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W. B. M. A. Tidings.

25 Cents per Year.

Vol 7.

Amherst, N. S., March 1900.

No 73.

Motto for the Year — Workers together with Him.

PRAYER TOPIC.

For the missionaries at Bobbili ; the school and its teachers
For the native christians that they may grow in grace and
win others to Christ.

Suggested Programme for March

Prayer by Leader
Singing
Scripture Isaiah Chap. 55
Prayer, Remembering our motto
for the year and Topic for the
month.
Reading Minutes
Reading Tidings
Question. How much have we col-
lected on ten cent fund for W. B. M.
Short consecration prayers by sever-
al
Doxology.

Suggested Programme for April

Prayer by Leader
Singing
Reading Matthew 28th
Prayer by several on topic
Reading Minutes
Reading Tidings
Plans for Easter. Would suggest
praise service and thanks offering to
be held Easter Monday. Bible read-
ing on Faith to form part of program
Close with roll call and Lord's pray-
er in unison.

Dartmouth, N. S., Jan. 17th, 1900

For Tidings"

Will the Aid Societies who have not remembered the
collection for Mr Burgdorf kindly do so at the February meet-
ing. It is very necessary that as large an amount as possible
be raised this year; We trust every President and Sec'y will
call in their power to increase the Home Mission Funds.
Don't forget the old adage : "Every nickel make."

M. E. Hume.

From Our Bureau of Literature,

It is matter of gratulation that the New Missionary Liter-
ature has arrived after long delay in the transmission, or in

this case—now transmission of this particular mail matter. There is perhaps no department of religious literature in which so much valuable reading may be obtained for the penny payments as in these leaflets.

True, there is much that is so sad and startling. But this should but awaken deeper interest in, and for, those whose habitation is in the dark places of the earth and to a fuller realization of the world's needs.

There is also much to encourage our hopes, strengthen our faith and cheer our hearts, in the revelations of Divine Leading.

Why will not all readers of Tidings avail themselves of what is so easily accessible?

We trust that before another issue, catalogues will have been distributed, so that our societies may be able to select what they deem suited to their especial wants.

We are sure these readings will be found helpful to all Mission Workers, both in and for the Home or Foreign field—To the shut in who can only plead in solitude for the spread of the Gospel—To the timid who but silently breathe their devotion. To the courageous in the van of active effort. To all who are planting in the Lord's vineyard hoping to reap at the gathering in. To all who are praying in Spirit and in Truth.

“Thy kingdom come.”

M. Wood,
Sec'y Bureau of Literature.

Amherst, N. S.

Bobbili Notes.

The question that is absorbing the Bobbilians at present is, what shall we do for water? One after another the tanks and wells are going dry. The Rajah has had two large wells dug in the bottom of our largest tanks, but even in these

there is only a few inches of water. Last Saturday Miss Churchill and I went down and watched a woman as she slowly drew from one of these wells a few cupfuls at a time with her palm leaf basket. It was quite muddy, but she said that it was good. We said to each other, "what will the people do?" In another tank there is quite a quantity of water, but it is bad, and must certainly be the death of many who drink of it.

This scarcity of water is not confined to Bobbili, but extends over all south India. The great Godaveri river is the lowest it has been for sixty years—so they say; and I heard that the authorities in Bangalore had fined some people who were wasting the precious liquid. When we remember that there are yet five months before the monsoon—before we can expect anything more than a few stray showers—the prospect is indeed very dark. Mr. Churchill says that he never saw it so dry in Bobbili at this time of the year. During my three years in India the word 'famine' has been echoing and re-echoing over our field, and I fear this is the worst yet.

Mr. Mrs. and Miss Churchill returned to their old home about a week before Christmas. It is so good to have them back. Now we are feeling quite settled, and looking forward to touring and working together for sometime before another furlough intervenes. But in the meantime Mrs. Churchill has had a slight attack of inflammation of the lungs. She caught a heavy cold, and it quickly developed into something worse. We hope however that she will soon be able to be up and about the house again.

Miss Churchill seems very happy in her Indian home and with the Telugu people. She has begun the study of the language, and is learning to give her own instructions to the natives.

