

In leper-land : being a record of my tour of 7,000 miles among Indian lepers including some notes on missions and an account of eleven days with Miss Mary Reed and her lepers / by John Jackson.

Contributors

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IN
LEPER
LAND



John Jackson

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IN
LEPER-LAND



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IN LEPER-LAND

BEING A RECORD
OF MY TOUR OF 7,000 MILES AMONG
INDIAN LEPERS

INCLUDING SOME NOTES ON MISSIONS
AND AN ACCOUNT OF ELEVEN DAYS
WITH

MISS MARY REED AND HER LEPERS

BY

JOHN JACKSON

AUTHOR OF "MARY REED: MISSIONARY TO THE LEPERS," ETC.

THIRTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS
MOSTLY FROM PHOTOGRAPHS
BY THE AUTHOR

LONDON: MARSHALL BROTHERS

KESWICK HOUSE PATERNOSTER ROW E C

AND

THE MISSION TO LEPERS

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FIF. 23 (2)



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P R E F A C E

TO the reader who is disposed to accompany me in a tour through Leper-land I desire to address a few preliminary words.

The visit to the lepers of India, of which this volume is one of the results, was the outcome of an ever-deepening sympathy with the needs of these afflicted people. Having for some five years been permitted to plead their cause here in the Homeland, it was hoped that a personal acquaintance with their actual condition would enable that service to be still more effectively rendered.

During the twenty weeks spent in India I travelled not less than seven thousand miles, and visited twenty-seven Asylums or settlements for lepers and their children, containing 2,979 inmates.

On thirty-seven occasions I was enabled (through interpretation) to speak words that I had reason to believe often brought hope and comfort to these stricken people.

I spent many days among the lepers. I entered, so far as a stranger might, into their joys and their sorrows. I joined in their worship and I shared in their festivities. Among the functions in which I was permitted to have a part were several feasts and one funeral. I was present at

three baptismal services, at which eighty-five lepers were welcomed into the membership of the Church on earth. On three occasions also I united with the Christian lepers in the observance of the Holy Communion.

I brought back with me some touching tokens of their appreciation of my visit, as well as innumerable messages of heartfelt thanks to their friends in England. All who have contributed in any degree to aid the work among these suffering people will, I trust, accept my assurance that their gifts have resulted in much real alleviation of their hopeless lot. If the reader's sympathy with the Christlike labours of the Missionaries who are working among the lepers is deepened by the perusal of this book, its main object will have been attained. These pages will show that exceptional opportunities were afforded me for gaining an insight into many phases of Missionary effort. But none of these impressed me as being more entirely in accordance with the mind of the Master than this work of ministering to the bodily and spiritual needs of the lepers.

The practical kindness that shelters, feeds, and tends him predisposes the leper to a lively faith in Him in whose name these boons are bestowed. Hence no class to which Missions appeal yields so large a proportion of apparently genuine conversions as do these outcasts from their own creed and kindred, upwards of 2,100 of whom may now, it is believed, be regarded as true Christians.

A secondary purpose of my visit was to represent

the Missionary Pence Association. In the capacity of Treasurer to that Society, it was my privilege to distribute upwards of £1,000 raised by contributors to the Association. This sum was disbursed in various forms of famine relief, much of it, conferring a double boon, being expended on buildings for lepers and others, the erection of which provided employment for the impoverished workers.

The hospitality so freely extended to me by the Missionaries of sixteen different Societies has usually received a passing acknowledgment in its appropriate place. But in addition to this I beg here to tender my most grateful thanks to all the friends who, by their unfailing kindness, contributed so largely to render my tour both enjoyable and instructive.

For their courtesy in furnishing me with introductions I have to thank Sir Charles Elliott, K.C.S.I., LL.D. (formerly Lieutenant - Governor of Bengal), Rev. H. E. Fox, M.A. (Hon. Secretary Church Missionary Society), Henry Conder, Esq., and my friend Wellesley C. Bailey, Esq. (Secretary and Superintendent of the Mission to Lepers in India and the East). To the last-named I am also indebted for much valuable advice as to my route, &c.

My chief object being to visit the lepers, my experience of other forms of Missionary work was derived mainly from that of the Societies with which this object brought me into contact. I was naturally introduced to the general work of those Missionaries who are Superintendents of the Asylums supported by the Mission to Lepers.

Hence the occasional pages which deal with missionary matters in general are to be regarded as merely incidental, and subservient to the main purpose of the book. Pressure of time compelled me to pass by much that would have deeply interested me, and lack of space prevents my doing justice to much that I did see of Missionary effort that well deserved notice.

With these limitations in view, the well-informed and Missionary-minded reader will understand the absence from these pages of any reference to much that would be indispensable to an account of the work of Missions as a whole.

It is probably an insufficient apology for the blemishes that a critical eye will easily discover in this volume to say that it was prepared under the pressure of limited time and of manifold duties. But it is at least free from exaggeration, and true to fact, and if the susceptibilities of the more sensitive reader are occasionally shocked, I beg her to believe that the realities went far beyond the subdued descriptions I have given.

With so much of explanation and excuse, I launch my little volume on its mission with the prayer that it may awaken in many hearts the same pity for the lepers that the facts and scenes described in it created in my own.

JOHN JACKSON.

LONDON,

November 1st, 1901.

IN LEPER-LAND

CHAPTER I

BOMBAY

THIS volume is the record of a Tour extending to 7,000 miles of Indian travel and occupying a period of twenty weeks, exclusive of the voyages out and home. My primary purpose was to ascertain by personal observation the real condition of the lepers of India, and to obtain a direct insight into the work of ministering to their temporal and spiritual needs.

It was fitting, therefore, that my first visit to any place of public interest should be to the "Homeless Leper Asylum," as it is officially termed, at Matunga, Bombay. The drive of five miles through the city presented to my unfamiliar gaze more features of interest than one pair of eyes could apprehend. While trying to seize the points of a group full of life and colour on the right, figures and scenes of beauty or squalor, but picturesque in either case, were escaping me on the left. The variety in type and tint, in caste and feature, in social condition and racial characteristics, was bewildering. And the absolute

novelty of the whole was almost paralyzing to one enjoying his first sight of the mysterious East, whose myths and fables fall far short of its living facts in real and even romantic interest.

And the people! Oh, the people!—the multitudes of them, I mean. Gazing on this seething mass of humanity—crowding the doorways, swarming off the side-walk into the road, blocking the carriage way, and hardly heeding the yells of the drivers—one can scarcely wonder that men who see in these subject races bodies rather than souls, should cynically suggest that India can well spare the thousands slain by plague, pestilence, and famine. But in how many of these faces a sympathetic eye can discover the hunger of the spirit within! Dormant, doubtless, in the majority, but capable of being quickened into life by the touch of Divine love even when transmitted through human lips and human hands. Yes, dormant, but still existent. Inarticulate, too, in great measure, this innate sense of need, or at best finding a distorted and imperfect expression in the temples, mosques, and numberless idols which abound in this great land. Unable to utter itself, but still *there*, deep down in the hearts which look out at you through the dark, keen eyes.

Through scenes of ever varying interest, at length we reached the Leper Asylum. There, amid surroundings of great natural beauty, we found a community of these doomed beings, 330 in number, in all stages of tubercular and anæsthetic leprosy, and ranging in age from a tiny child of three or four to old men and women, some unable to rise and lying in

their misery, moaning piteously. We were most courteously received by the Resident Doctor, and shown over the whole of this large and well-appointed Institution, the clean, airy wards of which would bear comparison with those of many public hospitals. It is maintained at the joint expense of the Government and the Municipality of Bombay, and if only the local authorities throughout India could be induced to follow this most worthy example what Lord Dufferin described as the "open sore of India" would be in a fair way to be healed. Though the number of inmates is nearly twice what it was ten years ago, it ought to be still larger. In one afternoon's drive through Bombay I observed no fewer than five lepers in the streets, three of whom were begging.

Many pathetic details could be transcribed from these sad "human documents." For example, the leper schoolmaster who finds congenial occupation in teaching some thirty leper children, and whose face lights up with eager interest as he tells of his work. He gladly accepts a copy of the New Testament, in Marathi. The group of leper boys we come upon presently, playing marbles, for all the world like happy English lads, are doubtless some of his pupils.

An old woman, with the bright, cheerful expression so often seen in *Christian* lepers, gladly testifies to her faith, and points upwards with the light of hope shining in her eyes. She is very aged and has had the disease forty years. George Bowen, whose memory is cherished by so many in this city, was

her father in the faith. In a separate room we find a Eurasian, who has journeyed here from Trevandrum. Among his most cherished possessions is a Bible given him there. He has benefited much by medical treatment here, and shows with great satisfaction his photograph taken when he was admitted, and which displayed a sadly affected face, now happily much improved. When well enough he superintends the out-door work of the other inmates. The variety of type is as evident in the Asylum as elsewhere in this chaos of races. The tall, fair man with a bad face is a Kabuli, and informs us that lepers are few in his country. Close to him is a man from Bokhara, whose father died a leper in this Asylum.

The Institution is provided with a Hindu Temple a Mohammedan Mosque (with a mullah who is a leper) and a Chapel for Roman Catholics. The Protestant Christians are at present a small though an increasing number, and it is hoped they may shortly be provided with a place of worship. Bible-women from the American Marathi Mission have visited the female inmates at intervals, while latterly a Catechist provided by the Mission to Lepers has been at work, and not without tokens of encouragement.

We were much interested in all we saw in the extensive, well-cultivated grounds. The Persian well for irrigation, and the scientific, and successful, treatment of sewage were especially noticeable. Though handsomely built and well-arranged, the Asylum would be much more homelike to the inmates if they were accommodated three or four in a room,

instead of in large, open wards. By the latter method there may be some gain in airiness, but it is at the expense of privacy and comfort. Having expressed our appreciation of this excellent institution in the visitors' book, we were presented with a bunch of plantains grown by the lepers in their own grounds and which we much enjoyed on our homeward drive.

I was accompanied on this visit by Mr. Thomas A. Bailey (brother of Mr. Wellesley C. Bailey), who, with Mrs. Bailey, was about leaving India for furlough after five years of valuable and voluntary service in various forms of Missionary work. As Honorary Secretary in India for the Mission to Lepers, Mr. Bailey has done much to further the cause of these helpless people, besides taking an active part in the work of famine relief. He not only welcomed me to India as I stepped ashore at Bombay, but found for me my faithful "boy" Andrew, who accompanied me in all my journeyings and served me well in the combined capacities of personal attendant and interpreter.

Owing to the limited time at my disposal, I was only able to see a small part of the work being done by various Christian Agencies in the City of Bombay. But under the guidance of my kind hosts, Rev. J. E. Abbott, D.D., and his sister, Miss Abbott, I was shown some of the work of the American Marathi Mission of Western India. In addition to entertaining me in the most hospitable manner, Dr. and Miss Abbott spared no pains to give me some insight into the work of their Mission in its various branches.

The American Marathi Mission is sustained by the

Congregational Churches of the United States, and is the oldest Protestant Mission in the Bombay Presidency, having been at work since 1813. Its special object is the evangelizing of the seven millions of Hindus inhabiting what is known as the Marathi Country. There are nine principal stations, the central one being Bombay with its self-supporting native Church of 249 members, with whom I felt it a privilege to worship on my first Sunday in India. I also greatly appreciated the opportunity given me on the same afternoon of participating in the open-air service, when my interpreter was Rev. S. V. Karmarkar. Mr. Karmarkar is one of the most worthy and capable of the native ministry, and is ably seconded by his wife, who is one of the very few qualified Indian medical workers of her sex. In her dispensary this native lady Doctor deals with nearly 10,000 patients a year.

The Mission employs 499 Indian workers of different grades, including 23 ordained Pastors, and reports a membership of 13,500, in 49 organized Churches and scattered village groups. Nearly 10,000 scholars are under instruction in the various schools of the Mission, while Medical and Industrial agencies are in active operation in several stations.

The ravages of famine in the Bombay Presidency threw heavy burdens on the Marathi Mission; not the least of which is the permanent support and education of 3,000 orphans, for whose maintenance the Missionaries (not the Society) have made themselves responsible.

Under the capacious (as well as hospitable) roof of

the Mission House in Mazagaon, I found three departments of work in active operation. Dr. Abbott's Hostel for native young men, Miss Abbott's Industrial Home for widows, and Miss Millard's class for blind orphans. The latter agency is new and not large, but it is growing and is meeting a distinct need. Among the sixty widows under Miss Abbott's care are many sad cases, who find kindly shelter and useful employment here. Many of them are occupied in making garments for the orphans. Of these latter, I can only make the barest mention of the 250 boys I saw under instruction at the Parel Orphanage, and of the large number of girls with whom Mrs. E. S. Hume and her daughter have been so successful—notably in the production of high-class ornamental needlework.

On my last evening in Bombay I was privileged to attend the Conference of Missionaries of various Societies which meets monthly for the consideration of pressing missionary questions. I was favoured with invitations to similar gatherings in Agra and Calcutta, and I may note here at the outset that these united meetings were indications of the fraternal spirit I found among Evangelical Missionaries of different denominations and nationalities throughout India. The presence of the enemy constrains the different detachments of the Christian Army to keep in touch with each other, and to present a united front to the common foe.

CHAPTER II

PUI AND POLADPUR

FROM Wednesday morning to Saturday afternoon of my first week in India was spent in a visit to the Pui and Poladpur Leper Asylums, and into these days were crowded many new scenes and novel experiences.

As a mere record of travel it may be worthy of note that the distance covered was about 204 miles, 104 by water in a coasting steamer, launch, and sailing boats, whilst close upon 100 miles were traversed in bullock carts and tongas. Of the whole time not more than 6 hours were spent in bed, though some refreshing sleep was enjoyed in the return trip by steamer. For a traveller only four days in the country to be as fresh at the end of this experience as on first landing was something to be very thankful for.

The promise telegraphed by friends in Edinburgh for my farewell meeting was thus early made good—“the Lord will send His angel with thee and prosper thy way.” But the human instrument of all this kind care was Rev. Imam B. Bawa (of the American Marathi Mission), who accompanied me in all my travels in this district.

Mr. Bawa—at a time when other work was especially urgent—had made the most careful arrangements for relays of ponies and tongas, so that I was enabled to

accomplish my main object and to visit the lepers of Pui and Poladpur with the least possible loss of time. To him my warmest thanks are due.

Leaving Bombay at 7 a.m. on Wednesday, after the Examiner for the plague had felt our pulses, we were soon steaming south for Rewadanda.

Our party consisted of Dr. Abbott, Rev. W. Hazen and myself, together with about 20 Indian Christians, including two or three pastors going to Roha for special services. There was also with us a native colporteur, who was soon busily engaged in selling Scriptures and other Christian literature to the natives on board, in which he was surprisingly successful.

This was my first sight of a boat laden with native passengers, and a very striking sight it was. The upper deck was well filled with them—except a small section set apart for first-class travellers—while the lower deck was literally packed with a mass of half-clad humanity of various hues. Sitting, standing, but preferably lying, in every imaginable attitude; men, women, and children indiscriminately jumbled together, many sleeping and all quite orderly in their discomfort. They emphasized once more what so strongly impressed me everywhere, viz., the immense numbers of the people, and the poverty of their condition.

Breakfast spread on deck by our two native attendants revealed to me the possibilities of a well packed tiffin basket and afforded us a most enjoyable meal. Steaming along past dismantled Marathi and Portuguese forts, we reached Rewadanda about 10 o'clock. This was one of the

chief emporiums of India in the days of the Romans, and was a place of great strength and importance during the Portuguese occupation. At the entrance to the "Fort" an inscription bears the date 1577, and evidence of the massive nature of the fortifications still remains in walls of enormous thickness. The ruins of a cathedral and a monastery form very picturesque objects, and are approached through groves of magnificent cocoanut trees, palms, and other beautiful tropical plants.

We had not been fifteen minutes ashore, before the disfigured hands of three leper beggars were held out to us. These had all been offered accommodation in our Asylum at Pui, but preferred a life of *liberty!* with mendicity and misery. A pleasant run of three hours up the river in a small steam launch brought us to Roha, where we were welcomed by Mr. Bawa, and comfortably quartered in a temporary bungalow. On our way through the village we looked in upon seventy boys rescued from the famine, who are receiving educational and industrial training here. These bright, happy little fellows welcomed us with salaams and hearty cheers in English! When asked to say what condition they were in when they first arrived, their efforts to indicate pinched faces and emaciated bodies were most quaint and pathetic. But now they are healthy and well fed, while a number of little girls fare equally well in another home. Included with these are the untainted children of some of the lepers in the Asylums.

Before recounting my experiences with the lepers of Pui and Poladpur it may be noted that these twin

Asylums which now afford havens of rest to about 160 homeless lepers, originated in the efforts of Mr. Bawa some eight years ago. Writing in 1893 he says: "I did not think of the lepers till so late as last April; I then sent a Christian preacher to Poladpur. He directly began to work among the lepers, whom he found more ready to hear his message than any other class." Soon there were candidates for baptism from among them—the first of whom had to stand a bitter fire of persecution from the people of her village. This woman proved the reality of her own conversion by presently bringing forward for baptism another whom she had instructed. The opposition to the work has long ago vanished, and the farmers in the whole district so thoroughly understand and appreciate what is being done for their lepers that they are strongly influenced towards Christianity. They have welcomed the Missionaries and their teachers much more readily since they have seen such a very practical demonstration of the character of the religion they bring. I found many evidences of this valuable, though indirect, effect of leper-work in different parts of India. Every Christian leper Asylum is an object-lesson which the most ignorant and prejudiced Hindu can scarcely misunderstand.

In order to be back again in Roha in time for an ordination and special services on the following day, Mr. Bawa and I started at 10 p.m. for Pui, each packed into a bullock cart with our bedding laid on the straw. Three hours brought us to the Asylum where we rested till 5.30, and after a cup of tea,

prepared for us by the caretaker, we proceeded to visit the lepers. They were grouped on the ground in front of the Asylum, and received us with many salaams. They seemed surprisingly happy, though there were some terrible faces and maimed hands and feet among them. About eighty, of whom all but eight or ten were Christians, were gratefully enjoying the provision made for them. It was saddening to see two or three children who are already lepers, and to find that one woman had a little untainted child under her "sari" or wrap. She had also another healthy child with her in the Asylum, and had been earnestly pleaded with to allow them both to be placed in the Children's Home, but would not be prevailed upon to give them up.

After the lepers had sung a "Bhajan," I gave them a short address (interpreted by Mr. Bawa). Their nods and smiles and bright looks showed how they appreciated the few simple words about the Great Friend of the lepers, and about the motives of those who had built and maintained the Asylum. More singing and messages of gratitude to all their kind friends in England brought my first interview with "our own" lepers to a close.

A pleasant drive in the bright morning sunshine brought us back to Roha in time for the special services of the day.

This flourishing centre, with several out-stations, has grown from a tiny seed sown by Dr. Abbott nineteen years ago, when he started a small school. Among his first scholars was a very little boy who had to be requested to attend in future clothed with at

least a shred of apparel of some kind. At the presentation to Dr. Abbott on the occasion of my visit, this same boy, now a successful lawyer, was one of the speakers. The chairman was a leading Hindu official holding a Government appointment. He openly declared his conviction that only Christianity could save India, and added that he saw no hope for his country with her various races and creeds except a strong, living faith that could unite and quicken the masses of the people. In Christianity alone could he see such a prospect. When educated and influential natives are found giving public expression to such sentiments as these—and the instance is not an isolated one—we may be full of hope for the future of India.

My visit to these two Leper Asylums gave me experiences of travel which were sometimes trying, but never dull. To spend the greater part of Wednesday night in journeying by bullock-cart and tonga to Pui and back, then to set out at ten on Thursday night for Poladpur, and to cover within thirty hours ninety miles in the two styles of conveyances just mentioned, may, I think, be regarded as a pretty thorough introduction to Indian travel for a novice in his first week.

Picture a particularly small, rickety vehicle, about five feet by three, and the traveller (of more than average height) alternately lying, sitting, lounging, and squatting, in the vain hope of finding an attitude a little less cramped and uncomfortable than the last one, and finally deciding that to fix himself firmly *across* the conveyance was the most tolerable position of all. After a few minutes of restless dozing, an

extra loud yell from the driver awoke me, only to find that I had lost my cap. However, the shouting and shaking, the jumping and jolting, came to an end, and prepared me to accept, with more than resignation, the experience of the *next stage*, which was to be wedged at full length into a bullock cart, side by side with Mr. Bawa, and with all our luggage stowed in some miraculous manner in or on the vehicle.

As we were pressing on against time to Poladpur, we were checked by finding the river at high tide at Mahad. To avoid a delay of two hours, we were ferried across in a narrow boat of the "dug-out" description, called, I believe, a catamaran. The tonga was perched astride of the boat, which, in turn, was kept from capsizing by a kind of boom resting on projecting bars on one side of the boat only. With a little coaxing from the driver our ponies were induced to swim after us, and we were soon travelling rapidly over the last ten miles. But the distance and the heat were now telling heavily upon the little animals, who, through a misunderstanding, had been driven an unnecessary twenty miles during the night. Finally, however, they deposited us at the public bungalow at Poladpur, at 10 o'clock a.m., just twelve hours after leaving Roha. A refreshing bath and a breakfast inspired me with a lively sentiment of gratitude to the paternal government which had provided this rest-house for weary travellers.

The Asylum is in a beautiful location just out of sight of the village, on the bank of the river, and commanding a lovely view of the magnificent range of mountains, on the highest of which is Mahableshtar.

The present buildings occupy only a small portion of the seven acres of ground belonging to the Asylum, most of the remainder of which is cultivated. The gardens, to which the inmates themselves attend, are well kept and watered, and give a fresh green appearance to the place. Under a matting in front of the men's quarters I found the inmates assembled to greet me, to the number of about eighty. They had swept up the paths, and made a touching attempt at decoration by small coloured flags, and in other ways. After cordial greeting on both sides, they sang, and that surprisingly well, a native hymn which was intended as a song of welcome, and the refrain of which was, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace." Later they sang again, and finally sent me away to the strains of a lyric in undeserved praise of "Jackson Sahib."

As I gazed on their faces, on most of which a look of hope and gratitude outshone the sadness, I felt repaid for my weary journey, and if the friends who sustain this work by their gifts could witness for themselves the contrast between these contented Christian lepers and the unhappy outcasts they once were, they would desire, I think, to redouble their efforts so as to extend the boons of Christian teaching and kindly care to more of these suffering people.

After a short address, in which I told them that their friends in far-off England loved and prayed for them because of the great love of the Lord Christ for us all, I read to them a special letter from the Clapham Auxiliary of the Mission to Lepers, which

greatly pleased them. I told them the history of this Auxiliary, and how some of the very poor had helped to build this home for them.* In their reply they said—"We send many salaams (thanks) to those who condescend to call us brothers and sisters, and we pray that God may give them long life to help poor sufferers like us."

Their spokesman was a poor fellow, named Atmaran, whose hands and feet are fearfully maimed, and whom I afterwards saw following us round the grounds with *his arms round the shoulders of two others*—the only way in which he can walk. But he was very happy, and his face really shone with interest and delight, and before we left he assured us that our visit had been to them as "nectar of five-fold sweetness"—so Mr. Bawa translated his expression. Atmaran is a most useful man, and at Pui first and here since, has had a great influence for good. He leads the singing, and instructs new-comers in the way of salvation. He also straightens out quarrels and difficulties, and encourages them all to work, so that they are much more useful and happy than before his arrival.

We entered and inspected most of the houses, and when I turned the primitive rice-mill in one of them the women were greatly pleased, and begged me to "come again soon."

Having been authorized to choose two women to

* This Institution illustrates the power, not of the penny, but of the *halfpenny*! It was partly erected and is to a considerable extent maintained by contributions of a halfpenny a week through the Clapham Auxiliary of the Mission to Lepers.



Atmaran and two leper women. Poladpur Asylum.



An Indian Bullock Cart.

be specially supported by friends in England, a couple of the most popular were elected to this privilege by the votes of the others.

When I photographed Atmaran and these two women, his reluctance to expose his poor maimed hands was very pathetic. One of the most touching of all the pitiful company was a little leper boy, Shripadi, who clearly contracted the disease because his mother would not consent to give him up. He is quite a tiny little fellow, who ought to be bright and merry with his playmates, but the fatal stigma is upon him, and he is doomed to life-long isolation among the victims of this hideous disease.

That the Christian life of these leper converts is true and real is clearly evidenced from time to time. They show a genuine concern that the message which means so much to them should be made known to others. Mr. C. Douglas Green (the Bombay Agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society) visited them recently, and from his interesting account I quote as follows:

“ Here also, as was the case at Pui, I noticed that all the lepers looked happy and contented. It really does one's heart good to see them. When one thinks of the condition of the poor lepers in India, one cannot over-estimate the good work which the Mission to Lepers is doing.

“ Our meeting was held at about 5 p.m., and when I arrived at the Asylum I found the lepers ready to welcome us all in ‘meeting order.’ They first of all sang for my edification, and then the meeting proper began. I spoke to them for about three-quarters of

an hour on the work of the Bible Society, and they listened with evident interest. At the end I pointed out to them that they might all help the work of the Bible Society by their prayers, and some of them even by their offerings, however small. I was not prepared, however, for what followed. In my latter suggestion I found they had already anticipated me. *They had come fully prepared to give.* Some time before the meeting commenced they had asked the Catechist to be allowed to give their offerings to the Bible Society. When asked how they were going to do this, since they had no money of their own, they replied that they had agreed among themselves that each one should put aside a certain quantity of rice out of their daily allowance. This was done, and the value of the rice thus put aside was given to them in coppers. At the close of the meeting a brass plate was passed round, and the coppers were poured in, and when the collection was counted it amounted to no less than Rs.5 (6s. 8d.). I found out afterwards that the aggregate weight of rice which these poor lepers had denied themselves for the sake of God's work came to *one maund* (80lb.). When I took that money my heart was too full to thank them, and, indeed, I could scarcely trust myself to do so. There was a sensation of a lump in my throat, and it was with difficulty that the tears were kept back. All I could do was to ejaculate half under my breath, 'God bless them.'"

To this I may add that a few months subsequent to my visit they gave a further indication of their gratitude. Their devoted friend, Mr. Bawa, having broken down through overwork, the lepers, assisted

to some extent by their friends, quite spontaneously contributed to send him away with a token of their appreciation, consisting of silver articles to the value of £4 10s.

I was deeply impressed by all I saw here. To work such a transformation in the lives of these hopeless outcasts, and to set even the lepers singing for joy of heart is a work of practical Christianity which a wavering faith would be stimulated by witnessing.

CHAPTER III

NASIK

PLAGUE and famine have wrought sad havoc in Nasik, which is one of the sacred cities of the Hindus. The Godavery river, which is here only twenty miles from its source, is held in great reverence by them, and there are many temples on its banks. From the top of the "bell" temple (so named from the bell now in use there, which had formerly been used in a Roman Catholic Church) the view is full of life and colour. Very varied in architecture are the buildings which line both banks of the river, while just below the bridge, where the women are washing and bathing, their many-coloured wraps light up the picture.

But as we passed through the streets of the city the picturesque aspect faded and the poverty-stricken condition of the place became painfully apparent. Plague and famine had so ravaged Nasik that in many streets three out of four houses were deserted, their former occupants dead or fled.

But it is well for such stricken cities that the Gospel of giving has its representatives in them. One of these (in the person of Miss Ruth Harvey, of the Zenana Bible and Medical Mission) has proved a Providence in human form to the sufferers from

sickness and starvation in Nasik. Having been instrumental in the erection of a model hospital for animals (a work of mercy which has deeply impressed the Hindus owing to their reverence for animal life), Miss Harvey, regardless of risk, threw herself heartily into famine relief and plague nursing. By these gradations her service descended to the most pitiable of all sufferers—the lepers. It was high time, in the interests, not only of the lepers themselves, but also of the healthy community, that something should be done to remove a danger and an offence from the very centre of the city.

“For years the abode of these unfortunate people had been the temples on the river side, that of Naru Shanker being the one principally occupied, on account of its proximity to the bazars, and the dharmasalas, to which rich pilgrims resort at various seasons of the year. Where the women of the city might be seen washing clothes and filling water-pots, there the leper might be seen also washing his garments and bathing his body. Some of the worst lepers used to sit in front of the sweetmeat shops, and others used to stand for hours together amongst the vegetable-sellers in the bhaji bazar.”

But famine and plague proved blessings in disguise to the lepers. Orders were given for the population to leave the city, but where could these go?

Fortunately they found their way to a disused plague hospital on the outskirts of the town. It was a poor, temporary, roofless structure, but it was the only refuge these destitute people could find. Here Miss Harvey found them, suffering from exposure to

the cold, and, having secured them a food allowance from the famine fund, she set herself to provide them with a decent shelter. A visit to Bombay to plead for help resulted in roofs for their sheds, and the very day the largest one was completed the rains began. The lepers laughed merrily, saying, "Let the rain come, we are ready to welcome it now."

On visiting this most practical friend of the friendless, I found that (thanks to grants from the Mission to Lepers) matters were progressing steadily towards a happier state of things. A suitable site for a permanent Asylum has been granted by Government, as well as ground for a Home for the untainted children of the lepers, and it is hoped building will shortly be commenced.

I found about eighty of these wrecks of humanity quartered in the temporary sheds. There were many cases of sad deformity, and it was especially painful to note many child-lepers among them.

One inmate especially deserves mention, perhaps. Miss Harvey thus describes him :

"We have one man we call the 'Peacemaker,' he is so forgiving and kind, and tries to help everyone. He nursed a fellow-leper through smallpox, and when the man recovered (he was at death's door), he was not a bit grateful! We were hot with indignation, but the 'Peacemaker' said it did not matter, he would go on being kind all the same. It made me think of the verse, 'He is kind to the unthankful.' This man has made no open profession of Christianity, but if 'by their fruits ye shall know them,' he is not far from the kingdom of God."

On the occasion of my visit, I saw him in the kindest manner dressing the wounds of a man in a loathsome state. With his own maimed fingers he gently and cleverly bandaged the foot and knee of the other, after the wounds had been syringed and disinfected. When, at my request, Miss Harvey told him how pleased I was to see him acting so kindly, he was quite touched. He made a gesture of dissent or disparagement, and hastily brushed away a tear. I regret to say that some three weeks after my visit the plague broke out amongst the lepers, and the "Peacemaker" was the first victim, and his ungrateful friend the next. At the funeral the whole leper colony showed great regard for their poor friend, and grief at their loss.

On the subject of medical treatment, the following may be quoted from the Report of the Nasik work:—

"The lepers suffer chiefly from fever, coughs, and general debility. They apply to their sores bitter oil, and a decoction made of baked and pounded leaves. Bathing freely in warm water appears to give them great relief. Beyond supplying them with fever and cough mixtures, bitter oil, and old soft rags, there is little else that one can do in the way of medical treatment. They wait on each other in sickness—cooking for the patient and supplying his wants with a sympathetic willingness that is encouraging to behold. Iodoform acts powerfully on lepers' sores, but it is so expensive we have not introduced it into the Asylum.

"It will cheer many to know that the lepers are not uniformly sad, nor are they without some sense

of humour. A kind Hindu gentleman made them a present of sepoy's old blue coats and red caps. The lepers arranged themselves in military order, and when the lady went to serve out the rations they made a sepoy's salaam. The lamest of the lepers said nothing further was needed to enable him to go in pursuit of a celebrated dacoit whose recent raids had created a great sensation in the neighbourhood. On another occasion when I said to the lepers, 'It may be that I shall have to leave you and go home,' a boy promptly rejoined, 'That cannot be. When the mother gets up and walks away the children walk after her. We shall do the same.' The hopelessness of attempting to embark with such a family is too self-evident to need any further comment."

The lady referred to in the last paragraph as serving out the rations is a young Parsee Christian, who forfeited family and friends on her conversion, and it was a striking proof of the reality of her religion to see her so kindly tending those whom she would have formerly regarded as despised outcasts.*

Another efficient assistant is the Bible woman, who is a leper. Leprosy showed itself in her while engaged in Bible work in Ahmednagar, and she became an inmate of the temporary Asylum at Nasik where she has found a sphere of useful service. Miss Harvey reports respecting her :

" Her knowledge of Scripture is exceptionally good. Leprosy has appeared in her fingers. This prevents her from writing or keeping a report. Her work is

* As this book is being prepared for the press, news arrives of her death.



Lepers and Temporary Huts, Nasik. The man is "The Peacemaker."

confined to the Leper Asylum, and so she teaches the same number of people every day. In one fortnight she taught eight of the lepers more Scripture than our school children, though taught regularly, take in in three months. Besides teaching the lepers she is a mother to them. She has a little house to herself, and is in authority over them. The lepers are very bigoted, like all the Nasik people, and besides observing caste, as far as possible, are fearful of any attempt to make them change their religion. In spite of this they all gather round Rhaibai to listen to her teaching, and to sing the hymns she has taught them. In the cool of the afternoon it is very pleasing to find them all gathered together, singing one hymn after another. One woman said, 'I can't tell you what these hymns are to us.' "

CHAPTER IV

WARDHA AND RAIPUR

AT Wardha (Central Provinces), I found the lepers, about thirty-five of them, located in an old serai granted by the Government, and admirably adapted to the purpose. The Compound is large, the buildings are substantial, and there is a good well in the centre. Both the temporal and spiritual needs of the inmates are ministered to by Dr. Revie, of the United Free Church of Scotland Mission. It was a suggestive sight to see the skill of a qualified European Doctor placed freely at the disposal of the most lowly and loathsome of suffering humanity. It was one of the many practical manifestations of the Christian Spirit, which it was my privilege to witness in connection with Mission Work in general, and with leper work in particular.

During my short visit to the Dispensary one of the lepers came limping over from the Asylum to seek relief from the pain of an ulcerated finger joint. The ordeal was soon over. The steady hand and the keen blade did their work, and the offending stump was gone, much to the amazement of the patient, who went away with an expression of grateful surprise on his face. But not always can such speedy relief be given.

When we returned to the Leper Asylum we found a new arrival, one who represented surely the lowest depth of human misery, and to whom the poet's line most aptly applies :—

“ Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave.”

With scarcely strength to drag his emaciated limbs to this place of refuge, his voice reduced to a hoarse moan, his face marred by festering wounds, and with the maggots already visible in his nostrils, this leper presented a truly pitiable appearance, as he came a poor heathen outcast to seek relief at the hands of a Christian Missionary.

