready for the market; past miles and miles of waste-land, in which the only vegetation is cactus, and then Tuticorin, with its glaring white streets, its glaring white walks, and glaring white walls. At Tuticorin, we say good-bye to Indian railways and Indian trains. The night-trip from Tuticorin to Colombo is—well, is not pleasant; this particular bit of water has a reputation for unkindness to travellers, and we are relieved to find ourselves inside the breakwater at Colombo.

"We go ashore in one of the hotel launches, and after bath and breakfast, we sally forth. We spend hours in the fascinating little native shops, and in the museum, where every exhibit is indigenous to Ceylon, and we watch the lace-makers with their huge pillows, and fast-flying, countless bobbins, make the beautiful Ceylon lace. We call on the English Baptist missionaries in the afternoon, and after dinner, wander out on the Galle Face promenade, to see the moon rise over the water, and watch the tide come in.

"Next day we are up early, bound for Kandy, the ancient capital of Ceylon. Our train carries us through miles and miles of cocoanut groves, and we are tempted to decide that surely Ceylon must provide cocoanuts for all the markets of the world. Kandy itself charms us. The roads about the lake are beautiful, and the nutmeg and cinnamon leaves, crushed by the wheels of our carriage, send up delicious spicy odors. Here are the Peradenya Gardens, one hundred years old, employing one hundred gardeners; and that wonderful old