In my last letter to "Tidings," if I remember correctly, I wrote you about Peddapenke, where they made so much

trouble about a boy who professed faith in Christ. Since then we have been in tent there. One dark rainy night the boy, Krishnamurty, came to see us, and as we talked with him we felt that he was a brother in Christ. On Christmas day he came to us in Bobbili and asked for baptism. However Mr. Churchill thought best to go first to his village and have a talk with his people, stating that he would baptize any of their number who gave evidence of faith in Christ. Last week Mr. C—made this visit, but was not allowed an interview with Krishnamurty; yet he received a message from him saying that he was coming for baptism. A cousin of K's is also reading the Bible, and he says that if K. is baptized he himself will come also in less than a month. There are many evidences that the Lord is working upon the hearts of the people in that section of the field. One day as Sayamma and I were returning from what seemed a fruitless morning's work, we were overtaken by two men from a village near Peddapenke. They had seen us when we were there on tour, so they asked if we were not Christians, and added that they heard us at a certain village. They said that they believed in Jesus Christ and also that about twenty five of their villagers were also believing, and that as many more of the same mind lived in a village near theirs. I wrote at once to the preacher, Chinna Dand, at Peddapenke and asked him to go to these villages. He went and was welcomed heartily and asked to come again soon. They say that "Christianity is true" and that they want to learn more about it. Pray for them.

December third was set apart as a special day of prayer for India. We in Bobbili decided to prepare for it by having prayer meetings each night for a fortnight before the date; and we continued the meetings for three weeks after. The spirit was beautiful—all seemed to be of one mind earnestly desiring the salvation of those about us. We kept hearing of one here and one there who was believing. One night

two of the preachers told of a village chief who had come to their house just to ask about the Christian teaching. He had a Testament and was reading it with a number of his villagers, but he wanted instruction.

A short time ago as we toured among the Rajah villages, we found eight or perhaps more, women who gave evidence of a changed heart. We could distinguish the believers by the expression of their faces. They could read, but had no Bibles—had learned of Christ from one of the widows living near. We took them a good supply of literature and have since sent the whole Bible. Their faces lighted up when they saw the books for themselves.

Thus while the scarcity of water causes dark forebodings to many; to us the prospect for a rich spiritual refreshing is bright.

Maude M. E. Harrison.

Bobbili, Jan. 15th 1900.

Mission Band Lesson—Rice.

Question. What is the staple food of the natives of India? Answer. It is rice.

Q. What do they eat with it? A. A sauce called curry

Q. How often do they eat rice? A. At every meal.

Q. Is this grain easily raised? A. It is, if there is plenty of water.

Q. What will happen if the season is a dry one? A. A famine will be the result.

Q. If crops are light for one year in our country do we have a famine? A. No, but in India there are millions more people than we have, and they depend altogether upon rice for food.

Q. Does each farmer own his land? A. No, he pays rent to some landlord or to the government.

Q. If the landlord is very rich does he not assist his ten-

ants in time of suffering? A. Most of them are too unj and greedy to think of such kindness.

Q. Do the men do the work in the rice-fields? A. The men plough with oxen, using old-fashioned ploughs; the women and children do the transplanting; both men and women gather the harvest.

Q. After the grain is gathered, what is done with it? A. It is carried to large floors where it is trodden upon by oxen.

What follows this? A. The straw is saved for fodder, while the grain is taken up in baskets, shaped much like a dustpan without a handle, and winnowed

Q. What is now done with the grain? A. The rice in the husk is drawn on large boxes or baskets, which rest on the cart-axles, to immense storehouses of brick and mortar, where it is usually kept for three years before exportation.

Q. How about the poor natives? A. The laborers receive a quantity of rice for the daily labor, and the women prepare this for use.

Q. Do they receive high wages? A. No, very small, so that many people are very poor.

What name is given to the rice in the husk? A. It is called *paddy*.

Q. How is the paddy prepared? A. The women put it in a sort of solid vessel having a deep hollow in the upper side. They then pound off the husks. The broken grains and as much of the unbroken as may be needed is eaten, and the rest is taken to the bazaars to be sold.

Have you heard of the crops of this season? A. In some parts of India there will probably be much suffering, owing to a lack of rains.

What cause do the poor heathens give for this? A. They think they have offended some god, or that evil spirits have done this.

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Q. Is this not very sad, when we know that for some reason God directs all things for the best? Will you not pray that a rich blessing may come upon these people during the next few months.

SUGGESTIONS:—In the next Band meeting, will each leader ask the children to name the various Mission Stations in India and also to tell how many missionaries we have sent to India and where each is now located. Keep these items ever fresh in the minds of the children. Review leading points of previous lessons when there is opportunity.

Rice Culture.