Let me here plead with the reader not to close the book in disgust at this point. I desire to spare the susceptibilities of those who may peruse these pages, but some true impression of the facts must be conveyed. If excuse were needed for my short and subdued descriptions of what I saw of suffering and misery among these afflicted people, it could be found, I think, in the following words of one who has not only seen, but has pitied and helped them. Presiding over a recent meeting in connection with the Mission to Lepers, the Countess of Dufferin and Ava said :—

“ Leprosy was to them the type of everything that was most miserable and disastrous, but living in a country where they saw nothing of the ravages of the disease, they were too apt to limit their thoughts of it to the typical side only. The reality of it rarely touched their susceptibilities, and perhaps they could scarcely appreciate the work that was being done amongst the lepers if they did not force themselves to know something of the particulars. Every now

and then some event, such as the death of Father Damien, brought the matter home to them, and evoked throughout the world a burst of sympathy and admiration. But Father Damien was only one of many who had devoted themselves to that cause, and if that meeting and others like it were to have any practical outcome, they must do more than sympathize and admire. They must face the painful details; they must realize the actual physical, moral, and spiritual condition of the lepers; they must think of the tainted children and of their future; they must lend their heartiest support to the heroic men and women who lived and worked amidst those suffering from that great affliction. They knew that the Saviour loved the afflicted; and in sympathizing with the lepers surely they would be doing what would be pleasing to Him. Anyone who had visited a leper settlement must carry away with him a sense of the greatest depression. It seemed as if no earthly joy or happiness could enter there. Melancholy—hopelessness—was characteristic of the disease; and yet there was one way this could be dispelled. The leper could be told to look beyond this world and the grave, and find the love of Christ an eternal love and a very present help in trouble.”

Yes, we must get beyond a vague sentiment of pity for the leper. We must, to summarize Lady Dufferin's true and striking words, *face the facts*, and feel for him in the two proper places—in our hearts and in our pockets.

The work carried on by Dr. Revie represents a very comprehensive and practical type of Christian service.

Eleven years ago he opened the Mission station at Wardha, which is a thriving town, with an extensive trade in cotton. He is still the only European worker in the place, and besides his general Medical Mission Work, he superintends the Leper Asylum, and preaches frequently both in English and in the vernacular. The estimation in which he is held by the community, may be inferred from his unanimous re-election as Vice-president of the municipality, all the other members being natives.

Such a station as Wardha serves to illustrate the vast amount of Christian work in India which cannot well be tabulated, and of which the number of baptisms recorded in the annual report is no reliable measure. Without disparaging such figures, it should never be forgotten that what may be termed the Christianizing effect of all forms of Missionary effort is a most important factor in the case. Medical work, famine work, leper work, educational work, and industrial, as well as direct evangelizing agencies, are all contributing towards the widespread turning to Christ which workers in India are both labouring and praying for, and to which many indications point. And what I have recorded as coming under my personal notice at Wardha has its counterpart in Mission stations all over India. Similar work is being done by Missionaries of all the Societies, and this is noted, not as being exceptional, but as representative of the beneficent activity of the Church of Christ in our great Eastern Empire.

Nine hours of comfortable travel brought me, at 11 a.m., to Raipur. The scenery during a large part

of the journey was very fine. The high hills were covered to their summits with fine forest growths, while valleys filled with luxuriant foliage, spread away in all directions. The fresh greens afforded a pleasant relief to the eye, after the brown barrenness of much of the country between Nasik and Wardha.

Though arriving a day sooner than I was expected, owing to a confusion of dates, I received a most cordial welcome from Rev. G. K. Gilder (of the Methodist Episcopal Mission), and greatly appreciated the two day's quiet and rest I spent in Raipur.

On driving to the Leper Asylum, three miles outside the town, I found two substantial ranges of good permanent buildings for men and women respectively. In these were comfortably housed 148 lepers, among whom it was a depressing sight to see at least twenty children—all tainted with the disease, and many of them bright little people, whom it made one's heart ache to see confined in this abode of hopeless suffering. They were all, except two or three, the children of lepers in the Asylum, which fact, since heredity may be disregarded,* emphasizes very strongly the need of rescuing the children from contact with their leprous parents, before they contract the disease. The buildings were very clean and airy, though I ventured to recommend in the entry I was invited to make in the visitors' book that, instead of being as at present in long wards, divisions with open tops should be put in, so as to make them into rooms, each accommodating four inmates. This is especially desirable in the women's quarters, I think, as it

* See Chapter XIV., "The Cry of the Children,"

would give them more privacy, and make the Asylum much more homelike.

I was struck with the order and cleanliness of the place, and the promptness with which the whole community assembled themselves in orderly rows to be inspected or addressed. They are divided into companies of eight or ten, each under the care of one of themselves, called a *mate*, which word is affixed to the turban or wrap. Each *mate* is provided with a card bearing the names of his or her company. This conduces greatly to order and good government generally. It was pathetic to see many limping along literally on stumps of feet, and I observed two men who could only reach the place of assembly by shuffling along in a sitting position. Eagerly they listened to the brief address I was enabled to give them, and most gratefully they appreciated the gifts of their friends in England, to whom they sent innumerable *salaams*.

They welcome the visits of Mr. Gilder and his helpers, who conduct regular services in the Asylum. Mr. Gilder writes concerning them :

“It is verily *news* to them that God loves them. Rejected alike by Hindus and Mohammedans they are left practically to the Christian philanthropist to be cared for, and to the Christian Missionary to be won as trophies for Him who has bidden all of earth’s weary and heavy laden ones to come to Him for rest.”

The lepers at Raipur cultivate a considerable part of the grounds. Cabbages were growing in abundance, as well as plantains, and some other fruits. They take great pride in their gardens, the maintenance of

which makes a pleasant break in the monotony of their existence, and affords many of them healthful exercise. In the language of the native gentleman, who acts as Secretary, "none of them ever seem inclined to give up the joyful situation they now find themselves in at the Asylum." They are given two meals a day, at 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. The dietary for week-days consists usually of dhal, rice, and a vegetable, with a little oil. On Sundays and Hindu holidays, meat and bread are added.

This Institution is an example of co-operation between the Mission to Lepers and the Local Authorities. It originated in the Famine of 1897, which here, as elsewhere, drove many destitute lepers to seek relief. But, unlike their healthy kindred, they were still needy and helpless when the famine was at an end, and the presence of 125 of them was a difficult problem for the municipality. Though unable to assume the whole responsibility, the Mission made a substantial grant which encouraged the local Committee to go forward, with the result that a permanent Asylum has been provided, which is entirely under the management of the Society.

That the Asylum supplies a real need will be sufficiently apparent from the fact that the Raipur *zila* is said to be the most leprous district in the Central Provinces. The Official Census Report for 1891 gives the number of lepers in this one *zila* as 5,000. The number of inmates was doubled between March, 1899, and December, 1900, and the last published report of this Institution states that many applications for admission have to be refused,



Rhalbai, the Leper Bible-woman (in the centre) and her class of leper women at Nasik.

CHAPTER V

CHANDKURI (C.P.)

FROM the railway at Bhatapara to Chandkuri was my first experience of jungle travelling. Accompanied by the Rev. K. W. Nottrott on his pony, I was carried in a dandy, or *dhooly*, by four coolies. Eleven miles of rough, scrubby jungle, varied by occasional rice patches, brought us in sight of Chandkuri. Here a pleasant surprise awaited me. A mile or so from the Leper Asylum, under a clump of trees by the wayside all the untainted children of the lepers were drawn up in two rows—boys on one side and girls on the other—their red and white banners supplying a bright patch of colour to the scene. They received us with hymns well and brightly sung, and when Mr. Nottrott had interpreted my few words of greeting, they escorted us to the Mission Station. One quaint little lassie of three or four, after a little coaxing, trotted by the side of the dandy and held my hand, a privilege for which there were soon several competitors. These clean, healthy, and evidently happy children were only one of many proofs I was to see of the valuable work accomplished here during the past four years.

It was as recently as 1897 that Mr. Nottrott

appealed to the Mission to Lepers for help, on the ground that destitute lepers in very advanced stages of the disease were arriving every day or two. He told of a mother coming with two little children, emaciated by famine, and all three suffering from leprosy. He quoted the Famine Commissioner as saying that he had never seen so many lepers in any district. One year later a lady of rank in England generously gave £300 to erect a permanent Asylum. She has subsequently assisted the Institution by other donations, and it is to commemorate her kindness that it bears the name of "The Clare Asylum for Lepers."

These homeless and hopeless people have proved so eager to enjoy the simple provision made for them that I found a community of them numbering 340, including seventy untainted children, being sheltered and cared for.

Seven a.m. next morning found us in the "Church" of the Asylum for a special service. Can I enable the reader to conceive the scene? A long, narrow building with thatched roof supported by rough pillars, and with eaves so low that all have to stoop who enter. Three large openings in the sides of plastered matting admit, not only the congregation, but a sorely needed supply of fresh air, notwithstanding which the odour would have proved very trying to a fastidious visitor. The birds whose nests are in the roof are flitting in and out with lively chirrupings. And what of the worshippers? Seated on the earthen floor and closely packed, men and women on separate sides, were some 250 lepers. In the very front and close to the table at which we sat, were six or seven

child-lepers, some of them bright-faced little people, whose terrible fate seemed scarcely as yet to overshadow the happiness of their childhood. If possible, still more pathetic was the sight of a little untainted child huddled between the legs of its leprous father. In the centre were two men without a finger between them, one of them trying with his poor maimed stumps to find the place in his hymn book. As were their hands, so were their feet, though in these cases the faces were still unaffected. Next to them were three others with features swollen, mis-shapen, and mutilated, and so on through the whole church-full—surely a congregation who were in sore need of all the hope and comfort which the Christian Evangel could bring them. These above all others seem to need a Gospel that brings “life and immortality to light.” And, if hearty singing and earnest responses are reliable signs, they warmly appreciated the message which I felt it such a privilege to give. This very touching service closed with the baptism of two lepers, a man and his wife. They made their responses distinctly though timidly, the whole congregation watching the simple rite with reverent interest.

After breakfast we made a round of the whole Asylum, which spreads over a considerable part of the twenty-two acres now belonging to it. The lepers, quite of their own accord, had made most pathetic attempts at decoration in honour of my visit. “WELCOME” in large letters, and surmounting an arch of green, greeted me at the outer gate, while at the entrance to the Asylum proper “BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL” was inscribed.

Many other texts, flags, garlands, &c., gave the place quite a festive appearance. To me their chief beauty was in the fact that they were a spontaneous expression of gratitude, and an evidence of some interest and brightness imparted to the lives of these sorrow-laden people.

We visited all the houses, permanent and temporary, and inspected the rows of low huts in which many lepers were being housed pending the erection of permanent buildings. We went into the houses of the Caretaker, the Catechists, and the House-Father of the children. Next into the homes for the boys and girls, where we saw the food being served out. Then we peeped into the Dispensary and the weaving shed. In the latter Sahibin and her husband, both formerly in the Home for untainted children, were busily engaged in weaving the material which is made into clothing for the boys and girls. Three more of the elder children have been placed out on small farms, and others are being trained as gardeners or carpenters.

For the afternoon a very interesting function had been planned, viz., the laying of the Corner Stone of the new Church for the lepers. This ceremony had been postponed to await my visit, and it was a pleasure to have a share in an event so full of interest to the lepers. We found a large gathering of them filling what will be the nave and transept of the new building. The boys and girls marched up from their Homes and others gathered round, until fully four hundred must have been present.

Four of us, three missionaries and myself, occupied the small platform, and when an opening prayer had

been offered, the leper Catechist led the singing of a hymn, which was rendered with heartiness by most of the lepers and the children. Scripture reading was followed by a short address from myself.

A sealed tin box containing a written history of the Asylum, and a copy of "Without the Camp" (the Magazine of the Mission to Lepers) were placed in the cavity in the stone, together with some coins. Then Mr. Nottrott, Mr. Yost, and I each struck the stone with a workman's mallet (silver trowels not being in the fashion for lepers' churches) and recited an appropriate passage of Scripture. More singing and prayer brought the stone-laying ceremony to an end, and the assemblage dispersed.

Mr. Nottrott finds an able assistant in John, the Catechist, who is a leper, and whose grave, gentle, and very intelligent face attracted me. He is by birth a Brahmin, and was acting as a Christian teacher when he contracted the disease—seemingly a clear case of contagion. At present his face is not disfigured. He is faithful and conscientious in the discharge of his duties, and happy in his work. At first, he was terribly depressed on finding he was a leper, and it was even feared he might take his own life, but he has now learned that he can still be useful, and he is quite resigned to his lot. He is well cared for by his kind, pleasant little wife, herself happily untainted.

In the evening the Asylum was all *en fête*, the occasion being nothing less than a banquet, at which Mr. Nottrott and I were the "guests of the evening." To celebrate so rare an event as the visit of one of

their helpers from the Home-land they had arranged a special dinner to which it was a privilege to contribute an addition of five sheep! This I was enabled to do from a gift entrusted to me for such purposes by my wife before I left England. I may add that ten rupees (13s. 4d.) purchased these five animals—four of which, it will be readily believed, were both small and slender.

On arrival at the Asylum we found it quite brilliantly illuminated. Tiny earthen saucers containing a little linseed oil and an inch or two of wick had been placed on the pillars of the gateway, and up each side of the path, while some of the walls were similarly illuminated, the effect being enhanced by blazing torches at frequent intervals. As the evening was dark the result was striking. The lepers were seated in two long rows and each provided with plate and drinking vessel. In the centre of all, and lighted by large torches, a table was spread for the two visitors. Here we were served with a dinner of native luxuries specially prepared by the untainted wife of the Catechist. Soup, the name and ingredients of which were equally unknown, cakes or patties both sweet and bitter, roast fowl and vegetables, were followed by rice and curry, the latter, though served specially mild for the occasion, being quite too hot for my unsophisticated English palate. Who would not have struggled bravely to show appreciation of such a meal? While one at least of the visitors was wrestling with the delicacies provided for him, the lepers had done wonders with their crippled hands, and liberal portions of rice, curry, and mutton,

followed by sweet cakes, had vanished. *How* some of the maimed stumps conveyed the food to their mouths is a mystery, but it was done. Dinner over, the "band and choir" from among the lepers grouped themselves near us, and a concert followed. Two large drums (or tom-toms), cymbals, and metal vessels, all beaten and clanged vigorously, made up in noise what they lacked in music. Then the lepers sang a long lyric recounting the life of Christ and His miracles—including the cleansing of the lepers—and after each verse a refrain about the "blessed name of Jesus." It was a striking and pathetic picture, and the reality of their enjoyment was evident. The flickering torch-light fell on faces often marred and disfigured, but many of them shining with an inward light. With swaying forms, and hands beating time to the simple measure (not a few being fingerless palms!) they poured out their gratitude and gladness in song. Altogether the scene and the singers combined to make a picture not easily forgotten. To see those who a year or two ago were despised outcasts, and who on admission had not the very faintest conception of kindness or of Christian love, now—may we not say?—sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in their right mind, once more demonstrated the power of the Gospel of Christ to meet the needs of the most sorrowful and despairing of mankind.

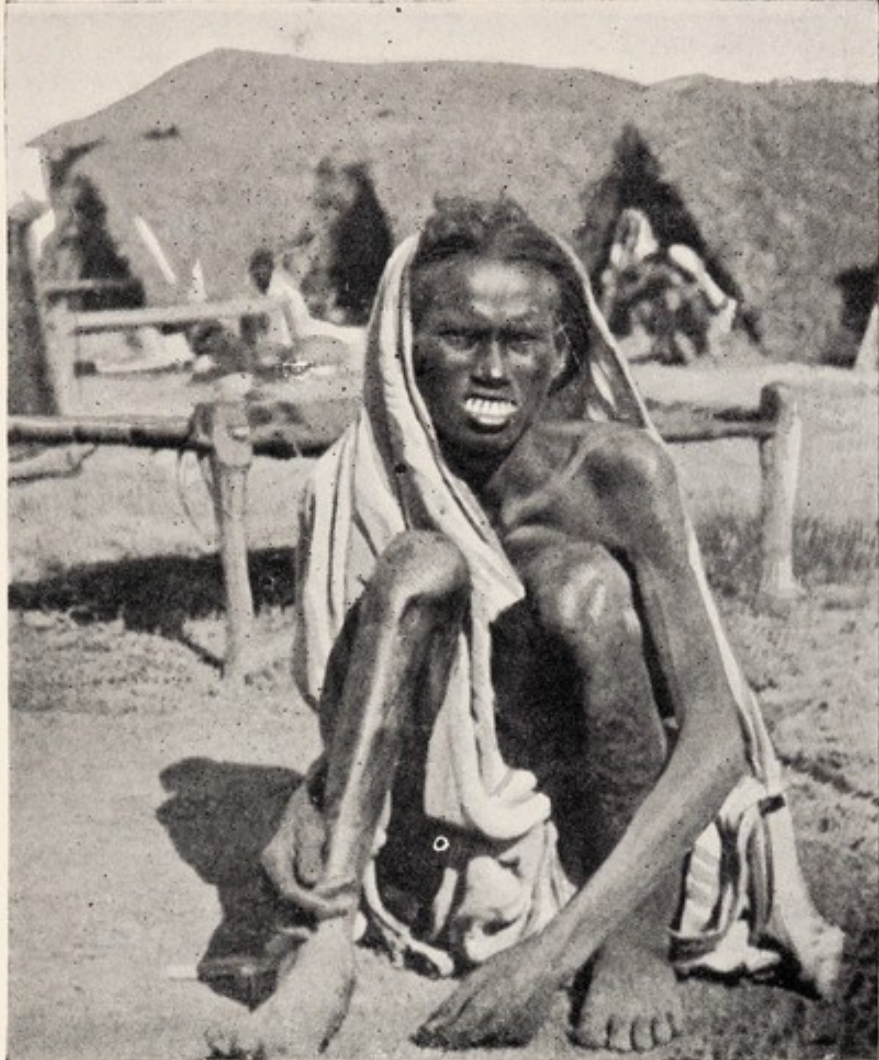
We next visited the children in their quarters, and had again to try to eat the dainties *they* had done their best to provide for us. It was a pretty picture to see all these little people, to the number of eighty (sixty of

whom were the offspring of lepers), seated in a large circle eagerly waiting for their banquet. The children's feasting over, more music followed, and it was nearly 10 p.m. when, amid many grateful salaams, we bade them good-night, after what had been, to one of the guests at least, an evening of intense interest.

I must reluctantly omit details of other experiences at Chandkuri. One of these was a burial, that of Yattan, the first leper who received baptism in the Asylum, and who had since led a consistent life. He had passed away during the night and, as speedy sepulture is imperative on sanitary grounds, we committed all that was mortal of him to the earth without delay. Mr. Nottrott and I headed the procession, and he was carried reverently by four of the Christian lepers, two of whom carefully and gently adjusted the white-swathed body in the grave. The wailing of his widow and children, which had been restrained during the short service at the grave, broke out afresh as we turned away from the last earthly resting place of poor Yattan the leper.

In the afternoon the lepers were again assembled in the Church and I was invited to catechize them. I must own myself surprised at the readiness and accuracy of their answers, many of which showed a real grasp of Christian doctrine.

When asked to name some of the works of Christ, the second response was "He cleansed the lepers—the ten and the one." It spoke well for the thoroughness of the Christian teaching that these poor ignorant lepers should in so short a period have gained a knowledge of Bible truth that would have



A leper photographed just as she arrived at the Asylum at Chandkuri.



Christian Lepers and Teachers at Mungeli—Central Provinces.

done credit to many a class of elder scholars in our Home Sunday Schools.

After I had given a short farewell address they were asked if they had any messages for their friends in England. They eagerly responded with "Bahut Salaams" and "Yesu Sahai" ("many, many, thanks," and "may Jesus be your helper"). One bright faced woman, whose correct answers proved her superior intelligence, requested on behalf of them all that "*our Sahib,*" as they called me, would "Come every year." Some of the most able-bodied of the men proposed to escort me to Mungeli (thirty miles!), but my departure before daylight thwarted their kind intention. Their bright smiles and grateful thanks testified that my visit had brought some pleasure and interest into their sad lives, and I parted from them with real regret.

CHAPTER VI

MUNGELI (CENTRAL PROVINCES)

IN the darkest hour that precedes the dawn I left Chandkuri, under the kindly escort of Rev. K. W. Nottrott, who accompanied me to Mungeli.

As an example of the marked variation of temperature against which the traveller in India has to be on his guard, I may note that when we set out at 5.30 I was glad to walk in a fairly thick overcoat for warmth. But before we completed our first stage of 16 miles I was equally glad to be carried in my dhooly—minus both my coats, so hot had it become by 11 a.m. Our "road" was an alternation of rough jungle path and dusty field tracks, varied by the tops of the low banks that divided the rice patches. The lovely flowering plants and the strange birds with their bright plumage gratified the eye and relieved the monotony of our slow progress.

Our half-way house was at Chakapendra. Here we breakfasted in the most primitive place of public entertainment that a considerable experience of travel has made me acquainted with. Walls and floor of mud, the remains of a roof of thatch, and not a vestige of chair or table. But for the latter we substituted a bedstead borrowed from a neigh-

bouring hut, and, seated on our baggage, we greatly appreciated our meal. A pair of first-rate trotting bullocks brought us by fairly civilized, if not macadamized, roads to Mungeli, where we were welcomed by Rev. E. M. Gordon and Mrs. Gordon, M.D., who kindly entertained me during what proved to be a very enjoyable visit.

As an instance of Mission work in a rather remote country station, I may note that here, in addition to the native Church in Mungeli and several village stations, a flourishing medical work with a hospital for in-patients is carried on. Here also, as elsewhere, there have been many instances in which the ministry of healing has prepared the way for that spiritual message which it is the primary object of missions to convey.

Reference is made in the Chapter on Children to the inmates of the Orphanage at Mungeli. Not a few of these are the offspring of the lepers, of whom 50 are kindly cared for in the compact little Asylum which overlooks the river near by. Here, as at Chandkuri, the Leper Asylum was an outcome of the famine of 1897, and here, also, these stricken people sought to show their gratitude to one whom they regarded as representing their friends across the sea.

On the Saturday afternoon 49 of them were assembled in their Chapel—wisely built with one side entirely open—and in the address with which they welcomed their visitor they said, among many things too flattering to find a record here: "We are at the present time greatly rejoiced, for we have for a long

period worshipped under the mango tree, where, on account of rain and heat, we have endured great inconvenience. But now we are able to meet with comfort to do service in this place of worship. Then, again, we have long lived in our mean huts, but now new houses are being built for us. We pray that those who have been merciful to us and have given us this place of worship may have joy and rejoicing. In conclusion, we remember that you will visit many places, and while we shall never forget you, you will forget our faces. We therefore ask you to accept from us this silver spoon, that, when you see it, you may be helped to remember us thereby. On your return to your own country will you forward to all your brethren there our most respectful Salaams."

The accompanying gift was very plain in pattern and crude in workmanship, but valuable as an expression of gratitude from those who have found home and hope here. It deserves to be noted that this Asylum was built, as well as another at Patpara (Mandla district), by gifts of farthings collected by the Missionary Pence Association, through the funds of which the inmates are also supported.

Sunday was a day full of interest. Public worship in the native Church was followed by my first Communion Service with the lepers. The exact form in which the Holy Ordinance is observed varies somewhat in different Asylums, though in every place in which I was privileged to participate it was with perfect solemnity and reverence that these poor maimed worshippers commemorated the death which has made eternal life possible to them. At Mungeli the bread

was passed round by the Catechist, and the wine was poured into the small vessel with which each communicant had come provided.

Eight lepers who desired baptism were then questioned, both by Mr. Gordon and myself, and their answers, given with apparent sincerity and readiness, showed that six at least of them had an intelligent apprehension of the fundamental facts of the Christian faith. Before separating, one of the men on behalf of the others expressed their pleasure at my visit, and their hope that I would return again "soon," and they sent me away with three cheers and many Salaams. The story of Ram-lall, the spokesman, is perhaps worthy of transcription, though it is merely one of the many similar tragedies happening in the lives of the lepers day by day. Ram-lall was a travelling trader from Allahabad, and was prospering in his way. But one day while on a long journey, far from home, he discovered that he had burnt his hands without being conscious of any pain. From this and other signs he knew that he had become a leper. Stunned by shame and sorrow, he felt he could never face his friends again. He became henceforth a homeless alien from his kindred—an "outcast"—and only the reader who has some knowledge of the power of caste in India can conceive what this discovery must have meant to him.

After long wanderings poor Ram-lall set out on a pilgrimage of many hundreds of miles to Puri, to the celebrated shrine of Juggernath ("the Lord of the Earth"). As he travelled wearily on, he heard,

happily, that at Mungeli there was a sheltering home for such as he, and he came. He had been receiving Christian teaching, exemplified by practical kindness, for two years, when one evening after the service he rose to speak. Pointing with his fingerless hands to his stumps of feet he declared, in words that brought tears to many eyes, that he might not have long to live and desired to obey and follow Jesus, whose servants had by word and deed proved their religion to be of God. He soon after openly confessed his faith in Him who is Lord of Heaven, as well as of Earth, and has ever since lived a consistent life and still exercises a good influence over his fellow sufferers.

After the service in the afternoon, for which the Mission Church was crowded, the congregation proceeded to the river, when twenty-eight candidates, including the six lepers, were baptized by immersion.

It was a striking scene. The large crowd of heathen stood on a high bank apart, while the lepers gathered in a group by themselves, and all the Christians and school children were assembled on the bank with Mrs. Gordon. At intervals during the service hymns were sung—the demeanour of all being quiet and orderly. Without exception, all who were baptized, including the lepers, submitted to the ordinance in the most reverent manner. Among the new converts were several young men from a neighbouring village, the head man of which stood among the spectators with a scowl on his face which seemed to forbode trouble. As the last baptism had taken place less than three months before, this addition of

twenty-eight proved the work to be prospering at Mungeli. The salaams of the six lepers as they turned to leave the water were very touching, and I felt it a privilege to share in the service by which they were welcomed into the fellowship of the Christian Church.

In the evening one of the men who had been baptized in the afternoon attended at the Mission bungalow to have his long tuft of hair cut off by Mr. Gordon. The wearing of this is a mark of Hinduism, the popular superstition being that, at death, the spirit will take hold of it and so draw him up into Heaven. Its surrender is therefore a sign of the renunciation of Hinduism and of the acceptance of Christianity. Some of the other converts gave up their necklets of beads, two or three of which were added to my collection of curiosities. At 8 p.m., Mr. Gordon and I packed ourselves into his bullock tonga, and by the same time next morning we had covered the thirty-two miles to Bilaspur. Here I rejoined the railway, and took the mail train to Purulia.

CHAPTER VII

PURULIA LEPER VILLAGE

IN this, which is one of the most leprous districts in India, there has grown up during the past fourteen years an Institution which bids fair to become a model leper village. In 1886 Rev. H. Uffman (of Gossner's Evangelical Mission) was, like his Divine Master, moved with compassion for the stricken outcasts who soon learnt that the compound of the Missionary bungalow was a haven where they were not only free from insult and persecution, but were, relieved and comforted. They came in increasing numbers, until it became imperative that some permanent provision should be made for them. About this time, also, the expulsion of a number of lepers from the huts they had found shelter in, too near to the town, emphasized the need for a Christian Asylum. Probably for sanitary reasons, the local authorities decided that this colony of diseased outcasts must be evicted. The lepers were turned out; the poor huts which were their only homes were burned to the ground, they themselves in many cases lying down to die under the trees. But, once again, man's extremity was God's opportunity, and through His servants the Compassionate



The late Rev. H. Uffmann, Founder, and for 14 years Superintendent of the
Purulia Leper Asylum.

Christ came to the rescue of those who were homeless, helpless, and hopeless. An appeal was made to the Misson to Lepers, temporary relief was given, and soon a small Asylum was erected. In laying the first stone of the new buildings, the late Professor Plath (Secretary of Gossner's Misson) spoke as follows:—

“Let me explain how this has come about. Christian friends in Great Britain have a Society for a charitable purpose. They wish to found Asylums for the poor outcast lepers of India; they give and collect money for this work; they look for helping hands in this country, which will be stretched out to these unhappy people; and behold here are the German Missionaries. . . . From Great Britain comes the money, Berlin gives the men, and a native gentleman has given this piece of ground for the buildings. Now may God bless the laying of this foundation, and grant that it may be for the glory of His own Holy name and for the benefit of very many poor and unhappy lepers.”

Much of great interest in the early history of the Purulia Asylum must needs be omitted, but we may note that in his report for 1889 Mr. Uffmann tells of rapid increase in the number of inmates, and of as many as 52 baptisms, amongst the number being Shidam Banwar, of whom, under his Christian name of Christaram (“rest in Christ”), more will be heard in connection with the Asansol Asylum. This large number of baptisms serves to indicate a readiness to receive the message of the Gospel, which

is a constant encouragement to those who work *among* the lepers abroad, as well as to those who work *for* them at home. And this is not the result of any sort of pressure or any hope or gain or advantage. In this, as in all the Asylums of the Mission to Lepers, attendance at the daily services is quite voluntary, and no preference is shown to the Christians over the non-Christians in any respect. Their confession of faith is the spontaneous result of conviction brought home to even their beclouded intellects by systematic Christian teaching commended, as that teaching is, by the practical kindness which provides them with home and food. Cast out by their kindred, cursed by their religion—for the Hindu leper is taught to consider himself under the special judgment of his gods for the sins of a former incarnation—and with caste lost by the mere fact of their fatal disease, it would be surprising indeed if these suffering people did not receive a Gospel so peculiarly suited to their needs. Taught by their newly-found friends that their sins may be all freely forgiven, and that the doors of the Heavenly Home are as open to the spiritually-cleansed leper as to the converted Brahmin or the Christian Missionary, it is no cause for wonder that their broken and despairing hearts turn gladly to Him who has brought life and immortality to light, and a belief in whose love is made so much more easy by the manifested love of His servants to them.

In the early days of the work we have Mr. Uffmann writing:—"It is indeed interesting to go to

the Leper Asylum and to see how happy they are. If one day passes without their hearing the Word of God they begin to complain, saying 'Why did you not tell us the Word of God?' Their faces look so happy and cheerful—just as if they had been changed during their stay here." Again, a year later, he says:—"I have my happiest hours among them. Day and night they sing hymns of praise to God. Some time ago the Caretaker met the Headmaster of the Government School, who asked him what singing there was going on so late in the night. On being told it was the lepers he replied, 'What a wonderful song is that!'"

The stages by which prejudice is worn away are thus described:—"A number of our new-comers, when they see what there is going on in the Asylum, at first refuse to hear the Gospel and refuse to come to Church, because everyone has to decide for himself whether or not he will come to service. By-and-by they come nearer and sit outside; then they go a step further and come close to the door; next they sit at the door; then they take the last step and enter the Church, and begin to listen to the Gospel, and daybreak begins with them."

It will not be out of place here to record the opinions of impartial authorities as to the work carried on in what has grown to be the largest Asylum for Lepers in India, if not in the world.

Two of the Medical members of the National Leprosy Commission visited the Asylum and

expressed their satisfaction with what they saw in the following terms :—

“ We visited the Asylum on the 4th and 5th February, and examined personally every case there. We were much pleased with the excellent arrangements made for them. Their houses were very clean, they were well clothed and apparently well fed, and they appeared to lead happy and contented lives. The Rev. Mr. Uffmann, who exercises the most careful personal superintendence, may be congratulated on the entire success of the Asylum—one of the very best we have seen during a lengthened visit to such Asylums throughout India. The children of leprous parents, and relatives, are kept apart, and they appear to be extremely happy and comfortable.

“ (Signed)

“ A. BARCLAY, Surgeon Major,

“ A. A. KUNTHAK, F.R.C.S., Eng.

“ Members of the Leprosy
Commission.”

Since this testimony was given the Institution has been greatly enlarged, as well as improved, by the addition of new and permanent buildings, tanks, and other arrangements for the health and comfort of the inmates.

Finding that the building of the new Church for the Asylum was suspended for want of funds, His

Honour kindly gave one hundred rupees so that the work might go on again.

This introduction has proved so lengthy that the account of my personal experiences among the lepers of Purulia must begin with a new Chapter.

CHAPTER VIII

PURULIA LEPER VILLAGE—(CONTINUED)

THE institution which must ever be associated with the name of Rev. H. Uffmann, of whose devoted labours it is the monument, deserves to be described as a village rather than an Asylum. It is now a community of some 600 souls, and as the new and substantial buildings spread themselves at regular intervals over the well-wooded area which forms the centre of the extensive estate, we see rising up what promises to become the model leper community of India. As we drive down the mile and a half of road by which the Asylum is separated from the town of Purulia, the object which first arrests our attention is the new church, whose bright roof of red tiles stands out strikingly among the green of the surrounding trees. Turning to the right, we proceed along the well-made road which leads us past the Home for untainted children to the main property which lies conveniently back. On the left we pass a large tank, not quite finished. This is one of several on the grounds, which will be invaluable for the profitable cultivation of the fields attached to the village. It is interesting to note that these tanks are being dug, or deepened, by funds

contributed by a native ruler from a distant part of India who visited Purulia, and was much impressed by this great work of Christian philanthropy.

On both sides of the way as we advance are the brickmakers, busily preparing the material for the three or four houses now in process of erection. Here, as elsewhere in India, the visitor is struck by the fact that the women are the burden bearers, and it is really amazing with what ease (and even grace) young girls will walk with upright and steady gait, carrying large piles of bricks on their heads.

The main entrance to the Society's property is decorated by banners and by an inscription, offering a warm welcome to "Jon Jackson, Esq.," while elsewhere along the roads which intersect the village at regular intervals are flags and other attempts at ornamentation. The lepers themselves are drawn up in front of their houses, and welcomed their visitor with cheerful greetings. These simple souls delight to testify their gratitude to all who can be regarded as their friends, and their contented appearance, in spite of their hopeless and life-long affliction, is itself a testimony to the bodily and spiritual benefits bestowed on them.

When the well-devised building scheme is completed the whole place will reveal a symmetrical plan. Even now, though the old and temporary houses have not yet in all cases given place to the new and permanent ones, the general design is evident. The idea is that of separate houses, each divided by ample space from the next, the male quarters being well shut off from those for the females; while the child-lepers are

wisely and kindly housed in buildings apart from the adults. The tenements will be uniform in size and appearance, and each will contain twelve inmates, in three rooms accommodating four each; and when it is added that to provide room for only the present inmates, forty-three such buildings are required, and that this is exclusive of caretaker's, doctor's, and untainted children's accommodation, it will be clear that such an institution is entitled to be called a village.

The houses are of substantial appearance, airy, and roomy, as well as of a pleasing elevation. Each house has five archways in front, and behind these is the indispensable verandah from which the three rooms are entered. In a high and central situation stands the church, seeming to dominate the whole and embodying the very spirit that first created and still sustains this truly Christlike undertaking. The new church only recently opened, and still awaiting its pulpit, is a great delight both to Mr. Uffmann and his flock. It is lofty, airy, and well proportioned, as well as neat and pretty, without a single rupee having been spent in unnecessary ornament.

The building is 72 feet long and 33 feet wide, and will accommodate seven hundred people. I found the leper girls to the number of thirty or more seated on the floor of the church at their lessons. In these I beheld the foul disease of leprosy in its least repulsive form. The present immunity of most of them from disfigurement gave an added pathos to the thought of their ultimate fate. Many of the faces were really bright and happy, and beamed a welcome

to the visitor—though several were already sadly affected and prematurely aged, looking more like the faces of women of fifty than girls of ten or fifteen.

