



A Group of Lepers.

to thieve, and lie, and play the devil constantly. When I think of all this, I say, "O, my Father, forgive all my sins." Yes, I used to lie in wait at night and as soon as the Kapoos had gone to rest, I used to climb the palmyra trees, pour all the toddy into one pot, bring it down and drink it. Then I used to steal fruit, wrap it up in a bundle of straw and go home with it on my back. Then I would often go at night and steal grain out of the small stacks, and sell it to get liquor to drink. Yes, this sickness came on me because of my sin. My wife, to whom my parents married me when I was a child, would not come to me when she was of age, because I was a leper. Twice, thinking it wasn't worth while living, I tried to drown myself, but God in His mercy saved me. Oh, what would have become of me had I died then? At one time, a man passing saw me fall into the well and pulled me out, and at another time, my courage failed and I caught the bucket lift and trailed myself out. I tried many ways to get rid of my sins. Used to bathe in the tank every day at sunrise, and do "pujah" to the Sudras, used to keep the marks of the gods on my forehead, used to go without any meal all day, unless the sun shone for me to worship him, so on cloudy days I could eat nothing till dark. I used to pretend I was possessed and would go off into a kind of trance, and then arousing myself, prostrate myself before the idol, and speak in enigmas and strange mutterings. At these times, the

people would bring me anything I asked for, because they were afraid I might curse them, and I would secure much fruit, sweets, and other dainties. Oh no, I had no peace in my soul. I did not then know any hymns, but used to sing heathen songs and dance before the gods. Although I tried so hard to get rid of my sin, I never received any benefit.

Then I heard of a famous tank away on the other side of the Godavari in which if a person bathed, doing "pujah" to a Brahmin, his sin would be washed away, and he would be rid of his leprosy. My old grandmother in some way secured two rupees for my expense and off I started with two other lepers. We had much trouble getting there, and though we sent in three plantains each for the Brahmin priest, we didn't get a glimpse of him, though he returned us two out of each of the three plantains. Then when we wanted to bathe in the tank there, the Sudras refused us permission, so we waited till they had all lain down, and we bathed secretly in the night. But after all this trouble and labor and expense, we were nothing bettered, but rather grew worse. I came home sick with cold and fever.

Yes, I had heard you sometimes when you came to the village to preach, and I knew Andrew, the village teacher. I had often thought of going to him, but was afraid he might not receive me as I was a leper. At last, I had courage to go and see him, and then I found peace, oh yes, I found peace. I prayed to my Father to take away my sin and he heard me. Now the Father keeps all the evil spirits away from me. Sometimes now, if the devil comes near to tempt me, I simply say, "O my Father, keep him away," and He hears me, my Father hears me. And now I am here, and all my needs are supplied. My body is cared for, and I have soul-food every day. I care not though the leprosy never leaves me, I am quite content, and will remain so, till my Father calls me home. I have no sorrow at all, no sorrow. This is all of God's favor, God's grace. It is all so wonderful to me that my soul and my body should be so well provided for. My favorite hymn is, "God, our Daily Portion."

I never cease praying for that lady (Mrs. Kellogg) who built this home for us, and then after praying for her, I pray for you. Yes, I tell the people who are passing by, and who stop to listen to my singing that my father has done all this for me. My Saviour suffered and I am saved from my sufferings.

SOME SAD STATISTICS.

In the Christian community of about 1200, there are 23 lepers. In 24 different villages all within 15 miles of Ramachandrapuram, 104 lepers were counted among the outcasts and Christians. There is in the Ramachandrapuram taluk (or township) a population of 250,000. If the proportion of lepers to the whole is the same as in the Christian community, that