Rice is an aquatic plant. It is grown on wet, inundated and irrigated lands. In this part of India the people depend entirely upon the rains; if they fail the result is a complete failure of the crops, which means famine. Light rains insure a partial crop, for the water that comes down the rivers is carried by means of channels to the fields.

During the month of April the seed grain is taken from its store house and sown very thickly in seed-beds prepared near wells or tanks, for the farmer must have his plants ready for transplantation when the rain comes, so day after day he draws water and keeps his plants from withering in the burning sun. In America, fields are fenced to keep out animals, but here every field has a little dyke around it to keep in the water. As soon as the first sign of the monsoon appears, the farmers begin to prepare their fields for transplanting. Farming is carried on in the most primitive style, the people consider that the way their ancestors did is good enough for them, so with the old out-of-date wooden stick called a plough, and other just as ancient implements they manage to waste a great deal of time and do very poor work. Experiments have been made and the result was that with an English plough an acre could be ploughed by travel-

ling ten miles while the same oxen would have to travel twenty-nine miles to do the same amount of work and when done it was very much inferior.

The ground is first flooded to soften it then ploughed, then ploughed a second time under water. Hour after hour the oxen or buffaloes wade around in this mud, mixing and stirring it up until it is like a great mud pie. A drag is then drawn through this mud to take out the weeds, grass, roots etc., and make it smooth. When the buffaloes and men finish their work, they are covered from head to foot with black sticky mud.

The plants in the seed-beds are now pulled up carefully, tied in small bundles, put on a cart or sort of "bob sleigh," hauled to the field and scattered ready for the women who do the planting. Day after day the women stand in this mud and water from ten a. m. until dark, sticking down the little shoots, two plantlets are put in one place, from six to nine inches apart. In pouring rain or broiling sun these poor women must work, for every hour lost in transplanting season is never regained. When asked if they enjoy their work they say "we get fever, and our backs and limbs ache, but we must eat, and we cannot see our children starve." Thus they work on, day after day, for the bread that perisheth. Driving along the road, hundreds of women will be seen in groups toiling away when suddenly a stranger, wierd shout is heard, and from a group near by a woman comes running towards us with two bunches of the shoots to place in front of the carriage, so that the horse will pass over them and bring good luck to that field. The woman also asks for money to buy saffron to bathe and make an offering to the goddess of the harvest. These special branches of young shoots are not planted but carried home and kept until the great feast. When the fields are planted the farmer's work is not done; he must daily watch his fields and keep them

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flooded with water. His greatest fear is that evil spirits may blight his crop or that some one in passing may cast an evil eye upon it. To avert these evils a great deal of time is spent in making offerings to the idols. One way they have of dispensing with the evil eye is for each village to take a collection, buy two or three goats, kill them and dip branches of a certain kind of a tree in the blood, then they take these branches and on a certain full moon, make the night hideous with their screams as they shake the branches, dipped in blood, over their heads and jump up and down and race over the fields like madmen. When they get tired they stick the branches down here and there over their fields, so that people in passing will look at the branches and not the growing grain.

The great feast of Gavaramma is celebrated especially by the farmers. In each village they make a calf of mud about three feet high. On its back they put the idol, which is also made of mud. For about a week this is carried through the streets so that all the people can make their offerings at night with music and shouts. The people gather around and worship. When through with the worship the image is carried to river or tank and thrown in. Next year they make a new one and go through the same performance. When the people wish for rain, much money is spent in making sacrifices. Many will say that in spite of all they have done their crops have failed, and that they fear their idols can do nothing for them but still they fear to give them up, and say farmers cannot be christians. When they are told that in this country there are christian farmers and that without the help of idols good crops are grown, they open their eyes in amazement, and when they are told that the farmers across the big sea, where there are no idols, sow their seed and do nothing more to the fields until they reap the ripened grain, it is quite beyond their comprehension.

The ripened grain is reaped by hand carried to the threshing floors and trodden on by cattle in the way we read of in the Bible. It is then stored and the straw preserved to feed the cattle in the long hot months when there is no grass.

M. Clark.

Notes from P. E. I.

I am sorry I cannot report visits made societies and bands organized. I was unable to do anything the first three months of our Convention year because of ill health. Now that winter is here visiting our scattered societies is out of the question.

I have written to nearly all of our societies and bands recently, and have been cheered by receiving prompt replies from the most of them.

The majority of these reports tell of regular monthly meetings and increased interest in the work.