Here, by the gate which divides the male and female quarters, is a scene that is new to me. Seated at a table under a clump of the small *sal* trees, which are so plentiful on the estate, is the "Doctor Babu," otherwise the Hospital Assistant, who ministers to the medical needs of the community. The treatment is simple, and aims at alleviation rather than cure. Surrounded by a sad assemblage of sufferers, whose marred visages and maimed hands bear witness to the ravages of the disease, he administers the remedies most suited to relieve fever, rheumatism, dysentery, and other complaints, though those named appear to be most prevalent. With constitutions already enfeebled by disease, the lepers fall easy victims to supervening maladies. The dispensary had been destroyed by the rains of the previous monsoon, and this open-air arrangement was a temporary expedient. It was a great joy to Mr. Uffmann to find under his plate on Christmas morning, a cheque for £100, for the erection of a new dispensary. It was my privilege to give him this pleasant surprise on behalf of the members and friends of the Missionary Pence Association, who had contributed the amount.

On this same spot, I witnessed on the following day the weekly distribution to the lepers of their money allowance. Beside a large table covered with small piles of pice stood the caretaker, who has been Mr. Uffmann's assistant in the work of the Asylum

since its foundation. As he calls the names, the recipients step forward and another helper hands them the coins. Many, indeed most, receive them in the folds of their garments, but now and then an unmaimed hand is held out. The daily sum is, for females seven pice ($1\frac{3}{4}$ d.), and for males 8 pice (2d.). With this modest allowance they purchase the necessaries of life, together with such extras as are possible on so limited an income. But even out of this they enjoy occasionally the luxury of giving, as the following incident shows. A few months prior to my visit they had felt a great desire for two small prayer rooms, one each for the men and the women, into which they could withdraw at any time, singly or in companies, for prayer. They decided to provide these rooms out of their own scanty allowances, and before long had got together fifty-four rupees (£3 12s.). But at this point tidings reached them of the famine in Western India, and quite spontaneously they desired that the whole sum should be sent to feed the starving people in the famine districts. As they had set their hearts on the prayer rooms this was an act of genuine self-denial. As my visit was at Christmas it was a pleasure to promise the lepers (on my wife's behalf) fifteen rupees for a little extra luxury at the festive season. On my return to the Asylum next day, I was informed that the "Elders" of the community (who are of both sexes, and are elected by the general body) had a request to make of me. It was that I would allow them to devote the fifteen rupees to a new fund for their prayer rooms. "The sweetmeats" they said,

“will only give us pleasure for an hour, but our prayer rooms will be a blessing to us always.” It was a privilege to encourage such true self-denial by adding the remaining amount required for the rooms (as Treasurer to the Missionary Pence Association), and a still greater pleasure, when I re-visited Purulia two months later, to entreat the Divine blessing on the lepers in one of the neat little rooms that had been erected in the meantime. I must complete the record of this incident by adding that through the kindness of a visitor from Germany, Dr. Julius Richter, they enjoyed their Christmas treat as well as secured their prayer rooms.

Another gratifying evidence of spiritual life among the lepers may be fittingly noted here. In 1899 through excessive devotion to the interest of his afflicted flock, Mr. Uffmann lay dangerously ill for several weeks, being unconscious for more than a fortnight. During this critical period the anxiety of the lepers was intensely pathetic. Not only did they daily plead with God for the life of their “Father,” but came limping along every hour of the day to inquire as to his condition, and when he was sufficiently convalescent to shew himself to them through the window their joy knew no bounds. Nor was this all. On the very first morning that Mr. Uffmann was able to join his family at breakfast, the caretaker of the Asylum appeared with a letter from the lepers, expressing their joy and gratitude at his recovery. Accompanying the letter were three rolls of notes, amounting to 150 rupees (£10), which these grateful souls had out of their poverty contributed

towards enabling their beloved Missionary to secure the change of air and the rest he so much needed.

That they have thoughts of pity for their fellow-sufferers who are still uncared for was proved by the petition they presented when they learnt that applicants for admission had to be refused owing to temporary scarcity of funds. The following extracts breathe both gratitude for their own privileges and compassion for those who are still without :—

“ To the dear Pastor Sahib who has looked after us on this earth, we, the lepers of Purulia Asylum, 614 in all, in the name of our Saviour Jesus, send this request; please receive it and grant it, and help.

“ We, by the kindness of our Pastors, and by the blessing of God, have been cared for in this world, and received from all our teachers instruction concerning spiritual things. In this is love, because we have been taught of the joy of the world to come. If we had not been enlightened in this way, then alas, we had died without food, and without home, and foxes and dogs had preyed on our bodies. . . .

“ Moreover, for the children of some of our people in the Leper Mission wonderful arrangements have been made. Though we have given them birth, we could never have done so much for them. People are astonished when they see this; those who are ill are in one place—those again are divided, the girls in one house and the boys in another. Then those who are not ill are in a separate place, the boys and girls are also divided. For them, too, is a school for boys and girls. In both places are different masters, caretakers and a doctor, and from time to time the Sahib

goes to a school to teach them, so that they too are hearing of God's love and of the true Saviour.

"The parents of some of them who were here are now dead. We, too, one by one, will die. In all likelihood they will live longer and enjoy true religion, and in the future be witnesses for the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and for true religion in this dark country; they will also be able to do something for those who are well. This is our hope, and we pray that God the Father will, in His love, fulfil our hope for His honour and glory.

"In all these good arrangements, what are we now hearing? That no more sick people are to be received, and some have been turned away. Seeing and hearing this, we are very sorrowful, and make a request for these new sick people, that all who come to this Asylum may get a place here and learn about the Saviour Jesus, and with true hope after death receive with us some place in the Kingdom of the living God. We and they shall be sharers of everlasting joy. Therefore, will you give us permission to receive them, because they, seeing our good condition and that of our children, hopefully come here. If we do not receive them here, they go away, alas! and will wander about hopeless, and some will die on the roads. What will happen to the bodies and souls of such unfortunates? You who have been so thoughtful of us, and who have cared for us, think of this!

"We all send 'salaams.'"

The celebration of Christmas Day at the Leper Asylum afforded an illustration of the true spirit of the holy season such as was surely not surpassed

on earth. At 8.30 in the morning we all assembled in the Church for a Baptismal Service. The large building was filled with a congregation of nearly 600 souls. On one side were the male lepers with the untainted boys in front, and on the other the women, all seated in orderly rows on the floor. The building had been prettily decorated with evergreen shrubs, and small flags and ornaments, and was further brightened by the handsome table cover just received from a friend in Scotland. Near the chancel sat the visitors, faced on the opposite side by the native assistants.

After a hymn had been sung with great heartiness, and prayer had been offered, Mr. Uffmann read suitable passages of scripture, and then addressed the congregation in his free, earnest manner, which is impressive even to one unacquainted with the language. The frequent repetition of the words "Prabhu Yesu" (Lord Jesus) was sufficient of itself to show what his theme was. No preacher could have desired a more attentive or responsive audience. Frequently he surprises them with questions, which are answered with a readiness which proves that they are following him. Occasionally he steps from side to side to question the children, and reads a verse to enforce his point. Now he advances half way down the Church to interrogate some of the men more closely. It is a striking scene, and one that powerfully stirs both thought and sympathy. Though to a careless observer the spectacle of so much maimed humanity would have been only distasteful and repulsive, the sympathetic eye could see in it much of—

The beauty that endures on the spiritual height.

I would like to affirm here, once for all, that, though I visited and closely inspected so many Homes for these suffering people, I found the loathsome aspect of their condition so brightened by their evident contentment and cheerfulness as to leave on my mind an impression of hopefulness rather than sadness. This was intensified as one reflected on the contrast between the comforts, both spiritual and physical, of their life in Christian Asylums and the unmitigated misery of their wandering existence without.

Eagerly on this Christmas morning they drank in the marvellous story in which the very essence of poetry and pathos is mingled with tragedy more terrible even than that of their own lot. Who, like these, can enter into the story of Him for whom at His birth no room was found in the inn; who in His manhood had not where to lay His head, and who, "despised and rejected of men," was hounded to his death with cries of hatred and rage? No wonder they listen, these outcasts, many of whom have been stoned away from the haunts of men. For them the Christmas message, with its good tidings of great joy, means everything they can know of hope and blessing for time or eternity.

Nor is it only on special occasions that the lepers listen eagerly to the words of life. It is their normal attitude. Mr. Uffmann told me that his sermons were always 15 minutes longer to the lepers than to other congregations, and this by their own wish. At the many services at which those desiring baptism were instructed they used to watch the

clock jealously and say, "Please go on; it is not time to stop yet."

The actual ceremony of baptism was gone through with a degree of decorum and reverence that could not have been exceeded in any congregation. After their Pastor had impressed on them the nature and meaning of the rite, all the new converts rose and repeated the confession of faith. As the baptismal name of each was called, the candidate stepped forward and was baptized in the Tri-une Name. Many could only advance to the font with great difficulty, and a few could only do so with the assistance which was kindly and readily rendered by others. One by one the pathetic procession continued, the names, which were in every case Biblical, sounding like a roll-call of Prophets, Apostles, Saints, and Martyrs. When the service ended no fewer than 77 men and women—outcasts from their own kindred and faith—had thus, outwardly at least, "put on Christ." One could not witness such a scene unmoved and could only pray that on this Christmas morning the Holy Child might indeed be born in their hearts. This large addition brought up the number of baptized persons in the Institution to 577.



Missionaries and Lepers Purulia Asylum (the Church in the background.) The Missionaries are as follows from left to right: Rev. Mr. Beckmann, Rev. H. Uffmann, Miss Uffmann, Mrs. Beckmann (Mr. Uffmann's daughter), and Mrs. Uffmann.

CHAPTER IX

PURULIA LEPER VILLAGE—(CONTINUED)

IN the afternoon of Christmas day it was a privilege to unite with a large company of "cleansed lepers" in the observance of the Holy Communion. After a service in which three of us took part, about 160 remained to the memorial feast. Having ourselves partaken first (from a separate chalice) it was a truly touching sight to witness these halt and maimed worshippers limp forward and reverently kneel—the attitude revealing the ravages of the disease in feet now reduced to stumps. Many of the hands held up to receive the bread were fingerless, and many of the faces marred and mis-shapen. Some were so helpless that they had to be led forward by others and supported in a kneeling attitude. I observed two men side by side, one with a terrible face, but with feet and hands unaffected, the other with a face untouched, but with only clubs of hands and, not only the toes, but half the feet quite gone. Amongst the communicants was an entirely blind woman, who was gently led forward by two of her companions.

It gave an added interest to this pathetic service to know something of the life-stories of several of these

who are so truly trophies of redeeming love. Here for instance is Sara, an old Christian of many years standing and of consistent character. The calm, peaceful look on her face prepares one to hear that she exercises a most helpful influence over the others. She is one of the leading "Elders" among the women, and manages usually to contribute to the Church Fund a *rupee* (1s. 4d.) monthly, in addition to the usual collection. And Sara's income is about 5s. 4d. a month!

Near her is Dayamony, who is smiling and happy though unable to walk. She usually moves about in a little cart in which she is willingly wheeled from place to place by the younger and stronger of the women.

Her sad history will be most fittingly given in her own words taken from a letter written to the lady who provides the £5 a year for her support, and whom she addresses as follows:—

(Translation.)

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"A long time has passed away since my last letter, but I hope you will kindly excuse me for that. Thanks be to the Lord that He has kept me alive so long. A large number of those who came here before me, and of those who came after me, have died; but God very kindly has spared my life

"At present, we number 537, including untainted children. We have all received from the Lord great favour. I therefore say again, blessed be the Lord

that He has sent us this disease, and that He has opened the hearts of the dear European friends to provide bodily and spiritually for us, especially the latter—the Bread of Life.

“When I left home and family before I came here, I lay four days and nights under a tree, but I am happy to say God saved my life from the mouths of wild beasts; but people came and drove me away, so that I had no rest even there. My husband gave me some money, saying, ‘Now go away from here to the place of pilgrimage, and remain there.’

“Often I think of the time when I was persecuted by everyone (even my husband did not protect me), and when I used to hear the cry, ‘Be off! Be off!’ and then it seemed as if my heart must break. Then I remember my new mother in England, who loves me so much that I am compelled to say ‘Blessed be the Lord who gave me such a dear mother,’ instead of all my persecutors, and who, instead of a place under the tree where wild beasts could every moment do away with me, gave me such fine accommodation in a good house among people who love me and who, instead of a wandering life and hopeless death, has given me a new life, full of hope, close to Christ our Saviour.

“I went once to see my child, but could not do so, because my husband and his relatives got very angry with me, and said, ‘Do not come back again; if you do, we will get the sweeper* to give you a good

* The sweeper is the scavenger of the village, and is invariably of the very lowest caste. He does work that no one else will. To be touched by him is defilement. The touch of

thrashing, and will kill you, and have your remains thrown away by the pariahs.' My relatives are so cruel to me that they do not allow me to see even my child, which is very hard, but my heavenly relatives will not drive me away. *How they love me!*

"I do not now think much on my former condition, but on my husband, my child, and those belonging to my family, who are as yet heathen—that breaks my heart. For myself, I begin to understand that the Christian religion is the only true one, and does not deceive anyone, and gives us full hope of a happy life after death, and teaches the true way to God. Many of our relatives come to the Asylum to see us and do not persecute us now, and many of them have become Christians. I hope the rest will come also.

"Please pray for me that I may go to heaven and see you there, too. Pray also for the heathen that they may get open eyes to seek salvation.

"With much love and many salutations,

"DAYAMONY."

When Dayamony was informed that I had often told her story in England, I noticed her poor fingerless hand trying to brush away the tear on her cheek.

Here, too, was Christina looking happy and contented. She, also, shall tell her own story:—

"My Christian name is Christina. We were comfortably off, and I got on very well in my husband's the pariah also defiles. The idea of the sentence is that Dayamony, as a leper, was so unclean that they could not touch her themselves, but would get the sweeper and the pariah to kill her and bury her.

house, especially as I bore him a child the first year. I was then eighteen years old. Unfortunately, soon after my baby's birth the first signs of leprosy—that dreadful disease—showed themselves, and as soon as it became known, I was banished from my husband's house as well as from the village. I turned in my need to the Brahmins whom I noticed round about the temple. There I fasted, sacrificed, and prayed to Siva as well as to Sonne, but the disease did not abate. I dared no longer have any communication with those belonging to me. Outside the village they erected a hut for me, and I spent the whole day there alone. Not once did I dare talk to my child. That was the hardest for me. I resolved, therefore, to sacrifice no longer, and went to the six Temples of the Idols. Here I fasted for sixteen days, and bathed in the holy stream adjoining the temple—the sacred Seen. I crept with wet clothes past the temple house. I served the idols for three months, but I did not become clean, only more and more hopeless. In my grief I went to the holy Ganges to bathe there, and at the same time to die, as it had been told me whoever dies in the Ganges will gain a holy place in heaven; but I did not find death there. Joylessly I turned back to my village. Here I did not cease to suffer, most of all from my husband, which, alas, I did not escape. I fled from my village, and went round begging in order to save myself from starvation. In my wanderings from village to village I came to Purulia. Here, in the Bazar, I met a little Christian child, who said to me, 'Why do you beg

here? Go away to the Asylum; there you will fare well, and will not need to beg—*Jesus lives there.* I went in, and have lived here for five years. Oh, how much pain I suffered up to then, and how much time and money I spent at the Temple of the Idols without knowing, as I do to-day, that they could not have helped me. Here my body was cared for; I received medicine, so that my sores no longer pained me. Before all, I have the dear God's words, and have learned to know and love the Lord Jesus. Praise be to God, who sent me this disease; now I rejoice at the thought of going to Him and looking on Him. Praised be God in all eternity.

“CHRISTINA.”

The history of Ruben, a young male inmate, must be the last of these specimens of leper autobiographies:—

“My name is Ruben. I was born in the village of Chakra. I have been a leper from my eighth year. When I took the disease everyone drew away from me, and no one would have anything to do with me. My brothers and sisters would not allow my clothes to be washed with theirs, and the barber would not cut my hair.

“I was despised and mocked by everyone, and had much sorrow and heart's distress. I left my own village and journeyed towards a far-distant place, where I fasted and did penance for my sins. But all this did me no good, nor did it in any way help to cure my disease. Despairing, and with a sad heart, I returned home, and helplessly I used often to ask

myself, 'What are you to do now, and what is to become of you?'

"There I received the news that there was a Home for such poor outcasts at Purulia, and with great difficulty I arrived here.

"Now I have long ago forgotten all my trials, and am happy to be allowed to stay here. Here I have learned to know the Lord, and daily hear His Word.

"RUBEN."

Following the Communion Service was a function of great interest to the boys and girls from the Children's Homes, as well as to the adults. This was nothing less than the distribution of sweets, toys, scrap-books, garments, &c., of which a generous supply had been sent by sympathizing friends in Britain. The delight of the little people as they went away laden with these unwonted luxuries was touching to witness, and great was the chatter and excitement as they compared their gifts with each other. If the donors could have seen their bright faces they would have desired no other reward.

On the day following came another interesting item of the Lepers' Christmas programme. This consisted of a pic-nic for the visitors. On arrival at the entrance to the Asylum we were welcomed by three or four hundred of the inmates dressed in their brightest and best clothes. For music they were provided with the large gong (which serves as a bell for the church), tom-toms, cymbals, and mysterious stringed instruments. Singing some of their native lyrics, they escorted us slowly, very slowly, round

the grounds to a small summer-house, which they had decorated gaily for the occasion. Here tea was laid for the guests, and was followed by more singing. A parcel of toys, dolls, &c., having appropriately arrived that day from the Helpers' Guild in England, the contents were distributed among the eager children. Many of the lepers seemed almost merry, and it was a great pleasure to rejoice with them and to see them in their own pretty grounds so secure and well cared for, as well as so grateful and happy.

The next day found us again at the Asylum, this time for the lepers' feast and for my farewell visit. Seated in rows, they were served with liberal quantities of a favourite luxury resembling American pop-corn, followed by abundance of sweetmeats. The untainted children, who sat apart, received their portions first. After the lepers had been supplied the elders and the musicians had their share. Music and singing was kept up most of the time, and it was altogether a characteristic Christmas gathering. Feasting being over I was called upon for a farewell address, which was interpreted by Mr. Uffmann. They responded with warm thanks and innumerable salaams to their kind friends in England. For myself they had prepared a presentation consisting of a sword stick, a formidable tiger-axe (engraved with my initials), a pipe, and a musical instrument!

Finally, the women sang a farewell hymn, led by Shusilla, whose really beautiful face had often attracted my attention. Shusilla has been a leper from an early age, but her face is still happily spared, and would be noticeable in any company

for its earnest, intelligent, and refined expression. This poor girl, now about twenty, bears her terrible fate in a cheerful spirit, and is especially useful among the leper girls, whose happiness she tries to promote in every way in her power.

So ended my Christmas among the lepers, and on the following morning I parted with sincere regret from the kind friends who had admitted me to all the enjoyments of their own family gatherings, and had shown me, moreover, a beautiful fulfilment of the Christmas prediction of "Peace on earth, goodwill to men."

* * *

Between the writing of these chapters and their passing into the printer's hands, the faithful friend of the lepers whose labours they record was summoned to higher service. Mr. Uffmann fell asleep in Christ, on August 11th, at Bielefeld, Germany, at the age of seventy years. It is fitting, therefore, that the foregoing account of his work should be supplemented by some particulars of his life.

It was at Theenhausen, Ravensburg, Germany, on the 15th of February, 1831, that the boy was born who was to befriend the outcasts of Purulia. His brothers and sisters numbered ten, of whom one was his twin brother. The parents were of a worthy stock, and the mother was, in particular, a godly woman. It was from her that the subject of our sketch learnt of the love of Christ, while his twin-brother grew up to be a noted man of prayer and was finally found dead on his knees. When about twenty years of age Henry had his first call to become a Mis-

sionary to the heathen, but his father's consent could not then be gained. The young man was prospering in the occupation of reclaiming rough mountain land and converting it into fruitful pastures, in which he employed at times upwards of one hundred men. This may be noted as symbolic of his life's work, which was to "make the rough places plain" for the lepers of Purulia, and to cause the moral desert of their hopeless lives to "blossom as the rose."

It was not till October, 1865, that Mr. Uffmann sailed for India, the voyage occupying four months. He went as a Missionary of the Society founded by John Evangelist Gossner, of Berlin, and known as Gossner's Evangelical Lutheran Mission. The first agents of this Society had landed at Calcutta in 1844, and had been led to an especially hard and unpromising field of labour among the Kols, a people inhabiting part of the province of Bengal, and sunk in misery and degradation. A few years after Mr. Uffmann joined the other workers there a crisis arose in connection with the Society, and a considerable section of its members joined the ranks of the English Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. Mr. Uffmann, however, remained steadfast to Gossner's Mission, and for a period of thirty-five years was permitted to labour under its auspices, being stationed for the whole time, with the exception of the first year, at Purulia. For nearly thirty years he was the Missionary in charge of the Purulia station. Mr. Uffmann was married in 1871, and found in Mrs. Uffmann a sympathetic and faithful help-meet. She left, together with four sons and two daughters, to

mourn his loss. Their eldest surviving daughter is Mrs. Beckmann, whose husband was Mr. Uffmann's colleague in the work of Gossner's Mission at Purulia. One of their sons is Dr. Karl Uffmann, who is, at the time of writing, in temporary charge of the work of the Purulia Leper Asylum.

During the thirty-five years of Mr. Uffmann's service at Purulia, he only visited Europe for furlough on two occasions, and then for very short periods, not amounting to more than two years in all. On the occasion of my visit at Christmas, 1900, it became very clear to me that an early furlough was imperative in the interests of his health, and of the work he had been instrumental in establishing and maintaining. It was accordingly arranged, and he and Mrs. Uffmann left for Europe at the end of March. It was hoped they would have had the privilege of attending the Keswick Convention, a prospect which filled Mr. Uffmann with delight. But God had reserved a better thing for His servant, and he passed peacefully away through failure of the heart, and was laid to rest among the mountains of his beloved Fatherland. The serious illness to which reference has been made probably undermined his naturally vigorous constitution, and his health for the past two years showed signs of failing. But he fulfilled the allotted span of three score years and ten, and half of it in earnest labour in the trying climate of Purulia. Those who have read the record of part of his life's work as contained in the preceding chapters, will need no words of eulogy as to the character of the worker. I count it a privilege to have passed a few days with this

man of God and the afflicted people among whom he ministered so lovingly. His manner towards the lepers was singularly attractive and sympathetic, and their affection for him was reverential. To them he embodied the compassion of Christ, and their grief at learning they would behold his face no more on earth was deep and touching. Of late years he may be said to have lived for his lepers, and I cannot forget how, day by day, after he had paid two long visits to the Asylum in the morning, his voice could be heard in the afternoon pleading in private with God for those stricken ones who loved to call him "Father." It is surely no flight of fancy to look forward in faith to the day when every man's work shall be made manifest, and to behold this faithful pastor leading forward hundreds of once loathsome lepers, now spiritually cleansed and eternally healed, and saying with adoring gratitude, "Behold, I and the children whom God hath given me."

One thing stands out especially in the life and work of Mr. and Mrs. Uffmann as connecting them with the lepers, and that was the fact that one of their own daughters fell a victim to this dreaded disease. Maria was a little girl of eight years of age when she was brought by her parents to Germany in 1880. Shortly before leaving India suspicious spots showed themselves on her body, but the mother's anxiety was allayed by the assurance of the doctors of Purulia that it was only a form of skin disease about which no alarm need be felt. They prophesied that a change to Europe would work a

cure. On the return of her parents to India Maria was left with her sister Anna at school at Kaiserwerth, where she remained some two years or more. So far from the supposed skin disease disappearing, it grew steadily worse, until the little invalid had to be removed to the Elizabeth Hospital, in Berlin. Here it was soon placed beyond doubt that her malady was leprosy. All that the best medical skill could do was powerless to arrest the progress of the cruel and relentless disease. Operations were performed, both on the fingers and the face, but in vain. Most pathetic were her requests to the surgeons to cut where they pleased, but to spare her fingers, as her greatest delight was in writing and knitting, and in many ways assisting other inmates of the children's ward, who were quite helpless. Maria was a sweet, unselfish child and never so happy as when sharing her presents among her companions, many of whom used to call her their little mother. Indeed, it was through her devotion to others who were suffering that she finally contracted German measles, and passed away after a few days—a happy release from what must have been a life of ever-increasing suffering and helplessness. By her cheerful resignation and unselfish kindness she endeared herself to the other children and nurses alike. Even during her hours of unconsciousness she was heard murmuring, "My Saviour, my Saviour"; and so, at the age of thirteen she fell asleep in Jesus, the cross which marks her grave bearing the words, "Behold, I make all things new."

There is some uncertainty as to how Maria

contracted the disease, but two possible ways are suggested by Mrs. Uffmann. Owing to the residence at Purulia of a native physician of great repute, a little girl of about Maria's age was received into the mission house while undergoing treatment for what was afterwards suspected to have been leprosy. The children were playmates and constantly together. Another probable source of contagion was a native catechist, with whom the little girl was frequently in contact, and who subsequently developed leprosy. Whether through either of these, or some other cause, poor Maria became a leper cannot be known, but the fact remains that a few months before entering on his work for the lepers of Purulia Mr. Uffmann's own much-loved daughter died a leper in Berlin. And who shall say how much of the unfailing sympathy the father was henceforth to show to these sad and suffering people was due to the tender memory of the beloved little daughter who had passed by the same painful path to the heavenly Fatherland?

CHAPTER X

IN LIGHTER VEIN

THIS short chapter is so distinctly different from the rest of this volume that to some readers an apology for its introduction may seem necessary. But even in these cases a moment's reflection will, I hope, suffice to show that it is not really out of place. However, should any be still otherwise minded, I trust they will not allow it to lessen their interest in the serious subject which is so prominent in these pages. Let me say at once that this may fairly be described as an "untainted" chapter. Its object is to share with the reader the enjoyment I myself have derived from the unconscious humour of two or three specimens of what is known as "Babu-English." This wonderful product of the Oriental mind may be called the half-caste child of the marriage of English education with Eastern imagination. As is usual with the offspring of such unnatural unions, it is not held in high respect by one, at least, of its parents. But it contributes its share towards counteracting the effect of the climate and the surroundings generally on the spirits of the Englishman in India. I recall with pleasure an evening on the verandah of a mission bungalow

in a large Indian city. Dinner was over and coffee was served, and to a group of four missionaries I read the address to the "departing" Head Master, which is here reproduced as an illustration of "English as she is spoke" in some of the high schools of our great dependency. The genuine, unbridled bursts of English laughter with which it was received must have startled the mild Hindu as he passed along the neighbouring street. They proved that these good men, at any rate, were not destitute of what a great preacher is said to have called the "saving grace of humour."

This polyglot expression of the gratitude of the students who had "been fortunately recipients" of "the golden instructions and chastening rod" may surely be regarded as the "fine flower" of Babu-English, unless, indeed, it has passed the flower stage and already run to seed (*see illustration*).

DIEU VOUS GARDE. VIVE VALE,
VOX POPULI VOX DEI.

"Thou wert our guide, philosopher and friend."

POPE.

To BABU BECHARAM NANDI, B.A.,
Departing Head Master of the Purulia Zilla School.

WE, the obedient and grateful students of the Purulia Zilla School most respectfully beg on our knees to approach you in order to offer you our warm and sincere tribute of gratefulness from the very core of our heart for the golden instructions and chastening rod of which we have been fortunately recipients for so many years and to express our sense of deep attachment which neither time nor distance can eradicate

"Ceaseless it flows and will for ever flow.

Esto perpetua.

Dieu vous garde. Vive Vale.



Vox Populi Vox Dei.

"Thou wert our guide, philosopher and friend."

Pope.

To

Babu Becharam Nandi, B.A.,

Departing Head Master of the Purulia Zilla School.

We, the obedient and grateful students of the Purulia Zilla School most respectfully beg on our knees to approach you in order to offer you our warm and sincere tribute of gratefulness from the very core of our heart for the golden instructions and chastening rod of which we have been fortunately recipients for so many years and to express our sense of deep attachment which neither time nor distance can eradicate

"Ceaseless it flows and will for ever flow.

Esto perpetua.

All of us without a single exception saw in you an affectionate preceptor a guardian angel, pater patricæ and l' homme necessaire.

Heavy as our heart is for this irreparable loss scarcely could we pronounce the word "Farewell" to you. *Secundo Omine.*

Let us then O brothers in one chorus waft his name above night and morn on the wings of prayer,

May every happy omen wait

To guide you through this long distance yet.

and sing à brâs ouvert in loud acclamation Pax Vobiscum. Amen.

May your shadow never be less.

PURULIA,
December.....1900.

STUDENTS OF THE PURULIA ZILLA
School.

Facsimile of the Address of the Students of the Purulia Zilla School to their Head Master.

All of us without a single exception saw in you an affectionate preceptor a guardian angel, pater patriæ and l'homme necessaire.

Heavy as our heart is for this irreparable loss scarcely could we pronounce the word "FAREWELL" to you. Secundo Omine.

Let us then O brothers in one chorus waft his name above night and morn on the wings of prayer,

May every happy omen wait

To guide you through this long distance yet.

and sing á brás ouvert in loud acclamation Pax Vobiscum. Amen.

May your shadow never be less.

PURULIA, } STUDENTS OF THE PURULIA ZILLA
December1900. } School.

A copy of this document was handed to Dr. Karl Uffmann as he and I were strolling out in Purulia one evening in December by a well-dressed native, who, from his appearance might have been the gifted B.A. himself. The copy in my possession is appropriately printed in gold, on white paper, with a very handsome border, and surmounted by the royal arms of Great Britain. The spelling and punctuation of the original are retained.

By means of the following, extracted from a letter addressed to my friend Mr. W. C. Bailey, an imaginative mind can see the suppliant pleading for help to enable his children to "make their ends meet." It is a petition from the caretaker of a Leper Asylum :—

"His servant most humbly and respectfully begs leave to approach the H'ble W. C. Bailey Esqr. the giver of permanent happiness to the most helpless,

most hated and rejected even by their family members, and also his servant's beloved protector in our Lord.

“ His servant humbly begs to state that he has been working with his utmost and the help of Almighty God in the Leper Asylum Mission even since before the Leper Asylum was established. He has been glad to accept with thankful heart his salaries, beginning from Rupees 5 to Rupees 12 at present and to state with this amount he has been able through the help of providence to make his both ends meet, though saddled with a family of ten members.

“ At present in his humble and limited knowledge of the wordly affairs and from the circumstances of the time his servant is of opinion that some good education of children is pressing hard upon the humanity. But he begs leave to admit that he has been almost altogether unable to meet this emergency. His servant's children get almost no education at all. At present he has his three children taught in the Mission school. But the education here is not in his humble opinion, sufficient to make his servant rest assured that he has given his children a good education and that his children can respectfully make their ends meet when the wordly burden falls upon them.

“ By force of circumstances being driven between these horns of dilemma, his servant humbly begs to approach the footsteps of his H'ble W. C. Baily Esqr. and prays that his Lordship will be pleased to help out his servant with his usual merciful eyes and loving heart, May Jesus be glorified, by enabling

him to give even one of his children a good education. His servant would deem it the greatest boon he could ever have if his Lordship would be glad to arrange with some Institutions on his behalf.

“Lately his Servant has informed the H’ble John Jackson Esqr. also of his prayer, but has not yet been favoured with any reply

“And his servant begs leave
to remain
his most humble servant.

* * *

“Leper Asylum Mission.”

The letter in which the foregoing petition was brought before my “Honourable” self is not without its touches of humour also, and forms a fit addendum to the preceding one.

“To

“The longtime benevolent of the Leper Asylum.

“Dear Sir,

“I am a factor under your kind-heart of the Leper Asylum. Thirteen years past I am working with great labour monthly paying twelve rupees only, and I supply my families’ life with a great difficulty from this payment. I have seven children by the mercy of God, whom I have no power to teach studies. Three of them have taught in our mission school. So I wished to teach two of them in other school but I can’t give the monthly school fees of six rupees from my insufficient payment. Therefore I humbly beg you kind-heart will kindly support with a good

arrangement in any school of your mercy, then it would be a great help to this poor man and also a great benefit of my sons in the future about their corporeal.

“Your most obedt. servant,

* * *

“Leper Asylum.”

The abrupt break off after the striking word “*corporeal*” suggests that the overtaxed *mental* resources of the writer had suddenly given out. I may add that both these epistles were penned in a very legible, clerkly hand, probably by a scribe employed for the occasion, but also quite possibly by one of the seven, who it is to be sincerely hoped, will be “respectfully able to make their ends meet when the wordly burden falls upon them.”

CHAPTER XI

ASANSOL (BENGAL)

WITH Mr. Wellesley Bailey's volume, "The Lepers of Our Indian Empire," as my guide, I found no difficulty in recognizing the Asylum for Lepers as the train ran into Asansol from Purulia. Probably many travellers note, with a passing wonder, the two inscriptions which stand out distinctly from the two parts of the Institution, viz., "Christaram Asylum for Homeless Lepers," and "Mrs. Marshall's Home for Lepers' Boys."

Each of these has an origin of sufficient interest to be recorded here. The story of Christaram begins with the entry in the register of the Purulia Asylum of the name of Shidam Banwar, on February 22nd, 1888. He was the first leper admitted there, and was forty-nine years of age. In due time he desired baptism, and was admitted to the Church on May 5th, 1899, under the new name of Christaram, which means "Rest in Christ." Before his death, on April 24th, 1890 (less than a year), he gave clear proof that he had received a new nature as well as a new name. Not only was his personal conduct irreproachable, but his really holy life had great influence with the other inmates. On his

deathbed he called them all around him, and begged their forgiveness if he had ever grieved them by an unkind word, and besought them all to trust in Christ, and to live together in peace and concord.

Christaram made extraordinary progress in the knowledge of Christian truth during the very short time he was under instruction, and embodied what he believed in a hymn of his own composition. This was discovered after his death, among the handful of effects he left behind him. Two verses, out of the ten, may be quoted, to show the tenor of the whole :—

“ Victory ! Victory ! the Lord has overcome !
 Victory over death ! He is ascended to Heaven.
 O, my soul, do not despise the love of Jesus.

“ The Lord has given His life for sinners,
 What a bottomless grace is that.
 O, my soul, do not despise the love of Jesus.”

About the time of Christaram's death, Rev. W. P. Byers, of the Methodist Episcopal Mission, was applying to the Mission to Lepers for funds to erect an asylum at Asansol. About this time, too, Christaram's touching story came under the notice of a benevolent lady, who was so deeply moved by it that she resolved to establish an asylum which should bear his name, so that of poor Christaram, the leper, it might be said that he “ being dead, yet speaketh.” So it came to pass that the Christaram Leper Asylum at Asansol was erected through the generosity of

GEORGIANA, COUNTESS OF SEAFIELD,
In memory of
Her beloved Husband,
James, ninth Earl of Seafield,
Who died at Onslow Gardens,
In June, 1888.

Thus, passing over all distinctions of class, caste, and race, the Institution links the names and memories of the Scottish nobleman and the Indian leper as "one in Christ Jesus."

Entirely different, though scarcely less interesting, is the history of the Home which I found filled with a band of bright, healthy boys, all of whose parents were lepers. With patient labour, and many prayers, a bedridden invalid in Canada, Mrs. Marshall, wrought a marvellous "missionary quilt," of good material and artistic design, and embroidered with missionary texts and missionary facts. This piece of handiwork was so admired that it sold for no less a sum than £80. This amount sufficed for the erection of the Home for untainted boys, which stands side by side with the Christaram Asylum for lepers.

