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W. B. M. U. TIDINGS

Vol 2

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No. 19.

MOTTO FOR THE YEAR

“Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak for your work shall be rewarded.”

PRAYER TOPIC.

For Miss Gray, her native helpers and her school that power from on high may rest upon them.

For our Associational gatherings that every session may be for the glory of Christ, and the advancement of His Kingdom.

My Dear Sisters:—

It is a great privilege to be permitted to carry the Gospel message to those who have been in heathen darkness; and the longer I live among these people, the more I love them, and long for their salvation.

During the month of February, we had precious times among the women, and were invited to more houses than we were able to visit. It is seldom we are refused a hearing, when the women are not busy at work. Yesterday, we spent about an hour at one house talking with an elderly woman who was much interested in what we told her of the plan of salvation, and she quite agreed with us, that they too need a heart-religion, and that fastings, pilgrimages, and idol-worship are vain and foolish. We tried to impress her with the thought that she must get the new heart in order to be saved from eternal punishment.

After leaving this house, we went to one, where the people had always received us gladly, but on finding that they had moved away, and strangers occupied their rooms, we left a copy of Luke's Gospel and came out. While standing near a well, talking with some high caste women, who were drawing water. A Brahmin came out of a house close by and began to speak to me in English. He said “what do you want?” I do not want anything, but to tell you of the true way of salvation, I replied. “Then you had better go away. We know your tricks, and we do not want your teaching.” I said to him “You look very ill, and you may not live long. If you should die to-night, where would your soul go?” “Never mind, my soul will go to the same place as yours,” was his answer. With this we turned aside, and came away. In a few weeks, or months, he may be summoned before the bar of God. What a future is before him? I could speak but a few words of warning to him for he cared for none of these things.

All the evening, I could not forget his pale face if a Telegu can be said to look pale. During the night every time I awoke the burden of this soul was upon my heart.

We had not been in that part of the town for two months, and before we went I felt especially drawn that way. It is about two years since anyone has spoken to us so rudely, and that time, the young man, who was also a Brahmin, sent an apology, and asked me to give him a Bible. When the people do not want to hear, they say so, and we pass along to another house, but the man, who turned us away yesterday is a stranger, and has been here, only two months. I am impressed, that at one time, some of his relatives, left their caste and became Christians. May the Lord touch his heart, and help him to make his peace with God, before he goes hence! According to your faith, be it unto you" is a precious promise. May we have faith!

Monday 4th—the above was written on Saturday—yesterday, after the morning service, an elderly Brahmin came to ask for an explanation of some passages in the New Testament, which he has been reading. He is really seeking the truth, but is not wholly convinced, that there is only one way to be saved, but he said, "when I am convinced, that Jesus is the only Saviour, I will believe in Him". For more than two hours, we read the Bible, and I tried to make the way plain to him. When he was going away, he asked me to give him a copy of the Ten Commandments, and some books, as he was going on leave for two months, and would have leisure to read and meditate.

Evening—Jessie and I have just returned from the town, where we had a delightful afternoon. The last house, we visited, was on the goldsmith street. About five years ago, the head man in this house was under conviction of sin for some days. I do not know whether he met with a change of heart or not, but from that time till to-day, we were never asked to visit them. We heard indirectly, that his relatives were afraid he was going to unite with the Christians. However, this afternoon, when we were passing, they invited us in, and we spent an hour with them. When speaking of repentance and the new heart, this man seemed to understand what was required. After a while, he went away and left us alone with the women. We told them about the goldsmith from Polepilly, (who is a distant relative of theirs,) how he was converted; by reading the New Testament, six years ago, and although he had been baptized, yet he did not leave his own house, and come to live with us; and they must not think that we wanted to take them away from their

home and family, but in their own house, they must make their peace with God, through Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world. Before leaving, they asked us to pray, so that they might see how we prayed to our God. A woman from another house of the same caste, who had listened from the first, said, "I want you to come to my house, and if you follow me I shall show you where we live, and when you come this way again, you will come and teach us too." Tuesday 5th—this morning, Jessie with her two children and one of the boarding-girls went to Vizagapatam to see her sister, who is ill in Miss D'Prazer's Hospital, and for a few days I shall be without a Bible-woman. They will return on Saturday.

This afternoon, taking little Vursamma, I went to the house we promised to visit last evening. The women were at the door ready to receive us. In a low whisper one said, "Come with me," and away from her nice large house and pleasant surroundings, she led us into a back street and told us to sit down on the verandah of a low mud building, which they owned. One room of this building was let to a family of lower caste, and the other was the cattle shed. These goldsmith women were afraid of the men, and they did not want us to stay in their house, but by going into this back street they could listen, and when any of the men came near, they ran inside and pretended to be feeding the cattle, or buying grass. In this way, they managed, and I think some of them at least had a better idea of Christianity, when we left them, than they had before.

In the next home, we received a kind welcome from a young woman, who was at one time a pupil in our school. There were about eight women in all, one of whom was very old, and when I began to tell them, that we all had sinned, but that a Saviour had come into the world to save sinners, she looked up and said, "can you tell us how sin will go?" "This is the work I have come on to-day, and if you will listen I shall try and make the way plain," I assured her. She came and sat down by my side, and heard the Word gladly, as did the others.

On Wednesdays, we have our Telugu-prayer meetings. Thursday 7th, this afternoon, we spend among the Fisher people. About twenty-five men, women and children gathered around us, and for two hours I talked and sang till I was so hoarse, I could say no more.

Monday 11th—we were out on Friday and had a good time, but this afternoon, our hearts burned within us, as we came home. After speaking in three

houses, we were called to visit the goldsmith's house, that we visited on Monday the 4th. The women sat down and while we were talking, I could see, that two of them seemed much impressed, and had tears in their eyes. After a few minutes the men came in, and one said to me. "I want you to teach these women, for we are going to become Christians, and they must be taught too." We tried to show them, that uniting with the Christians would not save them, but that each one of them must have a personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Master Himself was with us, and we believe His word will not return unto Him void. When we were coming away, one of them asked for a copy of the New Testament, which I sent after coming home.

It is not a privilege to be used of God, even in supplying a seeking-soul, with the written word.

In this work for souls among the heathen, there are perplexities and trials innumerable; but there is soul-satisfaction and joys unspeakable. During the last six months, I have been praying to the Lord of the harvest to send us a lady worker for Bimlipatam. For this reason, while I have charge of the school and boarding-children, and work in the town, I cannot leave and go out among the villages, on the field, where the women are dying, DYING, without even having heard of a Saviour's love, generally speaking.

I cannot ask the Board to send a lady to Bimli, till the other stations are reinforced. And now the question comes. Is there no young lady in all the Maritime Provinces, who is in a position to come to India on her own expenses, and give herself and her all to the service of Him, who gave HIMSELF for the poor perishing Telugus?

If there is one, who hears this call, and obeys it, be assured sister that you will never regret it, if it is the Lord's call. And just as soon as you are able to take charge of the school and boarding-department, I shall more than willingly, pass all into your hands. And beside this work there is ample room and need in the town for all spare time, for the dying wail of the village women is sounding in my ears, and when relieved from station work my duty is plain. May the dear Lord send His own chosen one!

Yours for India in His name,

A. C. Gray.

Bimlipatam India
March 1895.