A few societies bear record that their meetings are not so well attended as they might be. This is to be regretted.

We must all realize by this time the great benefit derived from regular monthly gatherings and the blessings that attend the united prayer of even the weak, strong in faith.

Tryon, Charlottetown and North River, societies have held interesting and successful thank-offering services. North River has added one to the list of life members. Upon the whole the condition of our aid societies at present and the outlook for the future encouraging.

The Bands are enjoying a good degree of prosperity. Some of them are putting forth extra effort by giving concerts, making autograph quilts, thus seeking to add to their funds and stimulate to a deeper interest.

The North River band has undertaken to endow a bed in the Chicacole hospital. The sisters are coming to feel the need of instructing and interesting the children along the line of missions if they are to become earnest and faithful promoters of this most important work.

Dear sisters, let us arise in the strength of the Lord to more earnest and consecrated service. Since we have been greatly blessed by a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, let us do all we can to make it known to our sisters dwelling in heathen darkness and degradation so that they may be brought into the light; elevated and enabled thereby. The promises of God concerning the power of his word are sure.

We hope to see a goodly number of our sisters at Alexandra in March at our meeting in connection with the P. E. I. conference with the P; E. I.

Mrs J C Spurr,
Prov. Sec'y.

Portion of letter from Miss Churchill telling of her journey to India.

A very happy New Year to you all, is my wish to-day, though the idea of cold and snow is so closely associated with the thought of the first day of January, that if it were not for the calendar, I would scarcely know this was New Year's day.

Here we are, really in our Bobbili home at last, and by this time quite settled. So often during the past year, I have thought and wondered about this coming to India and many a plan have I made; but after all, the reality has proved quite different.

After the long ocean voyage, the journey in the cars to Vizianagram was like all railway journeys—no, I can not say that with truth, for in many respects it had nothing at all in common with the railway journeys taken in America. There one does not look out upon miles and miles of land where almost every bit of grass is burned up by the sun where even the crops of grain cultivated with all the care the natives know how to give and watched oh so anxiously, are poor and parched, and where at every stopping place little brown faces look up to the windows so pitifully. Of course, as I have often been told this is a country where professional beggars abound, but even knowing that fact, it is none the less touching to see the children holding out their hands and calling Umma, Umma in their plaintive tones.

But as I have remarked, we came in the train as far as Vizianagram and here came in, the altogether new features of travelling. To begin with, it seemed strange not to start out on our journey to Bobbili until evening, for it was after seven o'clock before Mother and I had settled our selves in the front of the bandy, our smaller boxes and bundles packed in behind us, and had given the signal for our coolies to start.

At first it did seem as if those men were determined to tip us out, but as time passed and no accidents occurred, gradually I forgot my desire to cling to the sides at every rise or fall of the shafts and then I decidedly enjoyed the

ride, and with cushions and rugs around us, we reclined as peacefully and comfortably as could be desired. After we had gone some little distance, Mother asked the men to sing as they ran, explaining it was for my benefit as I had never heard their music and was anxious to. And after they once got into the spirit of it, how they did sing, plainly to their own satisfaction and decidedly to my great delight.

There seemed to be but one soloist among them, and he would sing several lines, and the other five would come in on the chorus.

It seemed like some fairy scene, the tall graceful coconut palms, here and there mango and tamarind trees with their denser foliage, the cactus plants, so decidedly oriental all along the road, occasionally a high hill rising abruptly from the plain, the singing of our coolies with its wierd and plaintive rise and fall, while over all the light of the moon, though making it nearly as bright as br day, seemed to cast a glamor over everything, throwing into the shade all the unattractive details of the country.

But occasionally would come a decided and very unexpected jolt which would bring me quickly from fairyland to sterner realities, and I would for a time turn my attention and contemplate the howling of the jackals and the poor roads over which we would be passing.

After we had gone thirteen miles we engaged fresh coolies, giving our first ones their expected present and sending them off very happy. Our new men belonged to another caste and, upon being asked to sing, started in on the monotonous ha—ho which palanquin bearers always use. Of this a little satisfied, and they were requested to be silent.

Our next coolies, when we again changed seemed quite young men and how they did set off running with us, indeed we were jolted so unmercifully that mother had to ask them to go more slowly. These instead of finding us fresh coolies at the next stopping place petitioned to go on with the bandy, so they came all the way, bringing us into Bobbili about 5 o'clock a. m. and there ended my first journey in the "Pullman Express," as it is called.