On arrival I was warmly welcomed by Mr. and Mrs. Byers, who give their service and sympathy without stint to the heathen, the orphans, and the lepers. After rest and refreshment Mr. Byers and I drove over to visit the Asylum. The lepers were expecting us, and were ranged on each side of the path to welcome us. Their new garments are usually distributed at Christmas, but as it only wanted three days to the 25th they had been already given out so

that they might receive me dressed in their best. They quickly assembled in their pretty little church, where, on their behalf, Mr. Byers read an address of welcome to their visitor, and of gratitude to all their friends in Britain. After a suitable reply from me, and some singing by the lepers, we went all over the very compact, complete little Asylum. Now that the trees and shrubs planted by Mr. Byers ten years ago, when first he acquired the piece of bare and barren ground, have grown to a good size, the place has a really pretty, pleasing appearance.

I took a number of photos, including one of a man who was decidedly the most painful case to look at that I had so far seen. Both eyes were entirely gone, leaving only empty sockets, and the nose had so sunk in, that the face was flat. The mouth was misshapen, and altogether this was the most terrible face I had yet seen. An old woman also struck me as a sad case. Her teeth were gone and her gums swollen and perfectly black, giving her face a most ghastly look. As a contrast to those, I may note two in whose cases the malady makes no apparent progress. Sricharam (a man of middle age) has been an inmate for eight years, during which the disease has remained stationary, as to external development. He has a son in the Asylum, a much worse case than himself. Sricharam is a true Christian and a most useful man, who wields a good influence in all respects. Not only does he seek to help his fellow sufferers heavenward, but he is both clever and industrious. He makes all the charpois (or cots) for the others, and attends the bazar and sees that proper measure of food is given

by the dealers. The message he sends to his supporter is quite in keeping with all I hear of him. "I used to be a bad man, but by God's grace I have been changed, and wish to be a good, useful man."

The other case is that of a young and really nice looking woman, who bears no outward trace of the disease as I observe her in church between two elder women. She has for some years had places on her body in which she has no sensation, but does not seemingly grow worse, and one could not repress a feeling of deep pity at seeing her condemned to linger out her life, year after year, surrounded by those in whom the outward man is so visibly perishing. It is worthy of consideration whether, in the larger Asylums (as Purulia, for instance), separate wards could not be arranged for such cases. Their time and labour might possibly be utilized to some extent for the benefit of themselves and other inmates. Such cases as these at Asansol could be drafted off to an Asylum where such a ward existed.

Next morning (Sunday) we visited the lepers again, and held a service at 8 a.m. I had the privilege of giving them a Christmas address from "Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy . . . for unto YOU is born a Saviour." It was inspiring to see the intent look on the upturned faces, and to be able to assure them that He who stooped from His high estate to the manger, the wayside well, the garden of agony, and the cross of shame, is alive again for evermore, and as ready to receive and to cleanse the leper and the outcast as the healthiest and wealthiest.

At the close came "the collection," I had noted

that many of the lepers had with them small vessels, and I now found that these contained their offerings in the form of portions of rice, which, often limping up the church with difficulty, they poured into a basket. The rice is turned into money by being re-sold to them—and so they cast in the lepers' mites into the treasury. The service lacked none of the pathetic interest that (to me at least) is inseparable from such a scene. The pretty little church, with clean matting on the floor, and walls spotless with whitewash, was brightened with coloured pictures of the life of Christ, and the bright sun and the fresh air were both admitted freely through the doors opening in every direction. The men were ranged in orderly rows, on our right, and the women on our left, all nicely clad in clean white saris and chuddars. The boys formed a row across the church close to the platform, well in front, and apart from the lepers, and on the little raised platform sat Mr. Byers, the catechist, and myself. To join in their hearty singing of "Happy day, happy day," and to know that almost all of them had confessed their faith in Christ by baptism, and were members of His one universal Church, could not fail to move one to thankfulness, and to a stronger faith in the power of Christ to "save to the uttermost."

Although the event took place a few months before my visit, I include the following reference (from a letter of Mr. Byers) to the marriage of two of the untainted children.

"We had a wedding at the Leper Asylum Church last week, when Kartik (or Panto Charan) was

married to Giri—both untainted children of lepers. Kartik gets ten rupees a month now, as fireman on the railway, and Giri will make him an excellent little wife. My wife didn't wish to part with Giri, she is such a nice girl and has such a good disposition

“The lepers were delighted to have a wedding in their Church, and the fathers were pleased that they and the others could attend and be present to see a Christian wedding. They had never seen one before. It was all very nice, and we are pleased to have our children settle down near us.”

This account of my visit to Asansol may fitly close with an extract from the address with which the lepers welcomed me.

“We, the lepers of this Asylum, welcome you most heartily to Asansol, and to our Home, grateful and glad of the opportunity of seeing another of those so lovingly interested in us.

“We thank you for your love and kindness, and for the place we poor outcasts have found in the hearts of those who live so far away—those who pray for us, and give for us with such generosity that we are so comfortably provided with all we need. We are thankful, above everything else, for the hope set before us in the Gospel.

“Yours gratefully,

“The Lepers of Christaram Asylum,

“Asansol, India.”

CHAPTER XII

RANIGANJ AND BHAGALPUR

THE journey from Asansol to Raniganj reminded me more of England than any scenery through which I had yet passed. This district is the chief coal-field of India, and the smoking chimney stacks and banks of black refuse were suggestive of many parts of the North of England. The weather, too, was homelike, being cool and showery ; indeed, it was raining most refreshingly when we arrived at Raniganj.

The first grant for temporary relief for the outcast lepers of Raniganj was made in 1890, but it was not till 1893 that the Asylum could be opened. Much difficulty was experienced in securing a site, owing to the not unnatural objection of the community to the planting of a leper settlement in close proximity to the town.

Finally, the earnest efforts of Rev. F. W. Ambery Smith were rewarded by the gift of a suitable site by the Bengal Coal Company. At first the lepers were reluctant to enter the Asylum, being very distrustful of the intentions of the missionary. But, as usual, their fears soon vanished, and by the end of five years seventy-five lepers were being comfortably housed and cared for. On the occasion of my

visit the numbers were fifty-four men, thirty-three women, and three children—ninety in all.

As shewing the need for such institutions, and, incidentally, the indifference of the communities on whom they confer such benefits, I quote from Mr. Wellesley C. Bailey's account of his visit to this district in 1896: "Having heard of several leper shopkeepers in Raniganj bazar, Mr. Smith and I went out in the evening to investigate. We found a sweetmeat shop kept by three lepers, two of whom were present. Close by, an oil shop was kept by another. A third we found selling pan (eaten as a digestive after meals). All these were bad cases and ulcerated." Before leaving Asansol (on the same occasion), Mr. Bailey says: "Mr. Byers and I went out together one evening to look up some special cases of lepers of whom we had heard, and in an hour, and within a radius of a mile from Mr. Byers, house, we found as follows: First, a leper woman with a cow; she is said to have been selling milk for some time. Next, in the small village of Budha, a banya (dealer), selling grain, spices, &c. He stated that he had had the disease for twenty years. His name is Rama Shadu. We then went to the shop of Lachman Marwari, cloth seller, who goes from house to house selling cloth, and found him a very decided leper. He acknowledged it himself. Lastly, we went to the stall of a vegetable seller. The owner of this stall is a leper, and a bad case, too. His wife told me he was too bad just now to attend to the shop as he had holes in his feet."

The reader is referred to the next chapter for a

short account of the present position of Indian Governments in relation to the leper question, and of the powers the existing law gives them for dealing with the dangerous and discreditable state of things just described.

The work of the Raniganj Asylum is kindly supervised for the Mission to Lepers by Rev. H. J. Bleby, of the Wesleyan Missionary Society.

After tiffin he drove me over to the Asylum, which is situated on a nice open site, two miles from the town, and near the river. I was fortunate in visiting the lepers on the day of their Christmas feast, the cost of which was kindly contributed by the proprietor of the large paper mills near by. This gentleman was present during the meal, and the short service in the Church which followed, and at which I gave the lepers a brief address. On saying that I would take any message they had for their friends in England, two or three of them—evidently regarding it as an opportunity not to be missed—said they would be very glad if I would send them a coat each! This request, which reminded me of the definition of gratitude as a “lively expectation of favours to come,” was, however, promptly followed by many and hearty expressions of thankfulness, and by salaams innumerable. As the evening was chilly, and it was after sundown before they rose from the ground after their dinner, the request was, perhaps, neither unreasonable nor unseasonable—especially as I observed some of them shivering from the cold, to which they are particularly sensitive.

I was struck, as usual, with a few especially bad

cases. One woman, not otherwise apparently much affected, had lost her upper lip entirely, and her face, while eating, was a distressing sight to see. Another had the most loathsome wound on her leg (below the knee) which I have ever seen. There was among them the usual proportion of maimed features and extremities, but they seemed clean and comfortable, and well cared for.

The asylum is well planned, and consists of seven houses, each having three good-sized rooms, comfortably accommodating, in all, eighty-four inmates. There were, at the time of my visit, ninety; viz., fifty-four men, thirty-three women, and three children, and Mr. Bleby told me there were others waiting to come in as soon as the re-roofing of the houses was finished. On entering, we find four houses for men (with caretaker's and servants' quarters), then, on the left, the chapel; on the right, the hospital; and in the centre, the well; beyond which are the women's houses, making altogether a very complete institution. It has, however, one defect—it is too small to receive the many houseless sufferers, whose eagerness to avail themselves of its shelter forms so complete a contrast to the reluctance of the first inmates to enter.

BHAGALPUR.

In tracing the origin of the Christian Leper Asylums of India it is interesting to note that in almost every case they have arisen from some kindly charitable impulse which has been a key-

note to their subsequent history. To this rule Bhagalpur is no exception. Here we find associated in the foundation of this home of hope three men—a native gentleman, a Christian Missionary, and an English leper.

Roy Bahadur Shib Chandar Banerji, was mainly instrumental in the raising of the first ten thousand rupees, while Rev. J. A. Cullen, of the Church Missionary Society, had the privilege of seeing the Asylum erected, and of being its first Superintendent. Mr. Cullen's interest in the lepers was first awakened by his pastoral visits to an English victim of this cruel malady. Overcoming his first natural repugnance to ministering to one in an advanced stage of leprosy, he found like so many other workers in the same cause the consciousness of his Master's approval a present reward. He soon became, and has continued to be, an enthusiastic believer in Mission work among lepers. This unhappy Englishman had been in Government service, but on leprosy developing he had to hide himself away even from the light of day, owing to his eyes being affected by the disease.

I arrived at Bhagalpur (from Calcutta) at midnight in the most brilliant moonlight, and was soon driving along the lovely road that leads to Champanagar, the suburb in which Rev. W. E. Morse (C.M.S.) resides, and near which the leper Asylum is situated. After three hours of sleep Mr. Morse and I were off to visit the lepers by 8 a.m. The Asylum occupies a really beautiful and extensive site, and there is room for considerable enlargement. A Hospital was about to be added, and the contract



The Leper Compounder giving medicine to the other lepers. Bhagalpur Asylum.

for it had been settled. It will stand on the highest part of the ground near the men's quarters. As we arrived at the Asylum the lepers were just coming out from the daily morning service, which is conducted by an old Pundit, who also holds a similar service each evening.

The inmates of the female ward appeared to be in need of a little womanly sympathy and care, and Miss Haitz (of the C.E.Z.M.S.), whose bungalow is near the Asylum, very kindly acceded to my request that one of her women-workers should visit them weekly. She will send one of her most experienced Bible women, whose visits will be much valued by these poor creatures. Although at the time I refer to the spiritual side of the work did not appear to be prospering so much here as in some places, still three baptisms among the lepers during the year 1900 proved that the seed had not been sown in vain. The Bhagalpur field is a notoriously hard one.

I visited the Medical Mission, the schools, and the weaving shed, all of which are mission agencies contributing their share to the elevation of the people. On the Saturday evening of my visit, Mr. Morse entertained the Europeans, principally the ladies and children, at the Club with an exhibition of lantern pictures. At the close I gave a short account of the work among the lepers, and a collection of thirty-one rupees was taken which was to be devoted to giving the Bhagalpur lepers their annual feast.

CHAPTER XIII

CALCUTTA

GOVERNMENT AND THE LEPERS

ON arrival here, from Raniganj, a hearty welcome awaited me. Rev. J. A. Cullen (C.M.S.) met me at Howrah, and to him and Mrs. Cullen I am indebted for much kindness and hospitality.

Among many interesting incidents of my visit to Calcutta I especially recall two strongly contrasted scenes. The first of these was in the beautiful Botanical Gardens on the banks of the river, where, on the last day of the dying century, a small picnic party spent a few pleasant hours. After we had admired the rare contents of the Conservatories and had wondered at the gigantic Banyan Tree with its 464 stems, and its main trunk of 51 feet in girth, Mrs. Cullen gave us tea on the fresh green turf. Our merry party comprised besides Mr. and Mrs. Cullen and their little daughter, Rev. G. H. Parsons (also of the C.M.S.) and myself.

On the other side of the river a day or two later I witnessed a saddening spectacle. This was the celebrated Temple of Kalighat, where Kali, the deity of blood and cruelty is served with an ardour and an activity worthy of a better object. Here I beheld

idolatry in full blast. Crowds of devotees, shrines innumerable, temples on every hand, hideous idols, busy priests, innocent goats waiting near the blood-stained block for sacrifice; these, with the shouts of the fakirs and the noise of the bells, made up a babel of sounds and a combination of sights from which the mind turned with pity and disgust. Certainly pity was the dominant emotion as we halted before a small tree on which were suspended scores of pebbles hung there by childless wives. With the stones were a few offerings from women whose wish had been granted. At one shrine our alms were solicited on the ground that prayers were being offered for the victory of England in the South African war!

Stalls for the sale of idols and pictures lined the alleys leading down to the ghat, or bathing steps, where the bathers ascending from the sacred waters looked not even picturesque, but merely miserable and squalid.

The Calcutta Leper Asylum was, at the date of my visit, situated in Amherst Street, in the heart of the City and close to the C.M.S. settlement. The lepers have since been removed to a large new institution in the suburb of Gobra. Rev. J. A. Cullen, of the Church Missionary Society, has a very warm interest in the needs of these sad and suffering people, and has preached and ministered to them regularly during his stay in Calcutta in the little Church erected in the centre of the Asylum by the Mission to Lepers. As the plans for the new Asylum make provision for a Church also, it is hoped that the Christian teaching which

has proved a boon to many in the old Institution will be continued in the new one.

Early on Monday morning Mr. Cullen took me over to the Asylum for a preliminary call. Some of the inmates were still asleep, and others not yet dressed. The large open wards in which they lived were very crowded, especially the one for Mussulmans, and were devoid of any air of comfort or privacy, such as is secured by separate rooms.

In the Hindu ward one man lay dead on his charpoi, in full view of all the others, without even a cloth over him or a screen round him. He died, the other lepers told us, at midnight, and it was then eight o'clock.

We found one European inmate, Mrs. N ———, who is allowed to occupy two rooms at the end of the ward and was comparatively comfortable, and, considering her condition and surroundings, cheerful.

An interesting incident of my stay in Calcutta was the interview kindly accorded me by the Metropolitan of India (Right Rev. J. C. Welldon, D.D.). He expressed his surprise and gratification on learning the extent to which the Mission to Lepers was operating in his extended see, and assured me of his most cordial sympathy with the work. To this sympathy he gave a practical form by readily consenting that Mr. Cullen, who accompanied me, should preach in the Cathedral on behalf of the Society.

On the subject of Mission work in general, his Lordship was good enough to make me the channel of a message to any English Christians it might be in my power to reach or influence. It expresses the

practical view of the great work of the evangelization of India which all who know Bishop Welldon would expect him to take.

Although entrusted to me in my capacity of editor of a Missionary Magazine, I insert it here, in the hope that it may reach the eye and the heart of some one both able and willing to respond to it. Let it be read as the call, not merely of the Bishop of Calcutta, but of the Great Head of the Universal Church Himself.

“WHEN YOU GO HOME TELL THEM EVERYWHERE THAT THE GREAT NEED OF INDIA IS CONSECRATED LIVES ; NOT PEOPLE WHO WILL TALK ABOUT MISSIONS, OR EVEN GIVE TO MISSIONS AT HOME, BUT WHO WILL COME AND DO MISSIONARY WORK AND LIVE MISSIONARY LIVES HERE IN THE FIELD.”

Thanks to an introduction from Sir Charles Elliott, I was courteously received by the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, Sir John Woodburn, K.C.S.I. and was permitted to explain to him the objects and methods of the Mission to Lepers, and to inform him that five* Asylums, giving shelter to nearly 800 lepers were maintained by the Society in the Presidency of Bengal, in addition to sixteen others in different parts of India. His Honour had visited the Society's large Asylum at Purulia, and the opinion he formed as to the work being done there was recorded in the following entry in the visitors' book :—

“ I have been greatly impressed by my visit to this Asylum. It has now upwards of 500 inmates, and

*Since this interview the Society has received and allotted the sum of £500 for the erection of an Asylum at Bankura, (Bengal) a centre in which destitute lepers are very numerous.

the sight of so great a company of stricken people would have been most distressing had it not been for the surprising contentment of their bearing. No leper is sent by the authorities, and no wall prevents an inmate from leaving, and yet the numbers rapidly grow; evidence of the constant kindness and sympathy with which the poor creatures are treated! I have seen no more truly benevolent work in India than this."

The Lieutenant Governor expressed great interest in the facts laid before him and declared the intention of his Government to enforce the Lepers Act (1898). As this volume goes to press, negotiations are in progress which it is hoped may result in some form of co-operation between the Authorities and the Mission to Lepers in the carrying out of a measure which was intended to provide for the segregation of these unfortunate people, and to protect the healthy community from what is both an offence and a danger.

The objects of the Lepers Act of 1898, as indicated in its title are, "to provide for the medical treatment of pauper lepers and the control of lepers following certain callings." It is applicable to the whole of British India, including Upper Burma, but only comes into force in any district on a declaration by the Local Government to that effect.

A leper is defined under the Act to mean "any person suffering from any variety of leprosy in whom the process of ulceration has commenced," while a "pauper leper" is one who publicly solicits alms or is at large without any ostensible means of subsistence.

The Act also empowers local bodies to prohibit lepers from preparing or selling food, drink, or clothing, and from bathing, washing clothes, or taking water from any specified well or tank.

Provision is also made for the appointment of Inspectors of Lepers, and Magistrates are authorized to impose fines for disobedience to any order made under the Act, as well as to demand sureties from lepers for their compliance with its requirements.

In its main provisions the Act embodies the recommendations of the Leprosy Commission whose members conducted an exhaustive inquiry into the subject of leprosy in India in 1890-91. In one very important respect, however, the Lepers Act goes further than the suggestions of the Commission. Whereas the Commissioners declared *compulsory* isolation, either partial or complete, *to be inadvisable*, the Act provides for *enforced* segregation--though only of such lepers as are without means of subsistence, or are engaged in trades or occupations directly dangerous to the community.

This is probably as far as legislative action could usefully attempt to go in the present state of public feeling in India, not to speak of the serious financial difficulty attending any effort at complete compulsory isolation. The enforced segregation of all the lepers of India would be a task the magnitude and expense of which might well deter governments whose revenues are already severely taxed.

In addition to Sir John Woodburn, I had opportunities of conferring with J. P. Hewett, Esq., Secretary to the Government of India, and with Walter

R. Lawrence, Esq., private secretary to His Excellency the Viceroy, both of whom accorded me a most sympathetic hearing, and expressed warm appreciation of the work of the Society.

The effort of the Bengal Government to carry out the Lepers Act will be watched with great interest by the public generally and by those directly interested in the leper problem particularly.

It may be added that the Government of the Punjab have also been considering the matter, but have arrived at the conclusion that they cannot at present enforce the Act, not on the ground that it is unnecessary, but that it would be difficult and costly. After collecting information on the question, an official memorandum was issued in 1900, by the Punjab Government. This document stated that, "After consideration the Lieutenant Governor has decided that there is no case at present for applying the Act to any local area, and that it is impossible to apply it to the Punjab as a whole simply because the accommodation is not available." Though this is practically tantamount to a decision to continue the old policy of drifting with regard to the leper question, I was glad to find some indications that the Government of the Punjab is disposed to further the work of existing Asylums by increased grants.

Much more might well be written on the wide and important question of legislative action in the matter of lepers and leprosy, but this brief statement, arising out of my interviews with representatives of Government, will suffice to indicate the present position.

During my stay in Calcutta I was much interested in the annual sports and treat of the Chamar, or low caste, schools of the C.M.S. Mission. It was amusing to watch the faces of the boys as they listened to the gramophone for the first time. Blank amazement gave way to hearty merriment as the sounds of laughter coming from the mysterious machine proved too contagious to be resisted,

I spent a pleasant hour on the Sunday evening among the boys of the Boarding School which is doing so valuable a work under the mastership of Rev. C. B. Clarke.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN

OF all that I saw that was saddening among the lepers, nothing pulled so powerfully at the heart-strings as the presence of so many children whose young lives are already blighted by this foul disease. In the asylum at Purulia, there are at least seventy leper children, while in many other places I found them in numbers varying from twenty downwards. As I write, memory enables me to see the bright face of a little fellow of three or four years, as he sat in the front row in the church at Chandkuri, between two human wrecks with maimed faces and fingerless hands. And to this condition must he, too, in all probability come, spending his weary years, meanwhile, among his unhappy elders, and having for his companions other children afflicted in like manner.

In the words of an experienced worker among lepers, "perhaps the saddest of all sights that the eye of man can behold is to see a bright, innocent child fondled in the arms of a leper mother, and being fed from hands which are masses of corruption. And yet thousands of such sights are every day witnessed in India." I myself saw many such cases, and can endorse the statement I have just quoted.

On one occasion, when present at a service in the leper church at Almora, I observed a little boy in the arms of his leprous father. Bereft of his mother, this child of eighteen months had no friend or protector but his father, and that father in an advanced stage of leprosy. It was a great privilege to arrange for his transfer to the Home for the other healthy children, and to find a new mother for him in the person of a lady in Hastings, who will provide the £4 a year which suffices for his entire support.

The need of homes for the untainted children of lepers has long been recognized. A medical worker wrote twelve years ago: "These children are really worse off than orphans, for they are growing up in the presence of a terrible danger—that of contracting leprosy from the inevitable daily contact with their leprous parents." Another says: "One of the saddest sights is to see the little children of the lepers playing about, all unconscious of the dreadful years coming on them."

It is, in short, impossible to exaggerate the peril, both physical and moral, to which these little waifs are exposed. Even if their parents are inmates of one of the Asylums provided by municipalities, or governments, the whole family are frequently crowded into an unventilated hut of, perhaps, ten feet square. In a still worse plight are the children of the many mendicant lepers, whose wandering existence exposes their offspring to the gravest possible danger.

Experience has proved that children born of lepers almost invariably contract the disease in childhood

or youth, *unless removed from the danger of contagion*. Let me quote Rev. E. Guilford, who wrote respecting the large leper colony at Tarn Taran, in which he has carried on missionary work for many years: "Of all those born there during the last thirty years, I know of only two men who have not become confirmed lepers. And even these, when I last saw them, began to show signs of the disease upon them." This refers to a period prior to the establishment of the Home for the untainted children at Tarn Taran.

Now note a contrast. In connection with the Almora Asylum (N.W.P.), for the same period of thirty years, the children of leprous parents have been brought up in a home, *apart from their parents*, with the gratifying result that *only one* of them has developed the disease. Several of these are now married, and have children, in whom the disease has not, up to the present, appeared. In not a few of these cases both parents were lepers. The same satisfactory results have followed in connection with all the fourteen homes maintained by the Mission to Lepers.

Having referred to the danger of the children of the lepers of Tarn Taran, as described by Mr. Guilford, in 1890, it is a pleasure to record the result of the effort then initiated by him for their rescue. An application to the Mission to Lepers resulted in an arrangement for the separate support of the healthy children of such of the lepers as would give them up. Ten years later, we learn the outcome of this. And as you read it, remember the

terrible record of the previous thirty years, during which children were being born, as in thousands of instances they are still being born, to that heritage of woe—the life of a leper.

“ I am hoping to receive two or three other boys from the Asylum (Mr. Guilford writes in 1900), so that we shall soon have a goodly band here. Some of our boys are now fine, tall fellows, and will soon be fit to flit from the nest which has sheltered them for the last ten years, and to seek their own livelihood. We are trying to equip them for this in every way. Some are becoming very good tailors, while two others have been taught groom’s work, and one other is finishing his time as a carpenter. They are all being taught how to cook their own food.

“ Of the girls I have an equally good account to give, for they all show promise of becoming useful women. The eldest of them is already the best nurse we have in our Zenana hospital here. It is a most refreshing sight to see her in clean white cap and apron, busy at dressing patients, or nursing one of the many foundlings who find their way to the hospital. It makes one’s heart go out in gratitude to God, and to His liberal children in England when one contrasts the present happy lot of these children with what would have obtained had they been left in the asylum, that ‘house of living death.’ ”

Evidence such as the preceding goes far in itself to demonstrate the non-heredity of leprosy. Moreover it can be supported by expert testimony of the highest authority. The first place must be given

to the conclusions arrived at by the Commissioners appointed by the Committee of the National Leprosy Fund, in 1889.* Five Commissioners, of whom three were appointed by the Committee, and two by the Government of India, investigated the question of leprosy in India. Not only did these authorities declare that leprosy is not diffused by hereditary transmission, but further stated that, after careful examination into upwards of 2,000 cases, the Commissioners had come to the conclusion that leprosy in India cannot be considered an hereditary disease, and they would even venture to say that the evidence which exists is hardly sufficient to establish an inherited specific predisposition in the offspring of leprous parents to any appreciable degree.

The Commissioners summarized their remarks on heredity as follows:—

“ 1. No authentic congenital case has ever been put on record, nor was one seen in this country.

“ 2. True family histories of leprosy could be obtained in only five or six per cent. of the cases.

“ 3. Many instances occur of children being affected while their parents remain perfectly healthy.

“ 4. The percentage of children, the result of leper marriages, who become lepers, is too small to warrant the belief in the hereditary transmission of the disease.

“ 5. The facts obtained from the Orphanage at Almora Asylum disprove the existence of a specific hereditary predisposition.

“ 6. Only five or six per cent. of the children born

*See remarks on the Lepers Act (1898), p. 102 *et seq.*

after manifestation of the disease in the parents become subsequently affected.*

"7. The histories of the brothers and sisters of leper patients with a true or false hereditary taint seem to show that little importance can be attached to inheritance as an agent in the perpetuation of the disease."

In their chapter on recommendations the Commissioners advise that where possible the children of lepers should be separated from their leprous relations and placed in orphanages, grounding their recommendation on the fact that "the advantages of such a method are fully illustrated in the Almora Orphanage."

The most recent congress of leprologists, which sat at Berlin in 1897, under the presidency of Professor Virchow also pronounced leprosy to be "*contagious but not hereditary.*"

In support of the findings of the Commissioners individual authorities of the highest standing can be quoted. The late Sir Morell Mackenzie declared that "hereditary contamination has now been shown to be a negligible quantity."† Dr. Munro says: "From all I have learned of the disease, I can find no proof of even hereditary predisposition, but feel much inclined to believe with Landré, that contagion is the cause of its propagation."

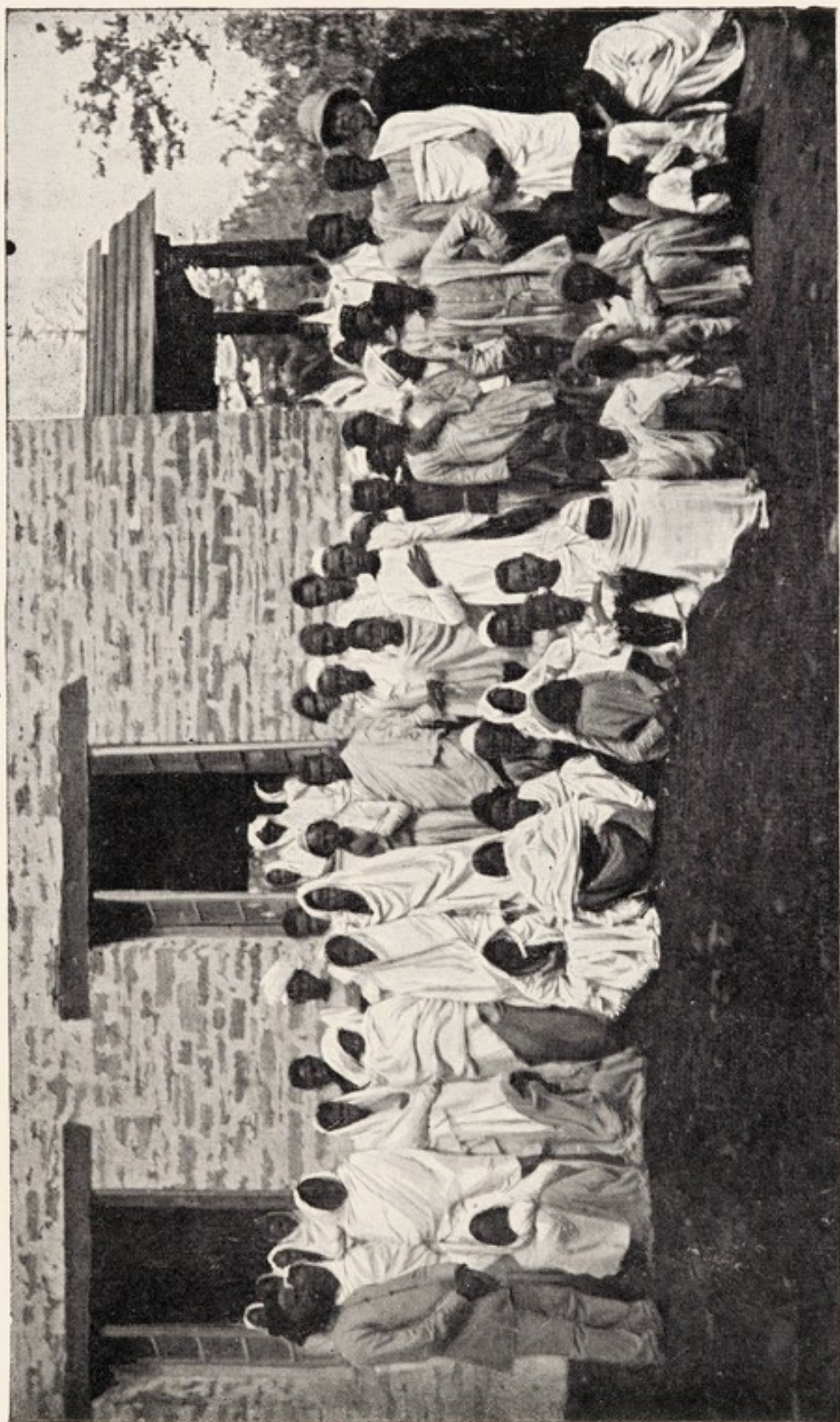
These facts and opinions should give a powerful stimulus to the work, already so hopefully begun, of

* This actually means one case in about twenty which had been dealt with at the date of the Commissioners' visit.

† Nineteenth Century, December 1889.

rescuing these young lives from ghastly disease and lifelong misery. In view of such possibilities of rescue it was a sad statement I heard from a missionary at Ramachandrapuram, who said she had been compelled within a few months to turn away forty or fifty lepers, who sought admittance to the Asylum there, because of *the many untainted children with them for whom she had no accommodation*. To know that these things are so, and that twenty pence a week will give food, shelter, and teaching to one of these little ones, and then to reflect that thousands are spending that amount weekly or daily, in needless extravagance, irresistibly raises the question as to how far the professed followers of Christ have risen to the point of self-denial in their giving. In many cases possibly they *do not know* of the need, in many others it is to be feared they *do not care*.

Not to close the Chapter on a note of sadness, let me add that some of the most cheering of all my experiences were connected with the little people who are safely sheltered in the many Homes for untainted children I had the pleasure of visiting. For example, on nearing Chandkuri, after eleven miles through the jungle, I was met on my way by a procession of bright little boys and girls, who with banners and songs, escorted me to the Mission Station. During my stay of two days I saw much of these happy children. I joined them in their singing and feasting, I saw them at their lessons, and two entire mornings were spent in interviewing and reporting upon the many boys and girls, who have



A group of lepers at the Almora Asylum. Rev. G. M. Bulloch, L.M.S., Superintendent of the Asylum on the right.

Photo by Mr. Bulloch.

been specially "adopted" by ladies, schools, Christian Endeavour Societies or classes in England.*

This was for many of them rather an ordeal. To stand before a strange "Sahib," who wrote mysteriously on a large paper, and to be asked to send a message to their far away friends, was a trying experience for these little waifs. Their messages seldom went beyond "Salaams" or "Yesu Sahai" (Jesus be your helper—a usual form of Christian greeting in the district). But they all readily recognized their new relationship and regardless of the sex or the numbers of their supporters, spoke of them invariably as "Father and Mother." I ought to add that only one of them *asked* for anything, and she was a little girl, who preferred a request for a new dress!

At Purulia again it was a great pleasure to have a share in the Christmas rejoicings of the seventy healthy children of lepers there. To listen to their singing, and to assist in the distribution of dolls, toys, and other gifts sent out by English children—members of the Helpers' Guild—contributed not a little to my own enjoyment of the happy season.

Then at Mungeli it was an agreeable experience to be welcomed in the pretty little church by a large gathering of boys and girls, among whom were included the untainted children of the lepers. A pleasant little programme had been arranged, beginning with "Sound the Battle-cry," the familiar music of which

* Any reader willing to adopt one of these rescued children is invited to communicate with the Mission to Lepers, Exeter Hall, Strand. The amount required is £4 a year.

had a home-like sound. Then followed an address of welcome read by Piyari (one of the oldest of the untainted girls), which was somewhat too oriental in its language for the very ordinary individual whose virtues it so greatly exaggerated. It would be ungrateful not to make mention of the neatly worked handkerchief, Piyari's handiwork, which accompanied the address. Other items in this little entertainment were a reply by the guest of the occasion—who had to stoop very low to be garlanded by the smallest lassie of all—a recital of the Commandments by the children, and the National Anthem—all the verses!

In other places including Asansol, Almora, and Tarn Taran I found children happy and healthy, who, if left uncared for would, almost certainly, have followed their unhappy parents through the unrelieved misery of a leper's life to the hopelessness of a heathen leper's death.

CHAPTER XV

AN INDIAN SNOWSTORM

ON the way up from Bhagalpur to Kathgodam, I had the good fortune to encounter, in the dining car, a young Missionary (Rev. Bernard Wills) on his way to the London Missionary Society's Station at Almora. The journey we took in company was not only a very novel one to two travellers newly out from England, but had some features which may not be without interest to the reader. Should this chapter strike you as superfluous and prosy, let me, in extenuation, remind you that I entirely spared any description of my voyage out, and that I have exercised great self-restraint with regard to descriptions of the country, "the manners and customs" of the people, and the every-day incidents of travel.

On arrival at Kathgodam, where the railway terminates at the very foot of the Lower Himalayas, we were met by a messenger with a note. He had been kindly sent down from Almora by Rev. G. M. Bulloch, together with four men and a dandy. The joint efforts of this man and Andrew, my native "boy," resulted in an arrangement (or "bandobast" in the vernacular) with about a dozen coolies and the owners of two mountain ponies to take us through to Almora. But this was only effected after

infinite chattering and bargaining and the friendly intervention of the station-master on one or two knotty points. Finally, after an acceptable "Chotahazri" (or little breakfast), we got under way, and, a mile from Kathgodam, crossed a narrow suspension bridge and began the ascent, which continued for 17 out of the 20 miles we accomplished that day.

As we zig-zagged up the winding road we met frequent parties of Bhotian shepherds driving their flocks down to the plains. These mountaineers use their sheep as beasts of burden, almost every animal being laden with two bags, or two fleeces of wool, tied on saddle-wise. The bags contain rock-salt, borax, or even gold-dust, and the journey from their remote mountain valleys on the borders of Thibet, and even from Thibet itself, takes probably three weeks or a month. The shepherds are strong, hardy men, and have, like all the natives of these mountain regions, an air of manly independence in great contrast to the cringing and servile attitude of the Bengalis from whom I had just come. A corresponding improvement was noticeable in their houses. Stone dwellings with roofs of flat slabs, and frequently of two stories, were now to be seen in place of mud huts covered with thatch.

As we continued to rise, the view of the plains below gradually extended till we commanded a wide prospect of flat and fertile country. But our attention was soon diverted from the plains to the magnificent mountain scenery unfolding before us and disclosing fresh beauties at every turn of our winding way. Range after range of lofty heights wocded to

their summits stretched in all directions, intersected by valleys filled with lovely forms of vegetable life, from tall pines to tiny ferns, the latter being especially beautiful and varied. Animal and bird life was not abundant, but we came upon twenty or thirty monkeys who took to the trees that overhung the road as we approached. We also surprised a flight of parrots, not large in size, but very beautiful in their hues of green and yellow which closely corresponded with the foliage. Giant cacti and many other plants considered rare and curious in England were here growing wild in great abundance. Our first stage of ten miles brought us to Bhim Tal (tal=lake) and on suddenly rounding a bend we came upon the narrow end of the lake. It reminded me not a little of Derwentwater—surrounded as it was by well covered mountain slopes. A notice board directing us to the “New Lake View Hotel” was also suggestive of Cumberland, but we wended our way to the Dak Bungalow where we were soon enjoying an excellent breakfast, nicely served by the two attendants. After a short walk, camera in hand, and a rest, at 1.30 we set out for our second stage of ten miles. The scenery was of the same grand and picturesque character, but we were destined to view it under entirely altered conditions. We had scarcely left the lake when rain began to fall. As we continued our unbroken ascent for fully seven miles the rain changed to snow, and the wind rose, until every few minutes we were exposed to heavy squalls which drove the snow into our faces and made our progress increasingly slow and toilsome. When one of these tremendous gusts sent the snow whirling

round into the valley far below us the effect was very striking. For miles our road twined rapidly upwards along the side of the mountains and we looked down into depths of which the bottoms were invisible, while the eye sought in vain to pierce the clouds which concealed the summits above. We seemed to be walking on the edge of the world, below us the bottomless abyss, above us the unscalable heights, while the tempest raging around us suggested the very spirit of destruction let loose. Long and weary were the miles as we toiled up the steep ascent. The snow was falling rapidly and rendering our progress more and more difficult. Finally, however, we reached the summit of the Gagar pass, which is upwards of 8,000 feet in height. We were, however, too weary with the upward struggle to linger in admiration of the sublime spectacle of the lofty heights all round us, looming dimly through the veil of the falling snow. Directly we began the descent the milestone reminded us that we had accomplished eight out of our ten miles, during practically all of which we had been steadily climbing in the face of a hurricane. Now, however, our compensations began, and we walked briskly down the hilly road, the soft deep snow making it unsafe to ride our ponies. As our way for the last two miles wound down into the valley, we could with rising spirits admire the lovely effects of the snow on the trees with which the slopes were covered. Some of the vistas were of indescribable loveliness. The graceful forms of trees and branches beaded in spotless white, and spreading away until they faded into the wreath of the falling snow, compelled our admiration, not-

withstanding our wet and weary condition. As a turn of the road showed me the coolies carrying the dandy, and the syces leading the ponies, I was forcibly struck with the funereal appearance of our cavalcade. The coolies, concealed from head to foot in their dark-coloured blankets, and bearing the empty dandy covered with a rug, preceded the two riderless horses with drooping heads; and the whole of them, stealing silently down the road into the valley, were strongly suggestive of a burial procession. The baggage-coolies had long ago been left behind, and must have found shelter somewhere by the way, as they only completed the march at noon next day.

Down, down, we went, till the well-built bungalow at Ramgarh came in sight. I had taken the precaution to send forward a messenger an hour before, so we were soon seated by a blazing wood fire, enjoying a cup of tea, and invoking blessings on the Government whose paternal kindness had provided such a quiet resting-place for weary wayfarers in these lonely regions.

Though the food and warmth were comforting, and we were grateful, our condition still left something to be desired. All our bedding was somewhere behind with our belated burden-bearers, except one rug and one blanket, which, as well as our overcoats, were soaked through with the snow. Negotiations with the *chaukidar* (caretaker) of the bungalow for a supply of bedding were unsuccessful, though very entertaining. The insurmountable difficulty was that, though not fastidious, we required it to be at least *approximately clean*. But by devoting the

evening to drying our wet belongings, drawing our beds close up to the fire, and mutually pledging ourselves to pile on more wood at every waking interval, we managed to spend a tolerably comfortable night.

Daylight revealed to us that we had still a long descent to the bottom of the valley through which lay our route. About noon we were relieved by the arrival of our coolies with the baggage, damp, but otherwise undamaged, and by 1.30 we were *en route* for our next stage to Peora. On reaching the summit of the second pass in our day's march, we were cheered by our first glimpse of Almora, across the intervening valleys, with the perpetual snows just visible in the background.

Shortly before sunset we strolled out from the bungalow, attracted by the sounds of bells and calls in the mountain above us. We were rewarded by a characteristically Eastern scene. At least three flocks of sheep and goats, all mingled together, were being gathered home for the night. Sheep and goats feed together and travel together here, and often resemble each other so closely as to give point to the statement that He shall separate the nations one from another "as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." Here, too, we saw the shepherd who "calleth his sheep by name and leadeth them out." We beheld a practical commentary on the words: "When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice." No sooner were the confused crowd of animals driven down from the mountain side to the road, than each shepherd began to call out his



A Street Scene in Almora. — N.W.P.
Note the Barber at work.



A group of Thibetan Shepherds and Acrobats.
Photographed at Almora.

own sheep, and in a surprisingly short time each flock was being quietly led home by its own shepherd to the shelter of its own fold.

From Peora to Almora was pleasant travelling. A bright morning ; a road winding round ravines and through pine forests ; a picturesque group of shepherds giving their flocks their noon-day rest at the shady camping-ground ; mistletoe growing in profusion, varied by ferns and other lovely forms of vegetable life ; the deep gorge in which two streams meet as we begin the ascent ; all these combined to render our last march a most enjoyable one.

From the little suspension bridge our way wound steadily upward for five or six miles to Almora. In our case it seemed appropriate that the first building we came upon should be the Leper Asylum, at the gate of which we found about fifty of the inmates waiting by the wayside to welcome their visitor from England.

I was cordially received by Rev. G. M. Bulloch and Mrs. Bulloch, whose kindness contributed so much to render my visit to Almora enjoyable. Strolling out in the evening we found on the parade ground a team of the 3rd Gurkhas, practising football for the regimental tournament. We also passed a company of these smart, sturdy soldiers at drill, and I was allowed to inspect one of their enormous dagger knives ("Kookerys") with which it is reported the untamed Gurkhas indifferently slay their enemies or carve their meat. From the summit of the parade ground we had a magnificent view of the snow-covered mountains, among which, and out-topping them all, could be seen Nanda-Devi, towering up for 25,700 feet—the highest point in the British empire.

CHAPTER XVI

ALMORA

THE Census of 1891 gave the number of lepers in the Almora sub-division as 1,039 in a population of 201,801. This seems a very large proportion for a healthy mountainous district, and is to be partially accounted for by the influx of lepers from the neighbouring State of Nepal, where they are treated with great cruelty, even to being buried alive in some instances. Probably another cause for the prevalence of the disease in these secluded mountain valleys is the practice of inter-marriage among the somewhat isolated village communities.

The establishment of a leper asylum in the chief town of the district was, therefore, a great boon to the neighbourhood, as well as a very happy event for the destitute wanderers it was designed to shelter. The founding of this most useful institution was the work of Lieutenant (afterwards Sir Henry) Ramsay, who erected the first buildings in 1840. Eleven years later the asylum was transferred to the London Missionary Society, and placed under the care of the Rev. J. H. Budden. This true friend of the lepers continued to minister to the temporal and spiritual needs of these poor sufferers with unfailing sympathy for a period of nearly forty years. But his kindly

care] for the lepers was only part of the invaluable service rendered by Mr. Budden to the best interests of Almora. The long and happy co-operation in Christian service between him and Sir Henry Ramsay, himself Mr. Budden's "son in the faith," is commemorated in two of the most prominent buildings in the town, the Ramsay College and the Budden Memorial Church.

Since 1864 (when a register began to be kept) considerably over one thousand lepers have been received into the asylum, more than half of whom have become members of the Christian Church. The first of whose baptism any official record exists was Mussuwa, who spent twenty-seven years in the asylum as a Christian leper, during which period he was enabled to maintain a consistent character, and exercised a most helpful influence over the other inmates. Mussuwa was the second leper admitted to the asylum in 1850, and his term of residence was no less than forty-one years. I cannot forbear to quote from Rev. G. M. Bulloch's notice of his death. "In 1864, Mussuwa, probably the first leper convert in India, was baptized by the Rev. J. Hewlett. For many years he has given spiritual guidance and consolation to many of his afflicted fellows, and made it possible for them to bear with patience their distressing ailments, and for some he has brightened with hope the valley of the shadow of death. On hearing of the old man's death, Mr. Hewlett gave the following particulars of his baptism: 'The news takes me back to that January afternoon in 1864, when, on the spot where the Leper Chapel now stands, I gathered the inmates of the

asylum, and spoke to them lovingly of the great Physician. . . . I was delighted, beyond measure, when Mussuwa stood up and said, with face and hands upturned, "Since Jesus has done so much for me, how can I help doing whatever He requires of me?" His declaring himself, on this occasion, on the Saviour's side, led to his baptism, together with that of two others, whom he had persuaded to join him in following Christ.' In 1869 he became a communicant, and has all along maintained a consistent life, and exercised such a power for good upon his companions, that most of those who have become Christians in the asylum have done so principally through his exertions. He has been blind for the last twenty-four years, yet this did not detract from his power to influence others. He might well be called a leper-missionary to lepers. It was a real pleasure to talk to him, so intelligent, shrewd, and full of common-sense were his remarks. Never once did I hear him complain; on the contrary, he seemed to be continually praising God for His goodness and love, and thanking the friends of the lepers for all they did to alleviate the miseries of those afflicted like himself. For some weeks before his death he became very feeble, and ultimately quite helpless; yet he bore all with patient fortitude, conscious of the Lord's presence, and confident in His wise dealings. Two days before his death I saw him for the last time. He was evidently waiting for the Master's call. 'Sahib,' he said to me, 'I am very tired. I think the blessed Jesus will soon give me rest.' He kept on repeating how glad he was that he knew that Jesus

loved him, though a leper, and that he would be permitted to enter glory whole and clean, purified from sin, and freed from corruption. Simpler and stronger faith in, and truer love for, the Redeemer it would be difficult to find in the Christian Church. He died surrounded by a number of his more particular friends among the lepers, and his last words to them were, 'I am going to Jesus. Do you continue to walk in His ways.' "

The history of this Asylum teems with incidents of pathetic interest. For example, in a description of a baptism (on the occasion of the visit of Mr. Wellesley C. Bailey, in 1890), we find the following:—

"One poor fellow—Mangaluwa—who came up for baptism, was so helpless that he could not come to church; but another Christian leper, who is not so helpless, and has taken a considerable interest in Mangaluwa, volunteered to carry him to Church, that he might be baptized there, along with the others, rather than have it done in his barrack-room. It was, indeed, a deeply touching sight to see Bijua hobbling along, for his own feet were toeless, with his friend Mangaluwa on his back, along the shady paths of the Asylum grounds to the church. Just behind them was another group of three, two of whom were helping a third one, between them, up to the house of prayer. Another unfortunate was painfully crawling along on all fours, and obliged every few steps to call a halt in order to get relief, for, besides being terribly crippled, he was suffering from asthma, an affliction which often accompanies leprosy."

The sending of an address to their Queen-Empress from the lepers (120) of Almora Asylum, on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee, was a great event to them. Their joy was unbounded when they knew that it had really reached Her Majesty, and had found a place among the Jubilee gifts, and they were delighted when they received a reply, which said: "The Queen is deeply touched by this kind message from these poor people."

Having heard of the famine in Western India (in 1900), the lepers conceived the happy idea of a "fast-day," so that they might send a little relief to the sufferers. They were unanimous in their decision and declared, "It is no hardship for us, but a joy and a privilege." So on the day appointed, instead of assembling at the food store to receive their daily supply, they met for prayer. One pleaded for the starving children; and another, that "our small gift may be accepted, and used by the Saviour as He did the loaves in the hand of the lad." This self-denial offering of the lepers amounted to 132lb. of flour, 24lb. of dahl, 6lb. of oil, and 6lb. of salt, the money value of which was sent to feed the famine-stricken.

The site of the Almora Asylum is especially suitable, being apart from the town, yet conveniently near to it. It occupies the side of a projecting hill, and the grounds are extensive and well planted with pines and other trees. The men's quarters are on the lower ground, and the women's next above them. The Church and the Hospital, with the house of the caretaker surmounting the whole, make up a very complete Institution,

The neat, comfortable appearance of the inmates, together with their cheerful bearing, at once suggested what I afterwards found to be the fact, viz., that the lepers of the Almora Asylum are especially happy and well-cared for. If those who conceive, and very naturally, of the lot of the leper as one of unmitigated gloom and sadness could visit Almora or Purulia, or other of our Christian Asylums, they would be amazed at the transformation in the life of the leper when sheltered and cared for in one of these Homes of Hope. But I observed among the Almora lepers more than the usual proportion of badly maimed and mutilated cases. The disease is evidently of a very malignant type in this district, notwithstanding the mountain air. As I studied the congregation we found gathered in the Church of the Asylum on the Sunday afternoon, I realized afresh what a scourge of humanity this dreadful disease is. It was touching to see a motherless child of 18 months or thereabouts nestling in the arms of his badly-diseased father, The ladies of the London Mission kindly undertook, at my request, to admit this little waif to their Orphanage, where it will be tenderly cared for and, it is hoped, will be preserved from the fate of its father.

The Church was filled with an earnest congregation, with whom it was a pleasure to join in singing "What a friend we have in Jesus." At Mr. Bulloch's request two of the lepers offered prayer. Without knowing the language, it was quite clear from the fervent tones that their petitions were very real.

Mr. Bulloch very sympathetically interpreted the

address I gave them on "the love of Christ." When I reminded them that I came from many in England who, without having seen them, yet prayed for them, and gave to them, and asked them *why* that should be so, several readily replied—"because they have the love of God in their hearts." They seemed most appreciative, and it was a great privilege to speak, even by the aid of another, a few words of cheer and hope to these stricken souls. They sent many grateful greetings to those who care for them in England. Three weeks later, on returning from Chandag, I found myself again at Almora on Sunday, and this time I shared in the Communion service with the lepers. A large proportion of the inmates participated, and it was a touching and suggestive sight as these spiritually-cleansed lepers reverently remembered the dying, yet undying love of Him who said, "I will: be thou clean." The marked success attending the spiritual work in this Asylum will be evident from the fact that out of ninety-six inmates at the time of my visit, ninety were Christians, and this, let it always be remembered, through no pressure, but by their own spontaneous desire.

Space fails me to tell of the interesting and valuable work of the London Missionary Society, which, by evangelistic, medical, educational, and other agencies, has done so much to make Almora what it is. It was a pleasure to meet the ladies of the L. M. S. working here, though I regretted that Miss Budden's absence on furlough prevented my seeing her.



View from the Asylum Grounds, Chandag.
In the centre is a deep valley full of mist. The men are Miss Reed's servants.

CHAPTER XVII

ALMORA TO CHANDAG

AFTER being delayed on Monday, by a day of incessant storm and rain, I was glad to find Tuesday morning sufficiently clear to warrant my setting out on the first of the five marches (fifty miles in all), that still separated me from Chandag Heights, which was my ultimate destination in that direction. Four coolies, anxious to work their way back to the Shor Valley, at the modest rate of fourpence per day per man, having been despatched with my baggage, I left Almora by mid-day, mounted on a tough little pony. The thirteen and a half miles to Panawanoula took us nearly five hours to traverse. My steed was, probably stale, certainly slow, and the hills were long and steep. But the day was perfect for such a journey. A refreshing breeze made music among the pine woods, often being the only sound to be heard. Now and then the tinkle of the cow-bell, or the bleat of a sheep, broke the stillness of the valleys, and at times the rush of the rivers, swollen by the recent rains, could be heard. The sun was sufficiently tempered by an occasional cloud to be both safe and pleasant, even during the middle hours of the day, while the prospect, as the road wound in and out of

the valleys, and alternately ascended and descended, was one of ever-varying loveliness. The bridle-path at times became a mere grass-covered track, scarcely distinguishable from the narrow, cultivated ridges above and below it—at others it wound along precipices that made me wish my sure-footed little steed would not take the corners *quite so closely*.

Finally, I espied the little board pointing up the hill to the Dak Bungalow, and, my boy and the baggage having already arrived, I was soon seated at a meal—thanks to the food basket packed for me by my kind hostess in Almora. After a short walk to explore my beautiful surroundings, I returned to enjoy the evening hour and to make some notes, from which I quote :

“ How shall I attempt to describe the scene spread out in all its splendour before me as I write? Here, from a height of nearly 7,000 feet, I gaze across a vast expanse of valley and mountain. Immediately below me on three sides are deep and steep declivities, into whose well-wooded depths the eye cannot pierce. Behind is the top of the range along the ridge of which my road to-morrow will run to Naini. But in front, as I gaze westward, what a spectacle! Range after range of mountains lift their crests, and just behind the most distant one the sun is sinking in a golden glory. Where the valley is in shade it is filled with blue light, dark yet delicate. The western sky is barred with blue and gold alternately. The more distant valleys are filling already with masses of white mist which it is difficult to distinguish from the snows. On every

hand extend ranges of lofty peaks, all the nearer ones being pine-clad to their very summits. The whole scene is at once soothing and uplifting, and a sense of peace comes with the remembrance that 'the strength of the hills is His also,' and that by His power they stand fast. So the last thought suggested by the golden light beyond the mountains is that life's 'sunset and evening star,' come when they may, will be followed by the dawn of the eternal day."

Our next day's march began with an ascent of upwards of a thousand feet, after which the path ran along the very backbone of the range affording magnificent views from each side alternately.

As we ascended, the pines gave place to oaks and giant rhododendrons—the latter in bud and, in some instances, even in bloom, though it was the depth of winter. The twisted and gnarled trunks of the old oaks were garlanded with mosses and ferns nearly to the top, while maidenhairs and osmundas abounded.

At one point the path, cut out of the face of the overhanging rock, was only four and a half feet wide and a dwarf wall of two feet in height was the only safeguard against a fall into the sheer depth beneath.

Soon after clearing the highest point of the ridge, Chandag Heights became visible, beyond two intervening ranges, and standing out against the still more distant snows. Steadily down, by a well-wooded and winding way we went, till the day's march ended at Naini, where the bungalow is charmingly located, as, indeed, they usually are. Here, however, a difficulty, somewhat tantalizing to a

hungry traveller, arose. I had ample food supplies, as Miss Reed had kindly sent down from Chandag a cook and a coolie, with provisions and two live fowls, besides which, Mrs. Bulloch's basket was far from being exhausted. I therefore ordered dinner forthwith, but was considerably taken aback when my boy returned to report that no cooking utensils could be found, this being one of the routes on which the traveller is expected to bring his own. However, I despatched him again on a round of the few native houses which make up the village of Naini, with strict injunctions to "commandeer" any pots or pans on which he could lay his hand. The result of this raid was—one saucepan and a cracked teapot without a lid! But with these the combined skill of the "boy" and the cook did wonders, and produced a meal which I enjoyed all the more for the difficulty in procuring it.

Next morning we continued the descent—very precipitous in places—which led us to the Sargew River. This is spanned by a very slender suspension bridge, bearing the suggestive notice that only *one person* at a time is allowed upon it. Looking up the face of the mountain, on either side, not the slightest trace of a path could be seen, owing to the density of the shrubs and trees, and it seemed impossible that any road could ascend or descend slopes so steep. However, we steadily, though very slowly, zig-zagged up for five or six miles, and reached Gangoli Hat by 2.30, the last three miles being travelled in sleet and snow. European visitors are somewhat rare in these regions, and my arrival created an amusing

degree of excitement. My call for the chaukidar was taken up and passed on from one end of the village to the other, while every dog in the place barked its loudest. Finally, an old man came shivering up, and unlocked the door, and then shivered out again in search of fuel—some very expressive pantomime having made it quite clear that the Sahib wanted a fire, and wanted it promptly, too. A damp, chilly evening, was followed by a frosty night, and when I arose at six next morning I was glad to see the sunlight showing hopefully over the mountains, just as the last star disappeared.

With a great effort I got my coolies off by 8.30, and we dipped down rapidly into the gorge of the Ramgunga, the scenery being, if possible, grander than any I had yet passed through. A long, steady ascent brought me to the bungalow at Bahns by 12.50. Here I found a fire burning, and a meal ready, thanks again to Miss Reed's kind forethought. After a brief rest, I pushed forward for my last and shortest march. The afternoon was bright and sunny during the two hours required to complete the ascent to Chandag Heights. An hour's sharp climbing brought us to the foot of the fertile Gorung Valley, at the head of which it was a welcome sight to see the new church of the asylum, standing on the very ridge between the Gorung and Shor valleys, as a beacon light for the benighted dwellers in their many villages. The road winds along the side of the mountain, and, in the shady parts, frozen snow reminded me that it was winter, in spite of the flowers and ferns fringing the wayside—among the

latter maidenhair, twenty-four inches high, being plentiful.

About a mile below the asylum I was pleasantly surprised at being met by Miss Mary Reed, to visit whom I had travelled so far. She had come down the hill in her dandy in order to bid me "welcome to Chandag Heights." I felt it to be a great privilege to meet, for the first time, one in whose life and work I had so special an interest, and to whom, and of whom, I had written so much. To see her, face to face, and to hold daily intercourse with one who is following in her Master's footsteps in no usual degree, was a privilege I had long desired, and now it was to be mine. So, if the guest was warmly welcomed, he, on his part, was still more glad to greet his hostess. We were soon chatting in the cosy sitting-room of Miss Reed's two-roomed bungalow, in which I immediately recognized the portraits of several well-known friends of the lepers. Framed texts, pictures, books, and other evidences of a refined mind, filled the room, in which one of the most prominent objects was an organ which affords Miss Reed the solace of music in her lonely life.

CHAPTER XVIII

CHANDAG HEIGHTS

THE PLACE

THE reader having accompanied me to Chandag Heights (as I will take the liberty of supposing), I will appeal to his imagination—to the faculty of “imaging” things not seen, as I endeavour to depict to him Chandag Heights—*the place*. In due order will follow some account of *the worker*, and of *the work*. This method will, I hope, convey a clearer impression to the reader, though at more trouble to the writer, than the diary form in which would be recorded the happenings of each consecutive day.

“Chandag Heights the beautiful,” as Miss Reed has named her lofty and lovely location, is ninety miles in distance, or seven days in time, from the bounds of civilization—that is if railways, as is too often assumed, are synonymous with civilization. The Gorung valley up which our road to Chandag led us, is separated from the Shor valley by a high ridge, which, while it divides the valleys, connects the bold hills on either side. On the summit of this saddle-shaped ridge stands Miss Reed’s house, and the Women’s quarters of the Leper Asylum, as well as the neat, new, and spotlessly white Church of the

Institution. The grounds are extensive, some sixty acres in all, thanks to a generous government and an abundance of available land. Fully a quarter of a mile down the hill are the houses for the male lepers, and near to them is the residence of the caretaker. Panahgah (or "place of refuge") is the appropriate name of the men's settlement, which consists of four blocks of good houses surrounded by gardens in which the less affected of the men are able to cultivate a few flowers and vegetables.

On the morning following my arrival, Miss Reed pointed out to me the features of interest in the wide prospect we commanded as we stood in front of her little bungalow. It was with evident enjoyment of the scene that she dwelt on the beauties of valley and mountain. She, herself, claims, and I must admit with good reason, that the view of the Upper Himalayas as seen from her own grounds is one of the very finest to be obtained anywhere.

In a letter received since my visit and written immediately on her return from a trip up to the summer snow line with (Miss) Dr. Sheldon, she says: "The immense heights, and great depths of the Upper Himalayas are sublime, but nowhere did I find such a glorious view of the eternal snows as we have from our own Chandag Heights."

In the Shor valley just below us, but three and a half miles away by the road, is the little town of Pithoragarh. Here reside the only English-speaking people within many miles of Miss Reed's outpost. They are the Missionary ladies, with Miss Budden at their head, of the Women's Foreign Missionary



Panahgah (i.e. "Place of Refuge.") The Men's Quarters, Chandag Asylum.

Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Near the town may still be seen the old fort of Pithora. The large and fertile valley is enclosed on all sides by mountains, and is fringed round with villages, whose inhabitants form a considerable community. A few miles eastward, across the river, are the mountains that mark the border of Nepal. From this independent state European Missionaries are still excluded, and in it the lepers are treated with such inhumanity that many escape into British territory, as the only alternative to death from exposure or violence, not a few finding their way to Chandag.

While we are gazing eastward let us watch the sunrise—by the help of some notes made one morning while the wonderful spectacle was before me. The stars fade and the darkness gradually gives place to a faint gleam which brightens into a pale gold as it slowly creeps upward over the mountains beyond which lies Nepal. As the king of day approaches the horizon, his coming is heralded by a deepening of the glow, first to a delicate pink, and soon to a deep rose. Some low-lying clouds seem to bridge the spaces between the peaks, and contribute by contrast to the beauty of the scene.

First the slender streaks of lighter cloud are transfused into bars of gold. Then a higher and heavier mass is set on fire from below, until only the dark line of its upper edge remains to show its former hue. From the brighter glow in the direct east, away towards the south each feather of cloud catches the gleam as if to send on the signal to distant heights

that the king is at hand. The background of all this glory is a sky of the most delicate ethereal blue, and against its clearness every tree on the top of the hills beyond the river, and every jagged rock on the summit of the higher and more distant range, stands out sharply and distinctly defined.

But as we turn southward a scene of perhaps still greater splendour gladdens the eye. We behold a mighty range of magnificent peaks, clad with eternal snow and projected in bold relief against a sky of indescribable beauty. Breaking the expanse of purest azure are some banks of cloud just clearing the crests of the upper heights, which themselves seem to be but a few miles distant. These vapoury masses are first struck on their eastern edge, but gradually their greyness is shot through and through with gold, and they, too, yield allegiance to the king in his beauty.

As I write, I can perceive the pale pink stealing over the faces of the snowy heights. The virgins blush at the presence of the monarch, but, like a blush, the rose tint fades and gives place to unsullied whiteness as the sun clears the barrier of the hills and shines with unimpeded glow. Soon the last shade of gloom is chased from the faces of the giant mountains and in unclouded beauty they lift their untrodden crests up into the infinite blue and the sovereign of the sky holds undisputed sway.

The perfect purity of the atmosphere, combined with the dazzling whiteness of the upper peaks, gives them a most deceptive appearance of nearness. I tested this on a fine afternoon by taking a walk in

the direction of the nearest of them. After walking a considerable distance, however, I found that at least two valleys and one lower, though still lofty, range intervened between me and the sublime summits beyond which lay the "hermit kingdom" of Thibet. As I returned, I observed a wedding procession winding up one valley and down into the next. The bright-hued garments of the bridegroom and his friends added some welcome colour to the landscape. They were preceded by musicians who performed on their primitive instruments with increasing vigour as they came nearer to the home of the bride.

On another afternoon, partly for exercise and partly for the view of the snows and of the sunset, I climbed a bold and lofty hill to the south. On its very summit I was surprised to discover a sturdy old scarlet rhododendron in flower, a bunch of whose blooms I gathered for Miss Reed. I was well rewarded for my climb by a magnificent view of a series of snowy peaks, ranging in height from eleven to twenty-three thousand feet. Through my glass their domes and ravines seemed but a few miles away.

The sunset effects both on sky and mountain were very beautiful, and six well defined tints were distinctly discernible. The brown of the bare hills in the immediate foreground was succeeded by the green of the wooded slopes of the lower mountains. Then the rich blue light of the further valleys deepened into purple, while this, at the snow line, gave way to the pale pink which presently passed into the perfect white—this in turn forming an exquisite contrast to the cloudless blue.

It was the day on which the tidings of the passing of our beloved Queen-Empress had reached us, and I had brought with me a pocket volume of Tennyson, from which I read, in honour of our new Queen, "A Welcome to Alexandra." The beauty of the scene tempted me to linger till the sun had completed his rapid descent below the horizon. I then, thoughtlessly, decided to vary my homeward route by descending the further side of the mountain. This, however, proved more difficult than I had anticipated. What at first seemed a smooth slope, soon became a rocky precipice, which necessitated a considerable detour. Meanwhile, the brief Indian twilight was deepening into darkness. Fortunately, a previous walk in the same direction, had led me along a very rough path through the brushwood, and I hoped, by as direct a descent as was possible, to strike it. This I happily did, after a good deal of scrambling, and while there was just light enough to distinguish the narrow, winding track. Notwithstanding that I ran myself out of breath, it was quite dark before I reached the little wicket that admitted me to the grounds of the Asylum. It was a sharp reminder that while it may be very enjoyable, as it certainly was, to view the sunset from a mountain-top in the Himalayas, it is not always quite safe.

One other striking atmospheric effect should be noted, and that is, the mist that fills the valleys. One morning, at seven o'clock, I found the whole of the wide Shor valley apparently transformed into a sea, so much did the vast mass of light vapour which filled it resemble water. The mist settles

down, and lies so dense and flat, with a surface ruffled into wavelike ridges, that when the sun shines on it the illusion is almost perfect. The resemblance was increased by the appearance of some of the lower peaks, which stood out precisely like rocky islands. Pithoragarh was completely submerged, while our own heights were only about 100 feet above this mimic sea. Soon, however, we, too, were enveloped, as the increasing power of the sun attracted the vapour upwards, and in two or three hours more all had been absorbed into the atmosphere, and the sky was cloudless. It recalled to the mind Isaiah's splendid imagery: "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed."

CHAPTER XIX

CHANDAG HEIGHTS

THE WORKER

THOSE of my readers who are familiar with my former little volume on Miss Reed's life and work* will understand with what special interest I looked forward to the days I had planned to pass with her. Nor was I disappointed in any respect. Neither the worker nor the work fell short of my expectations, and I look upon the eleven days spent at Chandag Heights as being perhaps the most interesting experience of my tour.

What invests Miss Reed and her work with a peculiar and pathetic interest is the fact that she herself is a fellow sufferer with her afflicted flock. Many Missionaries (as this volume bears witness) are doing devoted work among these diseased outcasts, but to Mary Reed alone among English-speaking missionaries has been accorded the distinction of *ministering as a leper to the lepers*. Those desirous of perusing the story of her life in detail are referred to the book just mentioned. Here it can only be briefly sum-

* "Mary Reed, Missionary to the Lepers," with introduction by Rev. F. B. Meyer, B.A. Illustrated with photographs and tastefully bound in cloth. Price 2s. 6d. Marshall Brothers, Keswick House, Paternoster Row, London, E.C., or the Mission to Lepers, Exeter Hall, London, W.C.

marized. While working as a Zenana Missionary in Cawnpore, and in very reduced health, Miss Reed was often moved to pity by the sight of lepers in advanced stages of the disease, and frequently gave them alms, but, so far as she remembers, without direct personal contact. She thinks it probable that the disease supervened upon an already lowered and anæmic condition. In a weak and suffering state she returned to America in search of health. (Miss Reed was, until 1898, a Missionary of the Women's Foreign Missionary Society, connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States.) For fifteen months she was an inmate of the Home and Hospital connected with her society in Cincinnati. After undergoing an operation for a specific ailment, there still remained symptoms which perplexed her physicians as well as herself. For thirteen days she had to lie in one fixed position, but though suffering much she was filled with a sense of inward peace and spiritual power hitherto unknown. The nurses and attendants were astonished as she gave expression to her exaltation in songs of praise during these days of bodily helplessness. She herself regards this a preparation for the shock of the terrible discovery she was so soon to make.

Among the unaccountable symptoms in the case was an acute and painful tingling in the tip of the right forefinger, sometimes lasting for days, as well as a livid spot on the right cheek. While lying in this helpless state, it was borne in upon her, suddenly and irresistibly, that her mysterious ailment was none other than leprosy! Her ordinary medical attendant

was shocked, even to tears, when she declared her conviction, and said, as if it were too dreadful to be true: "*It must not: it cannot be!*" But abundant and indisputable medical opinion was soon to confirm her own instinctive impression. There is a large medical college at Cincinnati, and three of the leading physicians of that institution examined Miss Reed, and declared her disease was leprosy. One of these gentlemen was an agnostic, and was so deeply impressed by her superhuman fortitude, under so crushing a blow, that he sought opportunities of religious conversation with one who was so evidently possessed of a secret unknown to him.

Dr. P. A. Morrow, of New York City, is regarded by the medical profession in America as a high authority on leprosy and kindred diseases; while in England the names of Sir Joseph Fayrer, M.D., and Jonathan Hutchinson, Esq., F.R.C.S., of London, will be recognized as those of eminent specialists, both of whom were members of the Committee of the National Leprosy Fund. Dr. Chowsky, of Bombay, was one of the Medical Commissioners appointed by the Leprosy Commission to investigate the disease in India. *These all, independently of each other, and after long and careful examination, diagnosed Miss Reed's case to be one of undoubted leprosy.* Drs. Fayrer and Hutchinson both urged the necessity of good diet and healthy climate in order to prolong life; but none of these specially qualified judges doubted for a moment the nature of the disease. One of these physicians encouraged her to expect a considerable period of



Miss Reed's House, Chandag Asylum.



Miss Reed paying the carpenters and builders.
The man stooping is one of her servants.

working life, if under healthy conditions. Aided by these, he anticipated that her naturally strong constitution would for years withstand the inroads of the disease, unless it proved to be of an especially malignant type.

It will be readily understood that regard for Miss Reed's feelings demands a reticent treatment of this very personal topic. But she would like the many friends—both British and American—who have sympathized with her and sustained her by prayer, to know something as to her state of health. I may, therefore, say that at the time of my visit, she was conscious of the presence of the malady in many ways. She was suffering from the fatigue and overstrain of an exceptionally heavy year's work, during which she had acted as manager of works, accountant and paymaster for the building of the new church, as well as of the comfortable new bungalow of which I was the first occupant. When, therefore, she told me she had never had clearer tokens of the presence of the disease, and added: "Can you not see it in my face?" I had to admit that her appearance had given me much concern. There were tingling pains in the fingers, together with other external signs, as well as internal ones which corresponded with the outward symptoms. But happily, these more alarming indications are not chronic. It is a common feature of the disease that it has alternate periods of activity and quiescence, regulated, no doubt in great measure, by the general condition of the system. The patient is frequently really ill for a few days, and then recovers a fair degree of health.

Some of those who erroneously assume that leprosy, in all cases, speedily disfigures or mutilates its victims, have expressed surprise at the non-development (or slow development) of the disease in Miss Reed's case. But this arrestment is by no means a rare occurrence. We have already referred to one (Musсуwa, at Almora) who, after being a leper for over forty years, died rather of old age than of leprosy. I myself saw many cases in which the development of the disease had been arrested for years, even after mutilation had begun. I recall a nice, healthy-looking woman in the Purulia Asylum, who, so far as her face and general appearance were concerned, would never have been suspected of being a leper. On my inquiring how the disease affected her, I was shown her hands, on which there was not one complete finger; and yet I was assured by the missionary and the caretaker that the disease had made no perceptible progress during the eight years she had been an inmate. Many other similar cases could be cited.

On this point I may quote the testimony of Dr. Dease, who, as a Medical Missionary, was in charge of the Chandag Asylum for some years prior to Miss Reed's appointment. In a conversation I had with him in Bareilly he said he had himself known the progress of leprosy to be arrested for years by good diet and healthy conditions of life. And these deterrents have no doubt had their effect in Miss Reed's case.

Not only is the bracing climate of Chandag Heights unfavourable to the development of the disease, but

Miss Reed's life is an active one, and in the main conducive to health. There can, moreover, be no doubt that an attitude of morbid melancholy, however excusable it might be, would foster the malady and promote its rapid development, as it does in many cases.

But the tone and spirit of Miss Reed's life are the very reverse of melancholy. The fact that she has all along refused to take a gloomy view of her affliction has undoubtedly had an important influence on her health. Her intervals of depression are few and brief. The general tenor of her life for these ten years past is expressed in a sentence from one of her letters:—"I find so much help and blessing in song, and from day to day I prove that *faith, hope, love, work, and song* cause sorrow to depart."

If one were anxious to find a purely natural explanation of the fact that a woman, returning to India in enfeebled health and with so insidious a disease as leprosy undermining her constitution, has, nevertheless, been able for ten years to do more than an average Missionary's duties, the foregoing facts would carry much weight. But this is emphatically a question to which there are two sides, *the human and the divine*, and while we have called attention to the natural aspects of the case, it is only that we may emphasize the supernatural. From the day when, with the clearness of a voice, it was revealed to her, not only that her disease was leprosy, but that her work was henceforth to be amongst these stricken people, Miss Reed has exercised a very real faith in God for daily strength. And who shall say her faith has

been in vain? Without using medical means for herself (though employing them, and sometimes with decided benefit, for her inmates), she has been sustained in her arduous and often painful work for ten years, and she, and many with her, gratefully recognize this strength as God-given. She herself would say that this is the life of Jesus being made manifest in her body (2 Cor. iv. 10), and that God is imparting through His Spirit a strength which holds in check the inherent tendencies to corruption and decay.

I have said that it was my privilege to be the first occupant of the pretty and commodious new bungalow which Miss Reed has had built close to her own modest cottage, and which it is her hope will, ere long, be occupied by a companion and co-worker. Here in the snug little dining-room we had our meals together, though at separate tables by Miss Reed's special desire. Here we passed the winter evenings warmed and cheered by a blazing wood fire in the open hearth. Here we mutually enjoyed many chapters from the Book of Books. Here we read together choice bits of Tennyson and Ruskin, and not a little of Dr. A. J. Gordon's "Ministry of the Spirit." Here I listened to confidences too sacred and intimate for the publicity of these pages. Here, too, we closed each day as we had begun it, by counsel and promise from the Holy Word, and by prayer and thanksgiving to the Father, all wise and all loving. This mutually helpful intercourse found its appropriate close, when on the morning of my departure, I was requested to mark a passage in Miss

Reed's new Bible, and I underlined the Apostle's triumphant testimony: *Wherefore we faint not; but though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal*" (2 Cor. iv. 16-18).

While the lepers are Miss Reed's especial care, her sympathies are by no means bounded by the walls of her Asylum. During the year preceding my visit, she had sent through the post some thousands of marked Testaments to the English-speaking postmasters of India. This effort elicited many letters of appreciation, as well as some of an opposite character.

But I found another need lying still more heavily on her heart, and that was the condition of the dwellers in the many villages clustering round Chandag Heights. She was greatly concerned on behalf of the poor dark souls in these hamlets, whose idolatrous revels often break the stillness of her nights. A promise on behalf of the Missionary Pence Association to provide £20 a year enabled her to secure an efficient native Evangelist, who has already made an encouraging beginning of his work among these neglected people. In his first tour of four days he visited thirty-one villages and spoke to nearly five-hundred listeners.

CHAPTER XX

CHANDAG HEIGHTS

THE WORK

THE Leper Asylum at Chandag was opened in 1886, buildings capable of sheltering some forty inmates having been erected by the Mission to Lepers. In his report for 1888, we find Dr. Dease, who was then Superintendent, pleading for funds to increase the number of inmates from thirty to forty and telling of much encouragement in his work. He speaks of two leper girls who "actually seem to have forgotten the dreadful disease of which they are victims, so cheerful and happy do they seem ; they even romp, as children of their age love to do." In 1891, Miss Budden, who, from her neighbouring station of Pithoragarh rendered valuable service in the work of the Asylum, pleads for further extension on the ground that there are more than five-hundred lepers in the Shor Pargannah alone. The figures of the preceding census showed the district in which Chandag is situated—viz, Eastern Kumaon—to have a larger percentage of lepers than any other district in India.

In 1891, Miss Reed was appointed Superintendent of the Asylum, and in the following year reports 38 inmates, of whom all but one had become Christians.

In 1893, the work was growing rapidly, and in her annual statement we have touching glimpses of some of the pathetic life-stories with which work among lepers especially abounds. We note one or two:—

“Bachchuli, a very pretty girl of ten, seems to have completely recovered during the past months. There is not now, and has not been for months, a mark on her, or any indication whatever that she has been affected. I have been giving her and others the medicine made from the herb of which I wrote you, and it has had a truly marvellous effect on three, of whom Bachchuli is one. What a mercy it will be if the disease never returns! . . . Ranjitia was brought by his starved and suffering mother to the Asylum in the early winter—a most piteous case she was. I did everything that could be done for her, but it was too late, she grew worse, and died in a few weeks; she was so grateful for all the comforts and care received. I kept her little boy a few days after their arrival to make sure that he was a healthy child, then asked Miss Budden to take him, which she did. He has been adopted by a woman in the home who cares for him as though he were her own.”

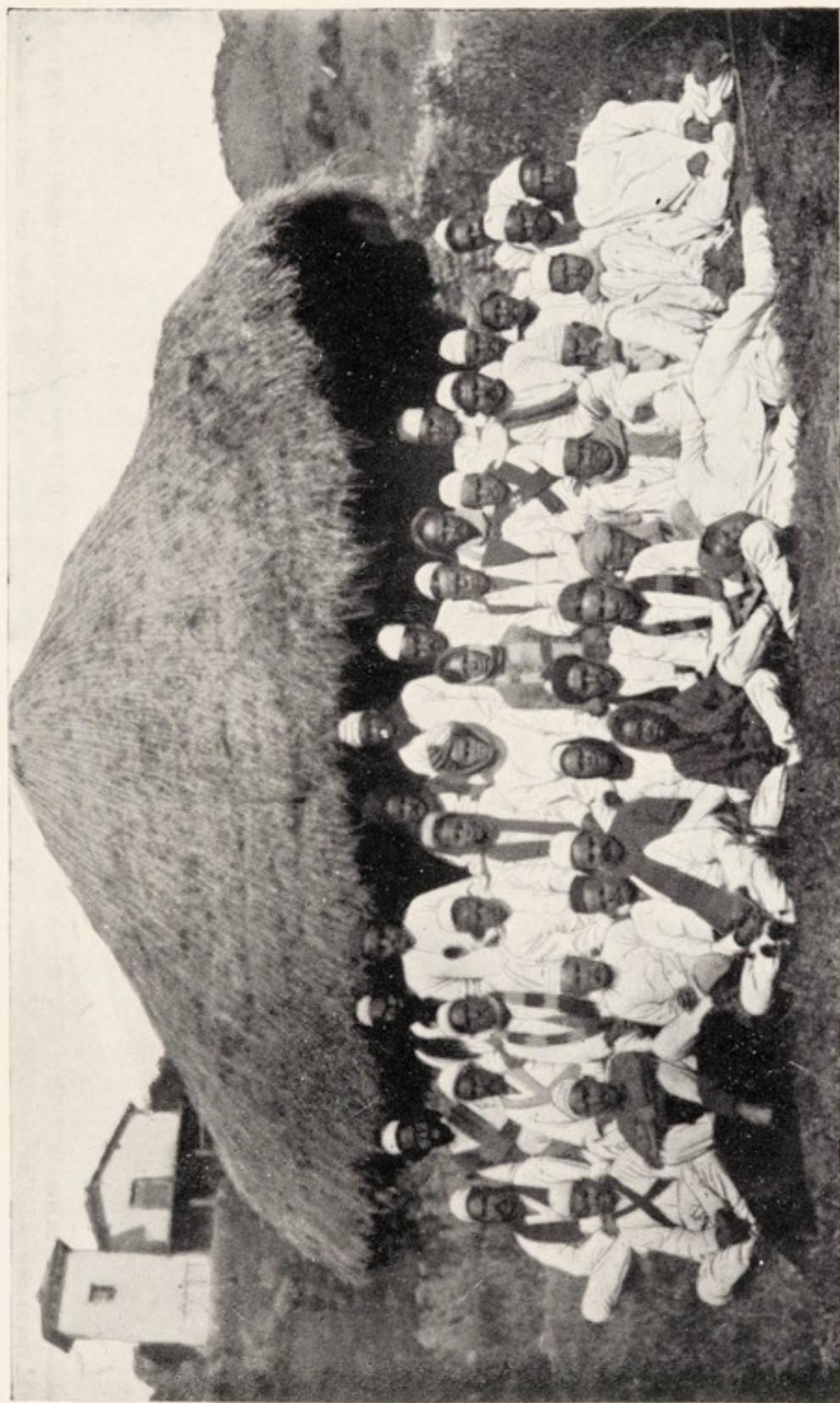
Then follow some touching details of a poor leper woman and her child:

“Bachwa continues to fret and grieve for his mother. She was such an affectionate, real mother to her children, and feels the separation from them more keenly than many mothers would, yet her patience and trust are beautiful to see, for since she trusts and loves ‘Him who doeth all things well’ she never murmurs.” This woman herself wrote to

her kind friends in Ireland: "My heart is very glad to know that you are praying for me so constantly. Through God's mercy I am well. Through your prayers I receive benefit to both my soul and body. This disease has not made any progress this year, and I am trusting that I shall thus be saved in the future from suffering. My little boy is now with me; he fretted night and day for me, and became very ill, and Miss Budden said he would die of grief if longer separated from me. . . . My little girl is in school."

Later on little Bachwa was placed in the Home for untainted boys at Almora, and in order to be near him, the mother was transferred to the Leper Asylum there. Just at the time of my visit to Almora, both Bachwa, now grown to a fine, healthy boy, and his mother passed through a severe trial. A very suspicious sore showed itself on Bachwa's toe, and the hospital assistant pronounced it to be leprosy. The grief of both mother and boy was heartrending, as they knew what a terrible fate that would mean. However, Mr. Bulloch pleaded for delay, so as to be quite certain before poor Bachwa should be transferred from the happy Children's Home to be almost the only child-leper in the Asylum. Meanwhile, the Civil Surgeon was consulted, and he, to the unspeakable joy of Bachwa and his mother, declared it to be, not leprosy, but only a sore arising out of an accident to the foot. So the little fellow returned from the Hospital to be happy among his playmates again.

The many services Miss Reed and I held with her



Group of Leper Men, Chandag Asylum.

lepers and the insight I was enabled to get into the whole work, will remain among the most cherished memories of my Indian visit. Miss Reed proved herself a most able and sympathetic interpreter of the addresses I was privileged to give, and it was, I believe, a relief and a refreshment to her to hear the old truths proclaimed in a fresh voice, and phrased perhaps in a new way.

On the first Sunday morning of my visit, as the new church had not yet been publicly opened, the women assembled in the open air for a service at 9 o'clock. Yuhanna (the male catechist), Timah (a native Evangelist), and Miss Reed all took part, and I added a few words of greeting at the close. It was a pathetic sight as the sad and hungry eyes looked out from the maimed faces, and the lepers drank in the "words of eternal life" from the lips of her who has become so strangely linked with them in their affliction. Then, as we all knelt on the bare hill side, and, with tears in her voice, their "mother" interceded for them, even a stranger to the language could not be unconscious of the "travail of soul" which found utterance in the earnest pleading.

In the afternoon we held our first service with the men at Panahgah. All who were able to leave their houses listened earnestly to the address I gave them on the sweet old theme of John iii. 16. After the meeting we visited all the men's quarters and spoke with those who were too ill to venture out to the service.

On Tuesday morning we again had a service with the women. They sat on the ground in a sunny spot

(all but four who were too ill to come) and I spoke to them on John x. 10. They listened with their usual close attention, and, when questioned, the responses of many were prompt and hearty. At the close two of the women engaged in prayer, one of whom was Bella, who fell a victim to the disease while a student in a college at Bareilly. She is now useful among the others, and has a most helpful influence over them.

In the evening of Tuesday, January 22nd, the workmen who had been engaged in the new buildings were assembled for an exhibition of lantern views in the church, and with them came a number of men from the neighbouring villages. We commenced about 6.30 by showing them the portrait of our beloved Queen-Empress, followed by that of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. Little did any of us imagine that on that evening and at that hour (by English reckoning) the sceptre was falling from the dying hand of her who had wielded it so long and so nobly. It was not till three days later that the news of her death reached that distant outpost of her great empire.

Pictures of the life of Joseph, of the Prodigal Son, and the life of our Lord followed, and were expounded by Miss Reed and myself. As not more than two or three of the audience had ever seen a lantern exhibition before, it was "magic" indeed to them, and I was amused at the struggle between their curiosity and their dread of the marvellous machine, as they pressed round to examine it at the close.

Wednesday morning found us down at Panahgah for what proved to be a very memorable service with

the men. They sat on the open ground in the sun, just above the houses, and formed a very pathetic group. The more decided Christians sat in front. Anwa, who leads the singing, has a sadly disfigured face, though his hands and feet are as yet unaffected. Next to him sat a young man with really handsome features, but when he tried to find the text in his Bible, I was shocked to see that his hands were only stumps. This was Nankiya, a consistent Christian. Close to him sat poor little Rupwa, whose young face is so marred that it might be that of an old man. He seemed to listen with great interest, as indeed almost all did. Others of this sad and stricken congregation had noses that had fallen in almost to the level of their cheeks, and the eyes of some were sorely affected also.

Seldom have I felt a more real sense of the Divine presence than that which stole over us as we were led on to plead with these sad hearts to open and let the Saviour in. Our text was Rev. iii. 20, and both speaker and interpreter were so helped by the Holy Spirit that, as the address proceeded, several could be observed quietly brushing away their tears. A definite appeal to the non-Christians to rise and say, "I will open and let Him in," was responded to with apparent sincerity by five—two or three of whom I had noticed to be listening intently. It is hoped that, after further instruction, these may be added to the Church among the lepers on Chandag Heights.

On the following day the leper women were assembled for the first time in their new church for the opening service. We had some special prayers

and singing, and a short address on Matt. xviii. 20, after which we showed them the New Testament portion of the lantern pictures.

They were intensely interested in the views and recognized each one almost immediately, especially Miss Reed's class of girls, who are remarkably well instructed in the Scriptures. Their answers to her many questions were quickly and correctly given, and when the picture of the Sacred Head with the crown of thorns came before them, a low murmur of sympathy and awe went round the church.

In the afternoon we held an informal meeting with the women, during which we got from about a score of them, though with some difficulty, their messages for the friends in England and America by whom they are specially supported. It was rather an ordeal for some of them, and their embarrassment as to the kind of message to send, as well as in speaking it out before us and the other lepers, was very evident. However, it was rather a "testing" time as to their conduct and their spiritual condition, and Miss Reed knew how to turn it to good account.

A few specimen messages may be recorded:

Manla says, "I have been lazy, but from this time I am going to try to be better."

Gangoli (the elder), "I suffered much at home, but by coming here I have received blessing and found rest."

Kamli, "I send many salaams. I want to be a good girl and a true Christian, and I will try hard to learn to read."

Jogyani, "I am very grateful for the kindness I

receive from you, and I believe in answer to your prayers I am helped. I want to improve and be better."

Rebli, "I suffer a very great deal, but through my prayers and yours for me I get much help to bear my pains. I send many thanks." (Poor Rebli is a great sufferer, but a true Christian. Her message was given in a low, hoarse tone, her voice being almost gone.)

Dipah, "To-day I have given my heart to Jesus and I want to be His obedient child."

Kaliyani, "I am truly grateful that the wants both of my soul and my body have been provided for here." (She is one of the best of the Christian women.)

Kali (a great sufferer and not naturally an amiable woman) said, "I feel a little better at present. I am thankful that God has saved my soul and that He gives me strength to endure. If He did not, what should I do?"

The message of one of the women had a special interest for me. This was Minnie, who was, a few years ago, assigned to my wife and myself to be supported by us. Poor Minnie has had some sad and bitter experiences in her life of about twenty years. Three or four years since she was tempted to leave the shelter of the asylum for a life of wandering and, it is feared, of sin. But she found only pain and sorrow in the lot of a homeless leper, and returned to her kind friend and teacher who had mourned over her absence. After a time she learnt to appreciate her home more than ever, and I was very glad to hear from Miss Reed that Minnie is

now a great comfort and help to her, and tries to be useful among the other women. She is a nice looking girl, and her face is at present untouched by the disease. After she had received the little present I had taken with me for her, she was asked if she had any message for Mrs. Jackson. She said:—"I send her much gratitude and love, and I am so happy you have come. I was a naughty girl, but last March I was much convicted of sin and could not sleep. I got up five times in the night and prayed, and peace came to me. Since then I have been happy in Jesus. I am so grateful that the Lord has put it into your hearts to care for me. I do hope I shall be worthy of the support you give me. God has given me such a good mother here, too. I am grateful to both my mothers."

Amongst the messages sent by the men I note that of Rupwa (poor Rupwa suffers much, besides being deaf—but he is a real Christian), "I send many thanks. I am happy in my heart, and am very grateful."

Anwa said, "I am very happy in Jesus and wish to walk with Him." Anwa is a very earnest Christian.

On Thursday morning we had another service with the women with a Bible reading on three passages in John's first Epistle (i. 4, ii. 1, and v. 13). In the afternoon, Miss Reed and I went down to Pithoragarh, and by the request of the ladies there I gave a short address. Miss Tresham kindly showed me their Girls' School, Women's Hospital, and Home for Blind Women. Miss Budden was absent, but expected to return the following week.

It was a great privilege to speak a few cheering words (from John xx. 19-22) to these workers who have many things to try their faith, and we encouraged one another by remembering how few and fearful were those trembling disciples when through the shut doors Jesus appeared in their midst, and said "Peace be unto you," and what wonderful results followed their labours when filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.

Friday morning found us down at Panahagah for another service with the men, when our subject was "able to save, to succour, and to keep." We were specially encouraged to see the bright faces and close attention of some of those who had been impressed on Wednesday. They were all out to the service, except four who were too ill, indeed some of those who were present seemed unfit to be anywhere but in bed.

Sunday, January 27th, was a day of joy to the lepers, as on it they took formal possession of their new church on the heights, and held their first Sunday services in it.

At 9.30 the women assembled, all but one poor soul who was too ill to attend. It must have been a great effort to some of those who were present to limp up the short path from their quarters to the church. It was a pathetic, and even a pretty, scene that greeted me on entering the church. Miss Reed had been at work, I knew, both late and early, to get the matting laid down with the straw under it which made the floor so comfortable for the halt and maimed congregation to sit upon. The walls were brightened

by large coloured pictures illustrating the life of our Lord, as well as by texts. Two fires made the temperature comfortably warm in spite of the cold and cloudy morning. The forty poor sufferers arranged in orderly rows on the floor formed an audience to whom it was a privilege indeed to tell out the unsearchable riches of Christ. At the upper end of the church stood a table covered with a clean white cloth and with a vase of flowers on it. Here in three chairs were seated Miss Reed, Yuhanna, and myself.

After Miss Reed had with great earnestness engaged in prayer, she read Psalm 63, after which I spoke on the soul (1) thirsting; (2) satisfied; (3) following. They listened with close and even eager attention, and after the address it was suggested that if any of them felt led to do so they should offer prayer. In response, two of them pleaded most earnestly. Miss Reed felt greatly encouraged by the reality of their petitions. Jogyani confessed her past shortcomings and besought help to follow closely, and Minnie most earnestly prayed that as they were worshipping in their nice new church they might themselves be temples of the Holy Ghost.

Altogether the first Sunday service for the women was an occasion of spiritual helpfulness, from which Miss Reed and I returned to our breakfast with thankful hearts. The women were quite reluctant to leave at the close; as Miss Reed remarked, "they found it good to be there," and did not want to go.

In the afternoon we held a similar service for the men, thirty-two of whom managed to make the



Group of Leper Women, Chandag Asylum. The one on the left is Bella.

difficult ascent from their quarters at Panahgah. The message, based on Isaiah xii. 2, seemed to help some of them. When on our way to the service I informed Miss Reed what my text would be, and she replied, "I hope that will help G——, and perhaps others as well." This hope was fulfilled in part at least, as when we gave an opportunity for the men to pray at the close, poor G—— was the first who confessed his need and sought pardon and restoration. This man was genuinely converted, Miss Reed thinks, a few years ago, but was tempted sorely and fell into sin for which his sorrow has long been deep and bitter. I had been struck at previous services with his expression of utter dejection—poor fellow he, too, is proving that the way of transgressors is hard.

As the men left the Church each was given a packet of sweetmeats as a treat provided by a friend of the lepers in England, and a similar gift was also much appreciated by the women. They are very partial indeed to these confections, and look upon them as a great luxury.

On the Tuesday following we had two most interesting services in the new Church. The first was for the workmen who had built it, and who listened very attentively to an address on, "By their fruits ye shall know them," in which I endeavoured to point out the contrasted motives and results of Hinduism and Christianity. They were urged to consider what the servants of Christ were doing even in their own remote corner of the world at Chandag and Pithoragarh. Their sick were being healed and helped, their children taught, and even their lepers sheltered and

cared for, without fee or reward by those who had left their own homes and kindred in distant lands. When I asked them *why* this should be and paused for a reply, an old man in the front row said, "For merit." This answer afforded an opportunity for still further emphasizing the fact that the *love of Christ* is the constraining motive for missionary service, and that, not only were these temporal boons bestowed on them without money and without price, but that eternal life itself is God's free gift through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Then followed our farewell service with the lepers, men and women together. Almost all the women were present, and a good many of the men had come up from Panahgah. There was a solemn sense of God's presence, and many of us felt the power of the truth as we dwelt upon some of the "precious" things in the Epistles of Peter, and especially on the most precious of all, viz., "Unto you which believe—*He is precious.*" I noticed among the women one little girl I had not seen before, and found she had only come in that morning, a child of ten with the disease already very pronounced. Her face was affected, as well as her feet, slightly, while her voice was nearly gone! She is an orphan, both parents having died lepers—the mother at home and the father at a great shrine at Hardwar, to which he had made a pilgrimage in hope of healing. As I wished to select a child to be supported by my little son, I choose this poor waif, whose name is Parli. When she was told of this and shown his photograph she seemed to brighten up. She is a timid little

creature with a sad, wistful face, and appears to have been a leper for several years of her short life.

The post which brought me the proofs of this chapter for revision brought me also a letter from Miss Reed, saying that "dear little Parli went home to Heaven on September 16th. She suffered much recently, and yet, when able to be up, she seemed so happy to attend service in the Chapel, and greatly loved to memorize and repeat God's Word. When she grew so ill, she wished to be baptized, and on Sunday the 15th she was thus made happy. Then the compassionate Saviour called her next evening to that happy land where there is no pain, suffering, or sin."

The farewells and messages of the lepers, and of the women especially, were very touching, and full of gratitude. Bella, on behalf of them all, said how they thanked God for the messages that they had heard and which had helped them so much. "We wake in the night and think of them," she said. They sent countless salaams to all "who pray for us and love us." The bright smiles on many faces gave way to tears when they realized that it was their final farewell and that I would be leaving too early next morning for a service of any kind.

Miss Reed was much cheered at the definite blessing that had accompanied our services and at these answers to her daily prayers for her flock. For my own part I felt that these services had been the greatest of the many privileges I had enjoyed in India, and I thanked God that I had been permitted and helped of Him to draw water from the wells of salvation for the refreshment of these thirsty souls.

In their gratitude they were determined to see all that was possible of me, and were sitting out on the frosty grass before daylight next morning to watch for my departure. Miss Reed sent them away and they returned at eight, just before I left, and said their farewell salaams. They stood on the highest point of the hill to watch me out of sight down the valley, and waved their chuddars as long as they could see me.

It was with sincere and mutual regret that hostess and guest found the time for parting had come, and our intercourse on this last morning was of a very sacred character.

As our little cavalcade set out on its return march to Almora Miss Reed accompanied me a mile down the valley, and there, in sight of the women on the hill top, our last farewells were said, and alone, yet (as she would gladly testify) *not alone*, my friend returned to resume her loving ministry among these outcasts from home and kindred.

Finally, as a bend in the road gave us our last glimpse of each other, I called out to her what were my two watchwords in all my journeyings—"Hitherto" and "Henceforth." Quickly she caught the meaning, and clearly and bravely her voice rang back across the ravine, "*Yes! and all the way, too.*"

CHAPTER XXI

MORADABAD, RURKI, AND DEHRA DUN

I WAS favoured with fine weather on my return journey from Chandag to the plains, and greatly enjoyed travelling through scenery so diversified, yet always beautiful. I had some very near and clear views of the "eternal snows," including Nanda Devi and the neighbouring heights. One very pleasant incident was my meeting with Miss Annie Budden at the bungalow at Gangoli Hat, where it was my privilege to spend an evening with her. Miss Budden and her companion "dined" with me—in other words they provided the dinner and had it served in my room which adjoined theirs. As Miss Budden has had many years' experience of Missionary work at Pithoragarh and was the first to introduce Miss Reed to the Mission to Lepers, she had much to tell that I was deeply interested to hear, and so the evening sped away all too rapidly.

The two marches from Naini to Almora were done in a day—by 5.15 p.m. The coolies, who had travelled well, were only an hour behind me, having carried their loads $23\frac{1}{2}$ miles that day. During the three days spent in Almora, I was again most kindly entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Bulloch, and renewed

my acquaintance with the lepers, as well as saw something more of the ladies of the London Mission and their excellent work. A group of Thibetan shepherds afforded us a good deal of amusement. These men come down from their distant mountains with their flocks for trading purposes, and manage to combine their business with other people's pleasure by giving gymnastic and acrobatic performances, with one of which we were entertained in the Mission compound.

They were fine, stalwart fellows and very genial and accessible. Mr. Bulloch and I visited their encampment in the evening and brought away one of their "Chilums" or pipes as a trophy. We tried to purchase a prayer-wheel, but this they would not part with—indeed the Lama, or priest, who accompanied the party, was disposed to resent our even handling it.

As the lepers had been the first to welcome me to Almora, so they were the last to bid me God-speed as I left. Many of them came out to the road to greet me as I passed the Asylum, and sent me on my way with their grateful salaams. I should note that Rev. G. M. Bulloch had added to all his other kindness to me by the loan of his sturdy, and valuable pony, "Punch," his own syce being in charge of it.

I journeyed as far as Bhim Tal --three marches—without adventure, but there as I was preparing for my last stage to Kathgodam a very unpleasant thing came to light. At 7 a.m. the syce informed me that the pony had disappeared from the stable during the night and was nowhere to be found! Though he and

and my four coolies had all slept in the stable they declared they knew nothing as to how or when it went, which I found it difficult to believe. However, it was undoubtedly gone, and as Bhim Tal possesses neither police nor telegraph, there was little I could do. I dispatched a coolie to Naini Tal with a note to the police, and started the syce back towards Almora with the saddle on his shoulders and a letter to Mr. Bulloch. As I could not recover the missing animal by either waiting or returning, I hired a pony in the village and went on. This proved a very trying animal though a decent looking one. It stumbled frequently and once at least I should have gone clean over its head had I not just managed to save myself by clinging to its top-knot. As the road to Kathgodam is nearly all down hill I had to walk four or five miles of it, but reached there in time to telegraph to Mr. Bulloch, and to inform the one local policeman of my loss as well as to take tiffin before the train left at 1.50. So ended my month in the mountains. I am glad to say that "Punch" was discovered at Naini Tal a few days later, none the worse for his adventures, and was safely sent back to Almora.

That night and the day following I spent in Bareilly where I was most hospitably received by Dr. and Mrs. Scott of the Theological College and at whose house I met Dr. Dease, who is a colleague of Dr. Scott. It was a privilege to address the Students of the College, as well as to see the very fine Orphanage and other departments, which make up a strong centre of work carried on by the Methodist

Episcopal Church in Bareilly. They have about 1,000 Christians in local connection, while in the Bareilly district and the adjoining one their adherents number nearly 100,000.

Moradabad was my next place of call. Here the Christian teaching in the Leper Asylum is provided by the Mission to Lepers and supervised by the agents of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Accompanied by Rev. L. Core, I visited the Leper Asylum. It is a nice little place, pleasantly situated outside the city, and with accommodation for thirty inmates, each having a separate room. I found there twenty-five lepers, eighteen men and seven women. The number fluctuates very much. It was forty-one two years ago, and was up to thirty-two in August, 1900, and down to nineteen in November. They appear to leave very frequently, and are (the Civil Surgeon says) re-admitted at any time and as often as they choose to present themselves. In this, as well as in some other respects, there appeared to be considerable laxity in the management of this Asylum. While no doubt occasional isolation is better than none, yet it is on all grounds most undesirable that lepers should be permitted to go in and out without any restriction, as they apparently do here. This renders the institution a mere temporary resting place to which they can resort in the intervals of their begging expeditions, and the protective value of the Asylum, so far as the public is concerned, is largely lost. I would like to add that I brought away the impression that the gentlemen mainly concerned, viz., the Civil Surgeon and the Collector, were both genuinely desirous of



Lepers and Children having dinner.



Leper Asylum and Inmates, Moradabad.



making the best possible arrangements in the interests alike of the community and of the lepers, and there is good reason to hope for an improvement shortly. In the entry I was invited to make in the Visitors' Book I suggested that a little more comfort, as to the clothing and in some other respects, might reduce the number of deserters and conduce to the filling of the rooms now vacant.

The Christian teacher who attends daily (with occasional exceptions) seemed a good, efficient man, and appeared to take a real interest in his work. There were eight Christians among the twenty-five inmates, and they sang a "bhajan" very heartily—one poor fellow being most enthusiastic, and clapping his stumps together like a regular Salvationist.

On arrival at Rurki, Rev. J. Lyon kindly met me and put me up in a cosy little tent in his garden. Sunday morning at nine found us at the Leper Asylum, which, though really just across the Ganges Canal from Mr. Lyon's bungalow, is fully a mile away by the road.

We found all the lepers (over forty) seated in the sun for the sake of the warmth, just outside the church of the Asylum. They were a very happy, grateful company, and all except three or four were Christians. As usual, a few cases were frightfully disfigured, one poor woman having the most ghastly face I have ever seen—it was so terribly suggestive of a death's head. But I met with no company of lepers whose interest seemed greater or whose responses were more hearty, and their appreciation of the address in which I sought to show them the fulness

and the freeness of the great salvation was most evident. There is a happy Christian tone here, and it is one more proof that the spiritual interests of the inmates are best served in Asylums where there is entire missionary control.

I was much struck with the expression of kindly intelligence in the face of Lucknoo, one of the lepers—a very superior man, who acts as compounder, and, assisted by his wife, who is also a leper, cares most kindly for the others, and frequently binds up their wounds. They are both young, and neither of them very much affected, and it was a proof of true spiritual life to find them so helpful, and doing such real service for Christ among their fellow sufferers. Lucknoo came down from Dehra Dun, and especially remembers Mr. W. C. Bailey's visit to the Asylum there, as it was then that he became a Christian.

The Rurki Asylum was quite full, and it will probably be necessary to enlarge it shortly. Land is available for an extension, and Mr. Lyon thinks the Municipality would grant it free. The lepers sent most grateful messages to all their friends in England, and wished to assure me that they were happy in Jesus, and trusting only in Him.

At Mr. Lyon's request, I conducted his English services both morning and evening. The Secretary of the Rurki Young Men's Christian Association was present in the morning, and suggested that the evening service should be notified to the members of the Association, as well as to the students of the Government Engineering College. The result was that, in addition to the usual congregation, fully forty young

men were present, all of them Europeans. One young fellow came forward at the close, and very earnestly and frankly told me that he had decided during the service that he would be a Christian, which was a very cheering conclusion to a happy day's work.

In company with Mr. Lyon, I called on Dr. Scott, a native Missionary of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, who, with the assistance of his brother, kindly cares for some seventeen lepers at Muzza-farnaggar. These poor outcasts have acquired a kind of settlement in a Mango tope, or grove, in which they have built huts for themselves. Daily prayers and Sunday services have been held for some time, with the gratifying result that the whole of the little community have become Christians.

Dr. Scott reports that there is another company of lepers located under similar conditions at Meerut, among whom he would be glad to place a teacher.

These two are specimens of a vast number of leper settlements to be found all over India where these hopeless people congregate, forming little lazarettos or leper quarters, and bound together by no bond but their common affliction. In some instances a small allowance is granted them by the authorities, but more often they are left to subsist by begging, in which practice they become very persistent. I was informed by a resident in a North India town, that his bungalow was regularly visited by a leper mounted on a pony, who demanded alms with the air of one who had a right to relief, rather than of one who solicited charity.

The moral and physical condition of most of these

settlements may be more easily imagined than described. Without either supervision or sanitation of even the most elementary kind, they are the abodes of hopeless misery and foul disease. Untended and unrelieved, with maimed features and mutilated limbs, these stricken creatures fulfil Isaiah's words, and under the attack of this loathsome complaint the body becomes literally a mass of "wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment."

Dehra Dun was my next stage, and I was met on arrival by Rev. W. J. P. Morrison who drove me at once to the Leper Asylum, together with Mr. Bhose, a retired native pastor. Mr. Bhose is most kind and regular in his ministrations to the lepers, for whom he has a genuine love, and who warmly appreciate his services, which are voluntary and unpaid.

The Dehra Asylum is beautifully situated on the outskirts of the town, and commands lovely views of Mussoorie and of the surrounding mountains. In the grounds of the Asylum, I was shown the comfortable little bungalow which was for many years the residence of the late C. W. Jackson, the first European leper admitted to the Dehra Dun Asylum, Mr. Jackson, who had been in Government Service, was forty-five years old at the time of his admission in 1890, and had then been a leper about nineteen years. His suspicions were first aroused by an eruption on his body, which in a few years developed into disfiguring sores. He visited England for treatment, but derived no benefit, and finally was admitted as an inmate of this Asylum. As Government granted

him a pension, he was spared the humiliation of living on charity, and spent the remaining seven years of his life in the house erected for him by the Mission to Lepers. He was a most capable man, and a decided Christian, and found a sphere of useful service in managing the accounts and business affairs of the Asylum, as well as in assisting in the Christian teaching. Though he suffered much, and was reduced to crutches at last, I find Mr. Wellesley Bailey writing of him, in 1896, that to "his energy, executive skill, and kind, but firm, administration is largely due the state of perfection to which this beautiful institution has attained."

Just at the time I left India a successor to Mr. Jackson was installed in his little house and in some of his duties. This was Mr. R——, a Eurasian of good education and respectable connections, who was brought to the notice of Mr. Thomas A. Bailey and myself on my arrival in Bombay. He has been afflicted with this terrible malady about four years, and has a wife and four children, all of whom are, happily, untainted. I found on visiting Dehra Dun that his services would be acceptable there, and it was a privilege to be able to arrange for his admission. He has since written in most appreciative terms of his house and his circumstances generally, and of the kindness he has received, both from the Civil Surgeon, Dr. Elphick, and from Rev. W. J. P. Morrison.

It gave me real pleasure to make the acquaintance of Padiya, the leper Catechist, who has for many years, both by his teaching and his life, exercised a

most helpful influence among his fellow-sufferers at Dehra Dun. As long ago as 1888, I find Padiya is reported to be working faithfully and lovingly among his companions in affliction. "He keeps up a daily morning and evening service in the chapel, and has a school for boys during the day. He also visits the lepers from house to house, preaching the Word of God and teaching them Christian hymns. All the inmates like and respect him, and when any of the non-Christian lepers are ill they are sure to send for Padiya, who goes and comforts them." On my visit fourteen years later I found Padiya still devotedly fulfilling the ministry described in this extract, and being well reported of by all. His wife is also a leper, though neither are bad cases, and they have one bright little boy, who happily does not at present show any signs of the disease.

I went all over the Asylum, which architecturally is the best and most compact I have seen. The buildings are arranged in blocks of two houses with a cook-house for each pair, and are of very substantial character and good elevation. There is a small dispensary, but no hospital ward. I suggested to the Civil Surgeon that a small hospital would be a great boon for bad cases and in time of illness. He quite agreed with this, and said they would consider if it could be provided.

There were 146 inmates, of whom 48 were Christians. The gardens around the Asylum are well cultivated and useful, and contain a number of tea plants which yield a little towards the expenses. The financial control and management of the Institu-

tion are practically in the hands of the Civil Surgeon.

The following morning, before leaving, we had a service with the lepers in the nice, airy church. Being open on three sides and surrounded by trees and shrubs, this church is a delightful place of worship for them—though a little cool possibly in the depth of winter. Mr. Bhoose interpreted an address for me, and it was a joy to tell to such attentive hearers, if only for once, the “old, old story.” Padiya expressed, for them all, their great gratitude to their friends in England, and assured me that their prayers would follow me in my further travels.

The Church was built, and the Christian work is supported, by the Mission to Lepers in India and the East.

CHAPTER XXII

SAHARANPUR AND LUDHIANA

DR. C. W. Forman, of the American Presbyterian Mission, kindly met me on arrival at Saharanpur, and I was the guest of him and Mrs. Forman for two nights, a visit which I greatly enjoyed—all the more for the presence in the house of their six bright young children. I also met Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Kelso and their son. Mr. Kelso's special charge is the Theological School, while upon Dr. Forman devolves the work of the large orphanage of 175 boys with its industrial training department, the Medical Mission at the City Dispensary, and the supervision of the two Leper Asylums. Dr. Forman greatly needs the services of a Christian mechanic who could train the boys in iron and woodwork, and develop what is already a very promising department. There is no difficulty in disposing of school desks, bedsteads, and other articles of a similar kind, and the Orphanage provides a steady supply of suitable labour. There is also a self-supporting shoemaking department under the charge of a native foreman. An intelligent and efficient Christian mechanic would find a most useful sphere of work here, with a house provided, and a fair salary.

Not more than a passing reference can be made here to the intensely important question of industrial work in connection with Missions, but I formed the decided opinion that at Saharanpur, as well as elsewhere, the practicability of it is clearly proved, and that it is merely a question of the development of selected industries in suitable localities together, of course, with the provision of the necessary capital. The bright boys of Dr. Forman's Orphanage have among them the material of many capable shoemakers, carpenters, blacksmiths, and builders, and when it is borne in mind that there are 25,000 boys and girls from the recent famine now being educated in Mission Orphanages, both the necessity and the possibility of industrial work become abundantly evident.

Dr. Forman and I drove out to the Asylum for Male Lepers, which is located well outside the town. There were twenty-five men at the time of my visit, of whom eight or ten were Christians. One of Dr. Forman's native workers gives daily instruction.

The buildings consist of one range of some twenty houses, each with room for two inmates. Although the care of the asylum is left mainly by the Municipality in the hands of Dr. Forman, he has not entire control, and, as I find to be frequent in such cases, the arrangements for the comfort of the lepers leave something to be desired. Their allowance for food is only two and a half rupees (3s. 4d.) a month, and the dealer does not attend to supply them as often as he is supposed to do.

Three or four lepers whose hands are somewhat

less affected are appointed to cook for those who are quite incapable of doing it for themselves. There was a larger proportion of really bad cases at Saharanpur than I found anywhere else, both among men and women. Among the former, three were quite unable even to limp along; they could only drag themselves painfully forward in a sitting posture and one of them especially was a pitiable object. Emaciated, with skin rough and scaly, he was, all the time I was present, vainly trying with his fingerless stumps to keep off the flies and to allay the incessant irritation. One could only feel that death must be a merciful release from such a condition. Others had raw, open wounds, and blotched, repulsive faces, and altogether they formed the most pitiable company of sufferers I had seen.

If a useful Christian leper, such as Lucknoo at Rurki, or Padiya at Dehra, could be found for the Men's Asylum here, it would be an immense help to these poor fellows. Dr. Forman anticipates no difficulty with the Municipality over such an arrangement if only the man were forthcoming. The new chapel about to be built will be a great help—especially to the Christians. Dr. Forman has wisely decided to build it after the Dehra model—with three sides open. It will stand near the houses, in a central place in front of them, and will be a great improvement to the appearance of the Asylum, besides being a means of spiritual help to the inmates.

The Asylum for Women is outside the town also, but on the opposite side, and is a neat, well-built

little place, in a very pretty and secluded position. There were only ten inmates when I was there, all of whom were very advanced cases. A careful inspection revealed the fact that they did not possess one whole finger among them; and in most cases the entire hand had disappeared! All but two were Christians, and they were much more animated and cheerful than the men. It is to be regretted that the many rooms now vacant in this nice little Asylum cannot be occupied. That the numbers remain low and stationary appears to be due to two causes; (1), that only very bad cases seem to find their way to the Asylum, and (2), that the order of the Municipality against the admission of lepers from any other than the Saharanpur district is strictly enforced. There must be many even within the district to whom the shelter of the Asylum would be a great boon. The women have a grateful recollection of Miss Dunlap, who ministered and taught among them so kindly until her removal to Jullundur.

In one of her letters Miss Dunlap gives a touching account of a visit to these poor outcasts.

“I have been out to see the lepers for the last time before going away for my holidays. At the doorway old Nagree was sitting, looking unusually happy for her. Scattered on the ground beside her were cooking vessels of brass and earthenware. A fire was burning brightly in the little ‘chulha,’ or portable fireplace, on which the natives cook. Nagree was busy kneading her roti, or flat cakes, which take the place of bread. She looked up when I went in, and made a friendly salaam. For thirty

years Nagree has been in the Leper Asylum. Think of being a leper for thirty years ! It is a rare thing for her to leave the Asylum, for her toes are all gone, and it is with the greatest difficulty she stumbles over the ground. You wonder how she manages to do her cooking with only stumps for hands—not a single finger. No wonder she is sometimes cross. But to-day Nagree is most happy, and while I am wondering what the cause of it all is, in walks the cause himself. It is her only son, a man about thirty-five years of age. He has been very ill, but is well now, and has come to make her a visit. He has brought his mother a pint of milk as a present. When I ask her how they all are Nagree says they are all well, but she turns her head meaningly in the direction of her next-door neighbour. I peep in at the next door and see on the bed only a heap of rags, from which come low moans. Another woman, whose hands are still comparatively good, comes in and, throwing aside the rags, screams to the poor woman to get up. This woman's name, translated, is 'Beautiful'! Miss Goddard found her in the bazaar about three years ago. She brought her to the Asylum, and the woman afterwards became a Christian. Poor 'Beautiful's' hands and feet are much swollen. She has fever, and there is a strange look about her eyes that makes one think she will not live long. The leprosy does not seem so bad in her as in some of the others, however. Some weeks ago 'Beautiful' had a sore under her arm. It was giving her trouble, so some of the women lanced it. They have a big knife they use for almost everything,

and I think that is the cause of the fever which promises to end in her death."

Miss Jones, who now visits these women in place of Miss Dunlap, accompanied us to the Asylum. From what I saw, as well as from letters received since my visit, it is evident that these poor despised people have found a true friend in Miss Jones.

In passing through the City we looked in at the dispensary of the Medical Mission, at which there were, in 1899, as many as 21,000 visits. Christian teaching is given daily to those who come seeking relief from bodily suffering, and as one witnessed the crowd of waiting patients and saw how much relief could be afforded by a little skill, one longed that such beneficent work should be multiplied a hundred-fold.

In taking tiffin with the lady missionaries, I gathered some interesting particulars of their educational and Zenana work. They have six schools in the City and have access to many native houses, though here, as elsewhere, the suspicious tyranny of the husbands is the greatest hindrance to the truth reaching their wives. Many of these welcome the visits and the ministrations of the workers, but too often, directly any real interest is shown by the women, further visits are on some pretext, or by an arbitrary prohibition, made impossible. But, however slow the progress may seem, all these agencies have their part in the permeating process by which India is being prepared for a widespread acceptance of Christianity in the not distant future.

After Saharanpur, Ludhiana was my next place of

call. Here, Miss Kemp, one of the workers connected with the North India School of Medicine, met me, and here also I had my first and only experience of a "rickshaw." This conveyance, which may be described, perhaps, as a grown-up baby carriage, made another addition to the large variety of vehicles I had met with in India, and of which the "rickshaw" was by no means the least comfortable.

I had the privilege here of meeting so large a staff of lady workers that I fear to begin to enumerate them. Being quartered for the night at one of the two bungalows, occupied by missionary ladies, and dining at the other, I cannot speak too highly of their hospitality as well as of their kindness in showing me all they could of their most interesting and valuable work. In the North India School of Medicine, native girls are trained to be nurses, compounders, and hospital assistants, and a considerable number have already left the school well qualified for useful work in these capacities. This is the only school of the kind in India, and its possibilities of usefulness are enormous, especially in view of the many millions of India's women who are shut off from all treatment by medical attendants of the male sex. It was a privilege to conduct evening prayers and to address the students on the opportunities afforded by the calling they had chosen.

In connection with the School of Medicine is the Memorial Hospital, erected in memory of Miss Bessie Greenfield, and containing sixty-six beds. The staff of the School also act as physicians and surgeons to the Charlotte Hospital, in which there is accommoda-

tion for thirty patients, as well as a large out-patient department. The latter institution is maintained by Miss Greenfield.

The building in which the Charlotte Hospital is located was formerly the Mission Church, and in it my friend, Mr. Wellesley Bailey, frequently preached when stationed here as a missionary. I had the privilege, not usually accorded to visitors of the male sex, of inspecting the interior of this building, which is now a sanctuary for suffering bodies as well as a place of comfort for weary souls.

It was touching to find two bright little sisters on adjoining beds—one of them with a leg broken in two places. This poor child had remained in her village for twenty days with the leg unset, and had then been brought twenty miles in a bullock cart to the Hospital. But she was well on the way to recovery, and saved from being crippled for life. A well-ordered Dispensary provides medicine for some 15,000 out-patients yearly, all of whom, as well as many friends who accompany them, listen to Christian teaching before receiving medical treatment.

Dr. Wherry very kindly showed me over the large boarding school, as well as the industrial workshop connected with the American Presbyterian Mission. Though not on a large scale, the industrial department is helping to solve the problem of making such work self-supporting.

The old Mission School in the City continues the good work begun in it as long ago as 1834. There are nearly 300 boys receiving an education into which Christian teaching enters largely. When I called

they were just assembling for the morning session, and during the opening prayers they all sat in orderly rows, with every appearance of reverent attention. In the higher department two years' instruction in English is given, and one of the senior classes was catechized for my benefit on the history of Britain prior to the Roman invasion, while another class was called upon to define the "palæolithic" and "neolithic" ages! This is said to be the oldest Mission School in the Punjab, and it was satisfactory to learn that between the fees and Government grants it is self-supporting.

The lepers of Ludhiana form an isolated community, and are located just outside the town, where they have built themselves little mud huts, not unlike those of the poorest natives. No allowance is made to them by the authorities, and begging is, therefore, their only resource. "Without the camp" these unclean people have dwelt alone, despised, neglected, and forsaken. It was not till 1899 that Dr. Edith Brown, Principal of the North India School of Medicine, applied to the Mission to Lepers for a grant sufficient to erect a house and a small dispensary. These were built and four Christian lepers were sent down by Dr. Carleton from the Subathu Asylum to teach the others, and to form, it is hoped, the nucleus of a Christian community among the lepers of Ludhiana. Shortly after their arrival Dr. Brown writes as follows concerning them:—

"They are very earnest Christians, and we are praying that their lives may witness brightly for Christ among the lepers with whom they have come to dwell.

“The woman gained the highest marks, and a prize in the oral examination conducted last year by the Sunday School Union. Poor thing! She is not able to write, as her hands are so diseased. All three are able to read, and their Bibles are evidently treasures to them.

“A service is held by one or other of the missionaries every Sunday, in addition to week-day visits. One morning last week a short service with the Christians was held, which they seemed to enjoy very much. They sang a very plaintive bhajan (hymn) which, freely translated, was that God was everything to them in spite of trouble, sorrow, sickness, &c., the refrain coming in at the end of each line, ‘We know God, and He knows us.’”

I was sorry to see ten or twelve untainted children spending their early years amid the dangerous and unhealthy surroundings of this leper village, and with no immediate prospect of removal to safer quarters.

The two houses and the dispensary already erected stand apart from the village itself on slightly higher ground, and exactly opposite the small mosque which represents Islam in the village. Attached to the mosque is a moulvie who felt it his duty to give forth his long wailing call to prayer at the very time we were holding the short service which precedes the weekly dispensing of medicines. He is usually moved to this vocal exercise during the progress of the little Sunday School which Miss Kemp and two or three of the native students hold weekly. The four lepers who came down from Subathu (two

men and two women) who live in the houses adjoining the dispensary were, when I was there, the only Christians, though some others listen well to the teaching and show signs of interest.

At the time of my visit Dr. Umpherstone was attending at the leper village once a week with medicine and dressings, and, in addition to treating the children, was able to give the lepers considerable relief. The four Christians assist as far as possible in dressing the sores of the other lepers.

After consultation with Miss Greenfield and Dr. Umpherstone (Dr. Edith Brown being absent on furlough) we all felt it most desirable that a small asylum should be established here, if possible, and providing a site could be obtained. As the cost would not in the first instance exceed £50, I was enabled, as Treasurer of the Missionary Pence Association, to promise that amount from the "Farthing Fund."*

I am glad to say that shortly after my visit the necessary land was secured, and, as I write, the new asylum is probably being built and soon the Ludhiana leper village, so long neglected, will have its Christian section.

*This very unpretending effort was initiated by Mr. W. Roger Jones, the secretary of the M.P.A. at the time of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, and the Ludhiana Asylum will be the third built by means of it—the other two being at Patpara (Mandla District) and Mungeli (C.P.). This is a noteworthy illustration of the importance of trifles.

CHAPTER XXIII

ਫ਼ਲਸਫ਼ਿਕਾ AMBALA

THIS station has special interest in connection with work among lepers, as it was here the Mission to Lepers may be said to have originated. Certainly it was here that Mr. Wellesley C. Bailey, its founder and present superintendent, had his first introduction to the lepers of India, and received his first impulse to work among them, and for them.

In view of all the benefits, temporal and spiritual, that have accrued to these stricken people as a result of that first meeting between them and the man who has proved under God to be their best earthly friend, I may be excused from quoting from Mr. Bailey's own account of the incident.

“It was in the end of the year 1869 that I first began mission work in India, at Ambala in the Punjab. I had not been long there when the senior missionary, the Rev. J. H. Morrison, D.D., the originator of the Universal Week of Prayer, invited me to accompany him to the Leper Asylum. Never shall I forget that day! With conflicting emotions I walked across with him to the Asylum. What a sight met my gaze! The Asylum consisted of a few rows of very simple native huts. On a clear space in front of the huts were

placed a table and two chairs, on the table a Hindustani Bible and hymn book. Dr. Morrison conducted a very simple service for the lepers, who sat in rows on the ground. I could see that every word he said was being appreciated by that, to me, strange audience.

“Some of the poor people were horribly disfigured, some were quite crippled, and some were dreadful to look upon. Nevertheless I soon got to love them all. Many became Christians. Let me tell of one, his name, *Ilahi Bakhsh* (the gift of God), a truly Mohammedan name.

“*Ilahi Bakhsh* became a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. He was a dreadful sufferer; the disease robbed him of everything almost. He became stone blind. He lost all feeling in parts of his body. Once when the Superintendent came to him in the morning he found that *Ilahi* had had his foot partly gnawed by rats during the night, and had not known of it!

“Another incident regarding *Ilahi*. I visited the Asylum after an absence of some years, and on going to his hut, I asked him if he remembered me. He crawled to the door of the hut and squatted on the threshold. He was quite blind, and in a dreadful condition of suffering. ‘*Ilahi Bakhsh*, do you know me?’ At first I got no reply. Again I asked the same question; then, after a pause, came the reply: ‘Yes, sahib; I know you now. You are *Bailey Sahib*.’ ‘My poor fellow,’ I said, ‘I am grieved to see you like this; I am sorry to see you suffering so much.’ To which I got the reply, ‘No, sahib; no. Since I trusted Christ, nineteen years ago, I have known neither pain of body nor pain of mind.’ Truly

a marvellous testimony to the power of Christ to comfort and sustain, even in the most dire distress."

Ilahi Bakhsh lived as a Christian leper for over twenty years in the Ambala Asylum, during which period he was a faithful follower of Jesus Christ and a true helper heavenward of his fellow sufferers. His love for the Saviour found expression in many hymns, or bhajans, which are to this day remembered and sung, not only in Ambala, but in Tarn Taran and elsewhere.

The mantle of Ilahi Bakhsh seems to have fallen upon another Christian leper, whose name was Rattia, and who for years was the leader of the singing in the services among the Ambala lepers, and exercised a most helpful influence over them. Though rendered almost helpless by the disease and unable to walk, Rattia continued to the very last with cheerful resignation to render his part in the service of praise. "Our old friend Rattia," the Missionary writes, in 1892, "with ever increasing infirmities, but unabated zeal, still leads the lepers' praise, though to get to the service he must walk sitting, with his hands and parts of his body protected by leather coverings."

In the following year he was called to that rest which must have a special sweetness for such a sufferer as he had been.

Miss Lily Wyckoff gave the following touching account of his death and burial, and I trust no apology is needed for placing on permanent record such a testimony to the power of Divine grace among the most despised of human creatures,

“ Not long before he died I went over with father one Sunday to attend the service. I saw the poor old man creep from his house towards the chapel, but when he had gone half way he seemed exhausted; he lay down on the ground, and I was afraid he was dead. Father had gone back to the house for a hymn-book which he had forgotten, and I did not know what to do to help the poor old man. He was not dead, however, but got up and crept to the service. I loved to watch his face when he sang. It reminded me of what we are told of St. Stephen—‘looking steadily on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.’ We were all thankful for him when we heard that he had passed away. I think he was the brightest example of what the grace of God can do that I have ever known. He was so happy in his faith, and bore his lot with such uncomplaining patience. I asked father to let me go to his funeral. We sat outside his house, and father read 1 Corinthians xv. They sang one of his favourite bhajans. I think all the poor lepers who were able came to the service. Rattia was laid on a charpoi (a native bed) and covered with a clean white sheet; we brought some white flowers also.

“ All the people who were able to walk followed us to the grave, which was at some distance. I had never seen the place before. It is in a quiet ravine, and the grave was dug in the sand. When father had finished the service all helped to fill up the grave. No one wept, but some poor women groaned as they turned away. I stayed behind and tried to talk to them a little about heaven,”

On my arrival at Ambala I was met by Rev. J. Clark, of the American Presbyterian Mission, who now superintends the work at the Leper Asylum, and to whom, with Mrs. Clark, my thanks are due for their kind hospitality. The Asylum is well built and is very pleasantly situated among well-grown trees, and sufficiently close to the road not to be dull. It is, at the same time, near the Mission Compound, and well away from the town. It was nothing like full at the time of my visit, not for lack of lepers in the district, but owing mainly to the indifference of the Authorities as to their segregation.

An additional, though temporary, reason for the reduced number of inmates was that, owing to the high price of food, Mr. Clark had been obliged to refuse admission to a considerable number of lepers. He was, however, in correspondence with the Government with a view to an additional grant to provide for fifty more inmates, who would, he was of opinion, soon be forthcoming from the Ambala district alone, if only he were able to receive them. The lepers I found in the Asylum seemed very comfortable and happy, and are evidently well-cared for. There were only twenty-three, of whom twenty-one assembled in the airy little chapel with open sides, where we had a service with them. As I sought to show them that the "great salvation" was as free to them as to the rich and healthy, and reminded them that Jesus loved them no less than others, many faces lit up with joy and hope and many heads were nodded in appreciation of the message.

The large proportion of Christians—seventeen out

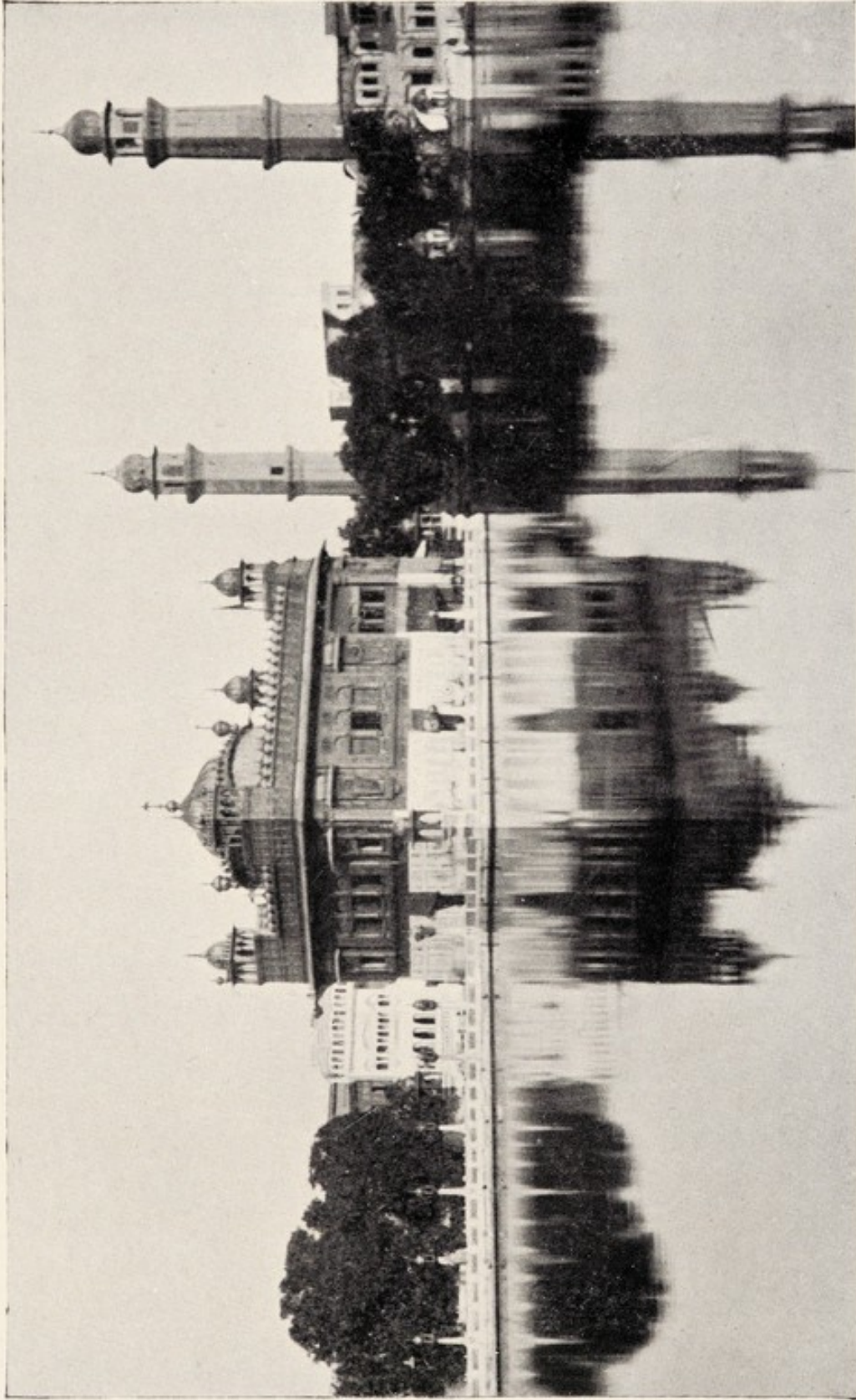
of twenty-three—as well as their responsive spirit speaks well for the teaching and influence of Marcus, the leper Catechist, whose story is a sad and touching one. As a boy, Marcus was in the home for untainted children at Almora, his mother being in the Asylum in an advanced stage of the disease. But poor Marcus' hands became affected, and in spite of all his efforts to conceal the terrible truth, he had finally to admit that he was a leper. But he only did so after he had burnt his fingers without feeling it, the loss of sensation being a sure symptom of anæsthetic leprosy. Almost heart-broken at the prospect of his terrible fate he was removed to the Asylum where he soon became useful in many ways, and after a time resigned himself to sharing the same house with his sorely diseased mother.*

He was a good, Christian lad, however, and a year after his removal to the Asylum he wrote:—

“At first I was greatly grieved at becoming a leper, but I now understand that it is God's will, and His will must be done. I thank God that my brother and sister are free from the disease. Christ comforts me in my sorrows, and I love Him. I am learning to read and write that I may be able to work for Him.”

His desire to become a worker for Christ has been granted to this poor leper boy, as some time afterwards he was sent from Almora to Ambala to act as Christian teacher for the Asylum there, and has

* Marcus, it may be noted, is the *only instance* of an inmate of the Almora Home for Untainted Children becoming a leper, though the Home has been established for thirty years.



The Golden Temple, Amritsar.
Amritsar means "the pool of Immortality." The Temple stands in the centre of the Lake.

for about ten years rendered faithful service in that capacity.

Mr. W. C. Bailey visited Ambala in 1896 and reported concerning Marcus :—

“He seemed unusually bright and happy. He generally wears rather a sad expression. He says everyone is most kind to him, and he is happy in his Saviour and his work. The disease is not making any very decided progress; his hands and feet are as of old, mutilated and anæsthetic; but there are no bad sores, and his handsome face is still untouched.” He adds that Marcus is very good and kind in binding up the sores of the other lepers.

Writing in 1899, Dr. Howard Fisher (then in charge of the Ambala Asylum), writes :—“Tell Marcus’s friends that he is an honest, good fellow He is my right hand man in the Asylum—more so even than the caretaker or chaukidar. Of all the lepers in the Asylum, Marcus is the only one allowed to come to my house, but for him I always have open doors. I am especially sorry for Marcus, as he feels the isolation of the Asylum, and the foulness of his disease.”

So poor Marcus has, not only found a place of useful service, but some compensation in his lot in spite of “the foulness of his disease.”

An interesting account of Marcus and his work, as well as of the Asylum generally, is given in the letter of an officer who was quartered at Ambala, and visited the Asylum in August, 1889. This gentleman writes :

“The immediate manager of the Asylum is a native Christian leper, Marcus, whose consistent life is a bright example of the power of God’s grace. He was

one of a number of children of leper parents who were removed from their parents when quite young to escape the infection of the disease, and was the only one out of about forty in whom the disease developed, but in the meantime he had been pretty well educated and had shown signs of genuine conversion, and so seemed eminently suited to work amongst his unfortunate fellow sufferers.

“Just at the time we paid our visit, the leper colony was gathering for morning prayers in the shed enclosed by a low paling, which serves as a chapel, and it was touching to see the poor souls seated there in native position, while Marcus read the word, gave a short exhortation, and led in prayer, the service closing with a hymn.

“A most affecting sight was a bright little boy of about four years of age, the son of a leper mother. He is the life of that sad community, and a terrible struggle is going on now in the parents' hearts whether or not to consent to allow their boy to be taken away to be segregated in a school of uninfected children. Humanly speaking, it is the only chance for the child, but we cannot but sympathize with the mother's feelings, who cannot bear to part with the only thing which brings a joy to her sad life.

“Mr. Clark reports that the spiritual work amongst the lepers is most encouraging, all the women and most of the men having confessed Christianity by baptism, while he has every reason to believe in the reality of their conversion.

“The mission compound is pleasantly planted with trees, and a good well, where a water-wheel, worked

by bullocks, brings the water to the surface and feeds the little aqueduct which irrigates the gardens, whose cultivation gives at once a healthy employment and a real pleasure to the poor lepers, who are thus supplied with the luxury of fresh vegetables and fruit. Indeed, the care and evident interest with which the little garden plots are cultivated, forms one of the most attractive features of this sad picture of a sad phase of human life."

CHAPTER XXIV

AMRITSAR

THREE hours in the train brought me from Ludhiana to Amritsar, which is, in some respects, the most interesting city in the Punjab. Founded in 1574 by Ram Das, the great guru (teacher) of the Sikhs, it is, for India, modern. It is still the religious capital of the Sikhs, whose faith is a purified form of Hinduism which has its centre in the celebrated Golden Temple. This building, over which I was shown in company with Rev. A. C. Clarke, of the Church Missionary Society, is picturesque in itself, as well as beautifully situated. It stands at the head of a causeway of marble, in the middle of a lake (or large tank) and surrounded by courtyards and promenades of marble and granite. In a pavilion in the centre of the temple is placed the "granth," or sacred Scriptures of the Sikhs, a small corner of which was charily uncovered by the priests in charge for the inspection of the sahibs. Much of the ornamental work of the temple is of a tinselly character, and it must be added that this far-famed building symbolizes the creed it represents in that the "gold" roof of the great shrine is only *copper gilt*.

The gardens of Ram Bagh are beautiful. There

are lovely walks, bordered by palms and cypresses, and radiating from the old palace of Ranjit Singh, the last native ruler of the Punjab.

Commercially, Amritsar is a wealthy and prosperous place. Its manufactures consist mainly of carpets, rugs, chuddars, and ivory work; and it is, in addition, an important distributing centre of general merchandise for the markets of Central Asia. It is the mart of many races, and it may be questioned whether a more varied collection of nationalities can be found in India than the narrow, crowded streets of Amritsar contain. It was interesting to note the well-marked and widely-varying types, and to see, jostling each other, traders from Cashmere, Nepal, Afghanistan, Bokhara, Thibet, Persia, and Yarkand. The innumerable, and for the most part beautiful, tints of their turbans and garments imparted a very bright and picturesque appearance to this characteristically Eastern city.

But, interesting as Amritsar is from a sight-seeing standpoint, it is no less so in a missionary sense. Founded in 1853 by the late revered Robert Clark, the Amritsar Mission of the Church Missionary Society has, not only prospered in this its central station, but has thrown out many flourishing and fruitful branches. These are spread over a wide district, and include Lahore, Tarn Taran, Batala, and Jandiala. All this is recorded and symbolized in the "Mission Tree," in the compound of the old mission house. Here the parent trunk of a banyan tree commemorates the planting of the Amritsar Mission, while some seventeen other

stems represent the growth of the respective branch stations.

Not only is Amritsar one of the oldest Medical Missions in India, but it is one of the largest. Four hospitals and two dispensaries in the city and district deal with an average of about 100,000 cases annually. Although at the time of my visit the work of the "Clark" Hospital was partially suspended during repairs, it was a morning full of interest that I spent there with Dr. A. H. Browne. I found him busy prescribing, dressing, and operating, with a kindly cheerfulness which proved that he meant what he said when he remarked that it was "delightful work." To the visitor it was certainly a "delightful sight" to see a qualified English medical man giving himself so whole-heartedly to the relief of these poor folk of a foreign race. And this, it should be borne in mind, is only one of hundreds of centres in the great heathen world where Britain's sons and daughters—often her brightest and best—are freely giving study and labour, and life itself, to those whose only claim upon them is their need. No wonder their heathen patients are often puzzled, and sometimes "imagine vain things," and assign the most mistaken of motives to kindness which is in such contrast to the callous neglect of their sufferings shown by their own kindred. But usually, there can be no doubt, some glimmering conception of the true motive reaches their darkened minds, and so encourages them to lay open the wounds and sorrows of their hearts to the Great Physician. Certainly one poor woman whose bad hand had been greatly relieved, grasped the real motive for all this

service, as she went away repeating to herself "All for the love of Jesus! All for the love of Jesus!"

Here are some of Dr. Browne's patients during *an hour in a very quiet morning*:—Man with cataract; another with a ghastly open sore on leg; a bad arm (had a thorn in it three years); woman with dropsy; an arm to be dressed after amputation of hand; bad case of bronchitis; a little boy of five or six to be dressed after recent removal of tumour. It was touching to see how tenderly he was brought and watched by his father and grandfather, who stood by with tears of gratitude in their eyes. After the child, an old man from near Lahore, with a diseased bone in his leg—he would be kept as an in-patient for some days, till ready for the operation. Then a poor old woman with a terrible leg wound to be dressed; unable to walk, she was "brought by four" on her own charpoi. The next was a well-to-do young native, attended by several friends. And these are only selections from an hour's work.

Dr. Browne very kindly took time to conduct me over the hospital—from the office, where I noted a large photographic group of the helpers, nearly all of whom are converts of the mission, to the flag which was flying from a staff in the compound. This "flag for Christ" is kept floating as the testimony of the first Sikh convert of the Mission, at whose expense it was erected. In the pretty, airy wards it was pleasant to see many beds bearing the names of English parishes whose Gleaners' Unions or Sunday Schools were supporting them. I cannot refrain from saying how much it

is to be desired that *every* parish should have its cot or bed in a mission hospital in some distant land. It would be a blessing, not only to the poor sufferer who would find relief and rest in it, but to those who supported it. This is written in a parish in a northern county of England, in which the subject of Foreign Missions is never even named from the pulpit. How many parishes and congregations in our own land need to be "missioned" on the subject of missions?

But, craving pardon for this digression, I return to Amritsar. On our round of the hospital we encounter two especially interesting characters. Here is the little house of the blind Scripture reader, who fulfils a humble, but happy and useful, ministry, in reading the words of life to others. When a boy he became blind through smallpox, and was led to believe that they could give him "new eyes" at Amritsar, so he walked forty miles to the hospital, but only to be disappointed. It was impossible to restore his sight, but he remained for teaching, and the eyes of his heart were opened, and he is now very happy in his work of leading others to the light.

Next we come upon a fine old man, with a skin almost European in its fairness. This is the "Old Moulvie," whose story is a striking example of the power of the truth to overcome the bitterest prejudice. Many years ago one of this man's sons found his way from his far-off home in the Swat Valley to Amritsar, where after a time he became a Christian. (He is now one of the Assistant Doctors.) Having



The Old Moulvie.—Amritsar.

himself come to a knowledge of Christ, he felt that he must return, and tell his father and friends the wonderful news. The father was the leading Moulvie, and regarded as the holiest man in the whole district. He and all the family were bitterly angry with the son who had thus disgraced them. Some time later the Moulvie appeared at Amritsar, having spent many weeks tracking his son from place to place. He called on Rev. Robert Clark, who received him kindly, and set before him the love of God in Christ. His hostility was so far removed that he confessed he had made arrangements with other Mohammedans in Amritsar to assassinate the son who had brought such shame on him. He was prevailed on to put a stop to this plot, but, disowning his son, he made him over to Mr. Clark, after which he left, taking with him a copy of one of the Gospels. Some two years later the Moulvie returned to say that he and the Elders of his village had been reading this book, and they had deputed him to come for further explanations of some things they could not understand. After a period of instruction, he went back to his valley, and before very long returned once more to Amritsar, this time to be baptized in confession of his faith in Jesus. Once more the Nazarene had conquered! Now, however, he felt he must go home and tell his friends that Christ was to him a Divine Saviour. This announcement created rage and consternation among those who had hitherto regarded him as their leader and teacher. They felt that no punishment short of death was adequate for the crime of having joined the despised Christians,

and they agreed to kill him on a certain night. Happily for the Moulvie, a woman who had overheard the plot, warned him, and he fled on the following day. He made his way once more, and for the fourth time, to Amritsar—a journey of probably a month's duration. There he was welcomed and there he has found a quiet home for his declining days. He is a remarkably bright, cheery old fellow, and took my hand in both of his in the most cordial manner, and we understood each other in a moment. He was greatly amused when I transferred his capacious turban from his head to my own. The good old man's geniality was quite irresistible, and his happiness in Christ unmistakable—a striking instance of "light at eventide." It should be added that one of the other Moulvies of the old man's district is now an inquirer, and it is hoped that he also will shortly renounce Islam for Christ.

My kind host in Amritsar was Rev. A. C. Clarke, whose main responsibility is the Mission School and College in the centre of the city. Here he is doing a valuable work in imparting a training permeated with Christian principles to a company of promising young Punjabis. Mr. Clarke believes most thoroughly in his work, and his boys consequently believe in him. He gave me the privilege of addressing his senior boys in English, and I was struck with the attentive and interested manner of most of them. Mr. Clarke kindly accompanied me to the Christian girls' Boarding School, where sixty pupils are housed in what is perhaps the finest school building I saw in India,

It was with genuine regret that I felt obliged to leave Amritsar without seeing something of the valuable Medical Mission work carried on at the St. Katharine Hospital, by Miss Hewlett and her helpers. It is sometimes a serious matter to "wait for the next train" in India, and I was reluctantly compelled to decline Miss Hewlett's courteous invitation to see the Institution in which these ladies are doing so extensive and beneficent a work.

CHAPTER XXV

TARN TARAN (PUNJAB)

IN Amritsar it was my good fortune to meet Rev. J. Anthony Wood, who had driven in from Tarn Taran, where he was resting during his convalescence from a bad riding accident. We drove out to Tarn Taran in one of the very shaky-looking local "bamboo" carts, in which we covered the fourteen miles in a surprisingly short time, considering the appearance of the animal between the shafts. We reached the mission bungalow just after sunset, and I was most cordially welcomed by Rev. E. Guilford and Mrs. Guilford, to whom I am indebted for a most enjoyable Saturday-to-Monday visit.

A striking feature of Tarn Taran is the large sacred tank, which is credited with healing properties, and is, consequently, the scene of monthly pilgrimages and fairs. Annually there is a special festival, at which enormous crowds gather, and at sunrise on this particular morning there is a great rush of people into the pool, with the result, not infrequently, that several are drowned. The legend connected with the healing powers of the pool is that of a leper who wandered there with his wife. She left him resting by the water, while she went into the

town to beg their bread. He, in his misery and despair, decided to end his sufferings by suicide, and threw himself into the tank. To his amazement, no sooner had he touched the water than he felt the strength of youth return to him, and he came out so young and well that his wife, on her return, did not know him, but came and inquired of him what had become of her poor leprous husband.

Among the many thousands who still resort to this pool are occasionally some lepers, and not long since, one poor fellow found an end to his sufferings in a way he had not anticipated. He plunged in for healing, and was drowned—an exact reversal of the legendary case.

Whether, as is probable, this tradition has drawn the victims of leprosy to Tarn Taran, I do not know, but there has long been a community of lepers there, among whom Christian work has been carried on for many years, supported financially by the Mission to Lepers, and supervised by Rev. E. Guilford, of the Church Missionary Society. On the Sunday afternoon, Mr. Guilford and I rode out to the village in which the lepers reside, and where they subsist on a small allowance made them by the local authorities. It is a mile beyond the town, by the side of the Old Mogul Road, and opposite the leper gaol, to which leprous criminals are sent from a large district. The place is unenclosed, and has much the appearance of an ordinary native village, except that its "streets" are wider and more regular. The small mud huts are very dark, and quite unventilated, and must be terribly close and unhealthy, especially where husband

and wife, and a child or two, occupy the same small room. Many of the lepers have managed to build enclosed places as front additions, and as these are irregular in size and style, and entirely of mud, they impart a very untidy, not to say squalid, appearance to the place.

There were about two-hundred lepers in the village at the time of my visit, of whom nearly forty were Christians. These occupy the houses furthest back from the road, and overlooking fields which were refreshingly green with wheat and brightened by the yellow of the mustard flowers. These two crops are grown together in the Punjab, and in many places I saw the mustard being pulled while the wheat was still in the blade.

The origin and growth of the little Church among the lepers here has been so interestingly described from time to time by Mr. Guilford that I venture to quote somewhat extensively from his letters and speeches.

In one of his addresses he thus describes his first introduction to the lazaretto of Tarn Taran :—" Never shall I forget my first visit to these awful wrecks of humanity. When we got within the Asylum there came surging around us such a crowd of deformed, mutilated, suffering creatures, that it seemed as though all the dire effects of sin which have ever been wrought upon the human frame had been focused in one mass before our eyes ; and it was impossible, to us who were unaccustomed to such a sight as this which was presented to us, to stay long among these people. All we could do, then, was simply to

speaking a few words of hope and of comfort to them, and we had then, perforce, to turn our backs upon this house of living death. But to this day that fearful sight has haunted me, and until death I can never efface from my memory the look of utter wretchedness which seemed impressed upon every face before us. But, fearful and loathsome as these poor people were, they seemed to have a strong fascination for one. There seemed to be in each of those mutilated human frames a wonderful power of attraction, a power which led one again back to the charnel-house in spite of oneself. And truly there was a power in each. It was the power of the human soul—a soul akin to one's own, a soul precious in the sight of God, and a soul for whom Christ died.

“ It was not long, therefore, before my visits to them were renewed; but when I went again, to my great surprise and joy I found that I was wrong in thinking at first that all these poor creatures were without hope in the world; for I found among those suffering men a band of six in whose heart the star of hope had risen, and from whose lives the light of life shone forth sufficiently to be wondered at, and to be seen of all in that terribly dark spot. These six had, about a year previously to my visit to them, emigrated from Ambala, where they had learned and embraced the truth as it is in Christ Jesus from the missionaries labouring there . . . Truly pathetic is the story of these poor people when they first came to Tarn Taran. At the time there was in charge of the Asylum a native doctor whose hatred of Christianity was so great that it had really become proverbial.

The rage of this man when these poor people presented themselves to him, and asked for admission to the Asylum, and said that they were Christians, knew no bounds. He said, 'Away from here; this is no place for you; and until you utterly renounce your faith in Christ, never let me see your faces again.' But what answer do you think these poor people made? They said, 'If you refuse to admit us into this Asylum unless we deny our Lord and Master, we are content to go and sit in the highway and die.' And out into the highway these poor people went, and there they sat for eight long days, with no shelter from the burning rays of the sun more than the trees afforded them, and with scarcely any food to eat. This wicked man refused to allow them even to buy food from the shop in the Asylum. Oh, my friends, methinks that there are very few, even in this favoured land of ours—where the comforts of Christianity, and the blessings of Christianity, are enjoyed from the earliest infancy—whose faith would stand such a trying ordeal as this! But on the eighth day this man became afraid of the consequences of keeping these poor people without shelter any longer, and so he admitted them into the privileges of the Asylum.

“When these people once gained admittance into the Asylum, they did not allow, thank God, their light to be hidden, but by song and by speech they showed forth the glories of their Redeemer, and day by day they urged their poor fellow-sufferers to come and partake by faith from the hand of God those comforts which they themselves had received from Him. And



Rev. E. Guilford and group of lepers, Tarn Taran Asylum.

their efforts were not in vain, for when I began to labour amongst them, I found that this band of six had already been joined by four or five others, who were well instructed in the Word of God, and who were anxious to confess Christ publicly in baptism."

One of these faithful four was Bahadur ("The Brave") of whose death fifteen years later Mr. Guilford gives the following interesting account :

"He was one of the six Christians whom I found in the Asylum here about fourteen years ago when I first fell in love with the place. They had migrated from Ambala to Tarn Taran about a year before I started the C.M.S. Mission to the Sikhs of the Tarn Taran district.

"In Bahadur we have all lost an affectionate friend, a zealous helper, and the brightest ornament of the little Church at the Asylum here. It will be very hard, if not impossible, to find anyone to fill the place which he occupied. He was trusted and beloved by all classes alike, and it was a grand testimony to him that both Hindus and Moslems used frequently to call on him to arbitrate in matters of dispute which arose among themselves. His funeral was attended by not a few non-Christians, and it was very touching to see them offer marks of respect to the deceased, while it was most encouraging to hear one after another bear testimony to his godly life.

"Only four days before his death he, with a dozen or so of his fellow Christians, was helping me, as usual, in my weekly efforts to influence the non-Christian inmates of the Asylum, and I shall not soon forget the faithful testimony which he then bore to the

saving power of Jesus. This testimony was drawn from him by the flattering words which were spoken of him by the Hindus sitting around us. His soul seemed to burn within him with a holy jealousy as he heard praises showered upon himself which he knew were due alone to His Lord and Master.

“Once an English traveller, in addressing the Christian lepers, said that it was probably a mystery to them why they were afflicted above other men; he counselled them not to lose heart, but to trust in the all-merciful and wise Father, and to believe that in the light of God’s presence they would know the ‘why and wherefore’ of His dealings with them now. To this Bahadur replied that for himself the mystery was already solved by the ‘joy of the Lord’ which filled his soul. ‘Before I became a leper,’ said he, ‘I was utterly godless, but my affliction drove me to an Asylum where I heard of Christ, and by grace I was led to accept Him, and He has given me something infinitely more precious than mere bodily health and strength.’ It was he, too, who replied to Mr. Eugene Stock when he asked the Christians at the Asylum if they were looking for the return of Jesus, and said, ‘Yes, and He may come to-day.’ If any man ever showed the resurrection power of Christ, Bahadur did, and if the supporters of the Mission to Lepers had no other to point to as the fruit of their labours, this one bright soul alone would pay them for all they have done and spent. But, thank God, they can point to hundreds of other brands plucked from the burning as the result of their efforts.”

In the following extract Mr. Guilford tells of con-

tinued progress in his work among the lepers, and continues;—

“The chief event of the year has been the confirmation of eleven lepers, by the Bishop of Lahore, on November 10th. For this solemn event the people have been under instruction for more than a year. Previous to the bishop's coming Mr. Perkins came over and examined the candidates, and he was so well satisfied with the result that he told the bishop that it would be difficult to find a better instructed class of candidates in the province. But, best of all, they had been instructed in deep things of God by the great Teacher Himself, the Holy Spirit, so that when I presented them to the bishop I felt that the inner and spiritual meaning of the ceremony had been fulfilled in their case, seeing that they had already received the earnest of the Spirit in their hearts, and had manifested the ‘fruit of the Spirit’ in their lives.

“There is one amongst them whom I like to look upon as the ‘John’ of the little company, for in practical sympathy and unostentations love he is pre-eminent amongst his brethren. Some time ago one of the Christian lepers, upon whom the foul disease had made fearful havoc, was suffering greatly from very bad ulcers, and unable to do anything for himself. At that time this dear fellow, who is comparatively sound in limb, used to attend to the wants of his more afflicted brother and comfort him by prayer and words of sympathy and love; and when he was surprised once in his work of mercy by their teacher, he quite blushed from simple modesty. Surely here we see the image of the Master Himself.”

From a later report of the Tarn Taran work I extract this note.

“On Easter Sunday I gave the Holy Communion to eight of them for the first time. The service was most deeply impressive, and it will remain in my memory as long as I live. To see them stretch out their poor stumps of hands to receive the bread, and open their mouths to have the wine administered to them from a spoon, was a wonderfully affecting sight.

“The gardens I have made are a great success. Instead of sitting idle all day, the poor things go now and do what for them is a good day’s work in their little plots of land. On Christmas-eve we gave the whole of the inmates their usual Christmas feast, and it was most gratifying to see their joy. The people generally are far more ready now to listen to the message of God’s love in Christ than they were a short time ago.”

In the following year we hear that the little church is becoming too small for the leper congregation. The number of baptized converts has grown to forty and there are three inquirers. Mr. Guilford testifies that his visits (at this time several in the week) are a great joy and inspiration to himself. “I get more good from these humble souls than I am able to give them,” he writes, and this, I may add, is the experience of many workers among the lepers. Again in the same year he writes:—

“I am thankful to say that work at the Asylum is going on very well; but I regret I have not been able to secure yet the services of a regular teacher for our people there. Perhaps this is a good thing

for me, as it compels me to go myself oftener in the week, and I always get good from our bright, loving Christians. I had four very interesting baptisms there the other day. One of these baptized is a Gurkha, who has served in our native army. He is a dear fellow, and it gave me great joy to receive him into Christ's fold."

The Gurkha just referred to was one of the Christians who, to the number of forty, gave us such a welcome on the occasion of my visit. I was attracted by the tidy, soldier-like appearance of this man as he sat with his child by his side during the service we had, and at which Mr. Guilford interpreted a short address for me. They sang with real heartiness some of their bhajans, accompanied by drum and cymbals, the former instrument being held in position by the legs of the drummer, while for sticks, he used his own fingerless stumps. They seemed delighted to see a visitor from England and sent most grateful salaams to all who care for them—especially to "Bailey Sahib," whose visit they remember so well.

As we walked through the village the faces of all seemed to brighten at Mr. Guilford's approach. He has a particularly cheery manner with these poor people and they greatly appreciate his kindness. It was sad to come upon a fine, tall Sikh, an ex-soldier who, like the Gurkha, has fought for his Queen, but who, unlike the Gurkha, had not yet accepted service under the King of Kings. He still retained some remnants of an old uniform, and the military habit showed itself as he did his best to respond to Mr. Guilford's challenge. "Attention"! said Mr.

Guilford, whereupon he pulled himself together and straightened out to his full height. "Present arms" was the next command, and the poor fellow, almost briskly, went through the movement. "Shtep out," next said Mr. Guilford, imitating the English of the native sergeant. But a change came over the fine features of the old soldier. The bright look faded, and with a pained expression he hung his head and looked down. "I can't shtep out," he said, "I have no feet." I looked, and it was true!

Having visited twenty other asylums for lepers before reaching Tarn Taran, thirteen of which were entirely under missionary management, I was able to note several respects in which the condition of the inmates of this one might be improved if Mr. Guilford had the entire control. It is true he has been appointed Honorary Superintendent, but in many respects his authority is limited, and there is little doubt that the whole moral tone of the village would be raised, and probably the comfort of the lepers be increased, if the entire place were under Christian control. As Mr. Guilford hinted that the authorities might be disposed to transfer the institution to The Mission to Lepers on certain conditions, I urged him to get the change carried out, if possible.*

One result of such a transfer would undoubtedly be that most of the untainted children whom I found living with their leprous parents in the non-Christian section of the village would be rescued from an

*As this book goes to press, negotiations are proceeding with every hope of a successful issue.

environment as dangerous morally as it is physically. There is a very successful little home for untainted children of lepers at Tarn Taran, in which most of the offspring of the Christian inmates are already being cared for and educated. (Some details will be found in the chapter headed "The Cry of the Children.")

On the Sunday morning I was present at the service in the Mission Church, when Mr. Guilford preached to a very large congregation in the building he was mainly the means of erecting. It is not often given to a missionary to see his work develop from its first inception to a large, flourishing station, and to watch over it uninterruptedly for a period of twenty years, but that has been Mr. Guilford's privilege. The work at Tarn Taran is an example of the value of continuity in missionary effort, and of the cumulative effect of personal influence. In addition to the agencies already named, there are orphanages for boys and girls, Zenana visitation, and a well-equipped hospital, in which, together with two out-stations, about 10,000 cases a year are treated. In connection with these branches, Miss Hanbury, and other lady workers of the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society, have done devoted and successful work. I was shown over the particularly bright and pretty hospital by Dr. Gregg, who had recently arrived and was entering on her work with an enthusiasm which augured well for its success.

Mr. Guilford, who has in Mrs. Guilford an invaluable helpmeet in all his good work, has been unanimously elected Chairman of the Municipality of Tarn

Taran more than once, and the demeanour of the population, as we rode through the town, showed how completely he had gained the respect of the community. When, some time ago, it was proposed in committee to move him from Tarn Taran, an old and valued Indian member rose and stated that a Sikh had once said to him: "If Mr. Guilford stays in Tarn Taran another fifteen years we must all become Christians," a consummation, the writer would add, "most devoutly to be wished."



A Persian Well near Wazirabad. - Punjab
As the bullocks go round the buckets go down empty and come up full.



Rev. T. Grahame Bailey (son of Mr. Wellesley Bailey) and one of his
village preaching rooms near Wazirabad.

CHAPTER XXVI

WAZIRABAD AND JALALPUR

AS I left Amritsar I entered on a week which was filled with interesting experiences of medical and general mission work, and during which, strange to say, I was not to see a single leper. A few hours in the train took me to Lala Musa, which is a thriving little railway town in the land of the five rivers. It is ten miles from Gujrat, and about the same distance from Jalalpur-Jattan, where Dr. Lechmere Taylor, and Mrs. Taylor, L.R.C.P. & S.E., have in a short time developed a large and successful medical work. But it was felt that something must be done for Lala Musa, as it was central for a large district and had many villages grouped around it in all directions. Happily for me, my visit was timed for the very day on which it had been decided to "feel the pulse" of the Lala Musans, and the announcement had been made by a native worker that on a certain day "Dr. Sahib and the Mem Sahib" would be prepared to receive all comers, and to do their best to heal their sicknesses.

On the preceding evening a party comprising Dr. and Mrs. Taylor, Rev. T. Grahame Bailey (all of the Church of Scotland Mission), and the writer, arrived

at Lala Musa, and took up quarters for the night in the serai, or public resthouse, the lower portion of which is used by native wayfarers, while the upper rooms are reserved for European visitors. The rooms were dusty and sparsely furnished, and for Mr. Bailey and myself charpois (*i.e.* native bedsteads) were borrowed, which, with a rickety table, constituted the sole furniture of our apartment.

Next morning operations began with an open-air service at the finger-post in front of the bazar, where the people were transacting their trading. A goodly crowd of nearly two-hundred gathered, attracted by the singing and the playing of a kind of accordion, and the beating of a drum. Just outside the audience camels, cows, and goats mingled freely with the people, who were cooking, eating, gossiping, or bargaining. The faces of the listeners were an interesting study. Some plainly indicated mistrust and suspicion, but many more a curious kind of wonder as to what these strangers meant by it all. Not a few listened with unmistakable interest, and on some faces could be read an expression of unrest and longing.

At the close of the preaching the attention of the crowd was directed to the tent, which had in the meantime been pitched on the maidan near by. To this we all adjourned, and found a table and chairs, and medicine boxes arranged, and a native assistant ready to dispense the remedies recommended by the doctors. Some of us felt a great curiosity as to how far these poor people, who were entire strangers to medical care, would entrust themselves to the hands

of those of another race and another religion. Would they understand, and appreciate, or not? The answer was soon forthcoming. The first to enter the tent from among the crowd pressing around was a tall, good-looking fellow with bronchitis; then a small boy who was suffering from some form of ear trouble. Another lad, with headache, came next, and he surrendered to me the charm which he had worn round his forehead as a remedy. The women were naturally more backward, and the first to break the ice was an old body with fever, but she was soon followed by others. Here was a deaf woman; there, a wailing child in its father's arms, and after them a boy with an ugly wound on his arm. A young woman crept in timidly, and shyly uncovered her face that Mrs. Taylor might examine her ear, which was hung with half a dozen rings as large as itself; then came a case of ophthalmia—one of many.

After a constant stream had flowed in for an hour and more, of which these are only a few specimens, an interval of rest for the doctors, and of work for the preachers, ensued. Quietly the people listened as they were told of the Great Healer of the soul and of spiritual cleansing, and who can doubt that the kind care given to their bodily ailments enabled them better to apprehend the message of redeeming love?

After an hour for lunch the ministry of healing was resumed, and with no lack of patients; patients of all sorts and sizes, from the tall, black-bearded Sikh to the little boy in arms, from the shy young girl to the feeble old woman, and including amongst them most of "the ills the flesh is heir to."

The afternoon was as busy as the morning had been, and, when the day's work finally ended, close upon three-hundred sufferers had been kindly and skilfully, though, of course, very hurriedly dealt with.* Many of them must have returned to their homes wondering at the things they had seen and heard. The wistful look on many a face told of an unsatisfied soul, and the very confidence with which they submitted themselves to strangers who came to them in the name of Christ showed that through their bodily sufferings an entrance might be found to their hearts for the words of eternal life.

On Wednesday morning, accompanied by Rev. T. Grahame Bailey, I left Lala Musa for Wazirabad, and drove out from there in the afternoon, for three days of "camping" among the surrounding villages. This gave me an insight into a phase of missionary work I had not so far seen, and was full of interest. We had services in seven villages. The meeting places were little mud chapels or native houses. We usually began by singing a few bhajans, as a rule with great spirit and heartiness. Then prayer, after which Mr. Bailey interpreted the addresses I felt it a great privilege to deliver. Our audiences consisted of

*The need for some permanent medical work at Lala Musa was so urgent that I was glad to promise, on behalf of the Missionary Pence Association, a sum sufficient to establish a branch mission there. Just as my MS. is ready for the printer, I learn from Dr. Taylor that part of the serai in which we slept has been granted by the local authorities, and a promising beginning has been made. In the first week as many as fifty patients daily were being treated, and this number will, no doubt, rapidly and steadily increase.

the local adherents of the Mission. As these poor, ignorant folks are for the most part Christian only in a very nominal sense, our meetings were designed to bring them into a real, vital union with Christ—to get them “converted” in a word. Therefore a clear, simple presentation of the Gospel was what we aimed at—followed by an appeal for a true surrender to the Saviour. God gave us some times of undoubted power, and in five of the meetings professions that appeared earnest and real were made of accepting the gift of salvation. Some twenty-five in all signified their desire and intention to be *real* Christians henceforth, and we trust that after allowance for “emotion” and for “failures to stand,” there may be a residue of abiding fruit. Two of our nights in camp we spent in the tent, with the oxen working the Persian wheel well close by under the tree, and on the third we occupied a little village chapel—our beds being at one end, and the “kitchen” where our food was prepared at the other. These quaint and primitive wells are very numerous in this district, and are often kept working night and day. It was owing, partly at least, to them that we were surrounded on every side by green, waving wheatfields.

On Saturday we drove into Wazirabad, whence I took train to Gujrat, and endured, rather than enjoyed, a ride of eight miles in an ekka over a rough road to Jalapur-Jattan. The groups of camels, sometimes bearing huge packs of cotton, sometimes unladen, were novel to me, and the fresh green crops of wheat brightened by the

yellow of the mustard were refreshing to the eye. The rainfall all through the Punjab had been copious, and splendid crops were the result. It was quite cheering to see long, level stretches of wheat-fields, promising abundance of food to those who had cultivated every available yard with so much care.

As I drove past the new hospital at Jalalpur, I caught sight of Dr. Taylor with sleeves turned up, busy among his *in*-patients, who were for the most part *out* on the verandah, beds and all. The open-air cure forms a natural part of the treatment, during most of the year in India. On Sunday morning I was allowed to give an address to the *in*-patients as well as to a number of *out*-patients. The latter had come for treatment, not at all realizing that Sunday is supposed to be a rest day for the Doctor. Missionaries.

In the afternoon another new and most interesting experience awaited me. Through the medical work at Jalalpur (which draws patients from forty villages in a wide radius) the inhabitants of a large village called Sook, some four miles distant, had invited Dr. Taylor to open a school there. So, by way of prospecting, we all, with three or four native helpers, drove out to this place. We were met at a distance by one of the leading men, who is intelligent and well-disposed, and who led us all through the village. As we went we gathered an increasing crowd who finally formed our audience, among them being the chief man of the village which is a very prosperous one. The head man went through the quaint ceremony of holding out in his palm a rupee for me to touch. This

is supposed to indicate that all he possesses is at your service, and your touching it is to denote your acceptance.

A large and very attentive audience listened to the addresses given by two native workers and myself (mine being interpreted by Dr. Taylor). The expression of real interest, and in some cases of spiritual hunger, on their faces was unmistakable, and at the close they showed their friendliness by asking us to stay all night, the head man assuring us they would do everything in their power to make us comfortable. This man, himself, listened eagerly, and at the close said he wished to "know the forgiveness of his sins" and would "accept what he had heard." I was greatly impressed with the fine physique of these men, and their strong faces which indicated great natural force of character. The very friendly reception and the sympathetic hearing we got were mainly due, doubtless, to what they knew of the medical work carried on at Jalalpur, and from which some of them had benefited—one more evidence of the value of the ministry of healing.

On Monday morning I again spent an hour at the hospital and saw the hundred or more who filled the verandah for the preliminary services, and who were afterwards admitted one by one to the consulting room and then passed on to the dispensing department. One or two were received as in-patients, though the accommodation was already fully taxed.

I was especially interested in the story of a young girl of sixteen and her twin brothers who, some time before, had made their way from their village, fifty

miles distant, in the small native state of Poonch. They were orphans and practically blind, as they all suffered from a form of eye disease common among Indian children. They had been directed to the hospital while still some forty miles away, and arrived holding each other's hands—the only way in which they could keep together. They were each operated upon in a short time with the following results:—The girl is now able to act as cook for the hospital, and is thus earning her living; one boy has so far recovered his sight that he had, on the day I saw him, commenced to learn to read in the mission school; the other boy had had one eye operated on, and could see so well that a few weeks before he had gone off by himself to their village, and returned that very morning, just in time to be photographed with his brother and sister.

The growing appreciation with which the hospital is regarded will be seen from the number of visits which have steadily increased, till, in the eight weeks of 1901 up to February 24, they amounted to 4,887, of which 2,028 were of new patients. In addition to this the limited accommodation for in-patients is constantly overtaxed. When it is remembered that all these receive some Christian teaching, it will be seen what a valuable work is being done. To the direct benefits must be added the incalculable influence of such an agency in preparing the people of all the villages of the district to receive the Gospel, or at least to listen with infinitely less prejudice to its messengers.



A Native Missionary, himself a Leper.



A Christian Leper Woman.

CHAPTER XXVII

LAHORE TO LUCKNOW

ON Monday afternoon eight miles on the front of an ekka—I declined to occupy the cage on the top in which the traveller is usually confined—and behind a very poor horse, brought me to Gujrat, where I was the guest of Rev. J. McCheyne Paterson and Mrs. Paterson. My limited time only allowed me to pay a hasty visit to the old city and to see some of Mr. Paterson's workers holding an open air school for the children of the low caste quarter. Next morning the mail train took me to Lahore where I was welcomed by Dr. and Mrs. Ewing of the American Presbyterian Mission. The latter most kindly acted as my guide to some of the sights of Lahore, including the Fort, the Jumna Musjid, and Ranjit Singh's Tomb. The drive through the crowded city showed me a very typical Eastern scene, with its quaint shops and narrow, picturesque streets.

The Forman Christian College, of which Dr. Ewing is principal, is one of the largest and most successful in India. It was a privilege to address the students, of whom there are 350, all understanding English. The American Presbyterian Mission has, in addition to other agencies, very large schools, one of

which has 1,200 scholars in attendance, of whom 800 voluntarily attend for religious teaching on Sundays.

Exactly twenty-four hours was all I could spare for Delhi, during which time I was very kindly entertained by the members of the Cambridge Mission, who made me welcome to their simple lenten fare. As there was not to my knowledge any work among lepers in Delhi, my day was devoted mainly to the sights usually enjoyed by visitors to this interesting city. The Fort with its treasures of architectural art and its historical memories, and the huge mosque where on certain days ten thousand Mohammedans may be seen worshipping at once, were objects of great interest. But the feelings of an English visitor are more deeply stirred by the historic ridge, and the Kashmir Gate, and the stone which marks the spot where Nicholson fell—this latter within the walls. Driving slowly along the ridge and in by the Kashmir Gate, one could realize the events of the siege, and feel a thrill of admiration for that crowning act of courage—the storming of the gate. It brought the mutiny near, to see the marks made by the British guns which are still visible on the masonry of the walls.

At Agra I was cordially received by Rev. Daniel Jones and Miss Jones of the English Baptist Mission. Though arriving at 7 a.m. after a night in the train, by 8.30, Mr. Jones and I were at the leper Asylum, which is a municipal institution, standing at a suitable distance from the city. It is well built and forms a square, enclosed by a good wall, and with fine trees and a well in the centre. There are

rooms for about one hundred and fifty inmates, though at the time of my visit I found only eighty-six—seventy-two men and fourteen women. As in many other municipal Asylums they come and go very freely and do not apparently cherish the feeling that the place is their home.

Christian teaching has been given for some time past by a native worker, and, besides this, Mr. Jones has attended frequently himself. The results have been most encouraging, forty lepers having been baptized. I found fifteen Christians in the Asylum, and after the service we held, at which Mr. Jones, in a very cheery manner, interpreted an address for me, ten more signified their desire for baptism. It is a striking contrast that the nearest building to the Leper Asylum, in the direction of the city, is the far-famed Taj Mahal. To this matchless mausoleum I paid three visits—in the morning, at sunset, and by moonlight—only to be filled each time with increasing wonder at the loveliness of this “poem in marble,” as it has been fitly termed. Standing on a platform of pure white, 313 feet square, and 18 feet in height, the building itself is indescribably beautiful. From dwelling with delight on its massive grandeur and graceful outlines, the eye turns to gaze with admiration on the exquisite beauty of every detail. From the basal platform to the crescent which surmounts the magnificently rounded central dome, all is in the most perfect harmony of shape and tint, and forms an unrivalled combination of strength and beauty. Bishop Heber’s memorable words as to the architecture of Agra, generally, is

emphatically true of the Taj—that “the Moguls designed like Titans, and finished like jewellers.”

The gateway, and the twin mosques which flank the Taj on each side, would be regarded as striking and beautiful buildings if viewed apart. But these have no glory by reason of the glory that excelleth. To attempt a detailed description of the whole scene, with this magnificent memorial tomb as its centre-piece, would be to mock its unsullied loveliness, and I pass on with the confident affirmation that never again on earth shall I see such perfection of architectural beauty as I beheld in this palace, erected by the Mogul Emperor, Shah Jehan, nearly three centuries ago, in memory of Mutmaz-i-Mahal, his best-beloved wife.

The Fort, as well as the buildings contained within it, are magnificent in their massive grandeur; the Moti Musjid (or Pearl Mosque) is, of its kind, a gem of the purest ray, and the tomb of I'timad-udaulah, across the Jumna, is beautiful in the extreme; but these all pale their ineffectual fires before the unapproachable loveliness of the Taj Mahal.

On Monday afternoon I drove out to Secundra, where the dead past was represented by the splendid tomb of Akbar, and the living present by the strong C.M.S. station, with its varied agencies, which include an orphanage with three hundred children and several industrial departments. A united meeting of missionaries was held in the evening, at which I had the privilege of giving a short address on work among the lepers to twenty-six representatives of the different societies who are working in Agra and Secundra.

The night was spent in train and waiting room, and I reached Cawnpore at 7.30 a.m. Three hours were all I could spare in which to obtain a hasty glimpse of the many tragic memorials of the mutiny with which Cawnpore abounds. But I traced out the site of the British entrenchments: I saw the Memorial Church with its walls studded with tablets, and I gazed—and not with dry eyes—at the pathetic mementos and pictures of the women and children; I felt my blood boil with abhorrence as I stood on the steps of the Massacre Ghat, and saw in imagination the betrayed fugitives fired on by Nana's sepoys, and I beheld with mingled feelings of pity and rage the white marble angel that marks the spot where the bodies, dead and living, of British women and children were hurled in one mangled mass into the well. And then I thought without a shade of pity of Nana himself, the arch-demon, the perpetrator of these unspeakable villainies, perishing miserably of fever in the jungle deserted by his companions in crime. Does my reader censure my unpitying thought and call it un-Christian? If so, then I plead guilty that I was—that morning at Cawnpore—merely human, that was all.

After Cawnpore, Lucknow, where my very kind hosts were Rev. W. D. and Mrs. Frater, of the Wesleyan Mission. Here again were striking reminders of the mutiny, especially in the ruined buildings of the Residency, to which the beautiful gardens form so picturesque a setting.

We found a small Leper Asylum outside the city with twenty-one inmates, and supported by the Munici-

pality. It adjoins the Lunatic Asylum, and the two institutions are both under the management of the same native Doctor. The lepers seemed well-cared for; the sexes were kept apart; and the buildings were substantial and airy. They were not visited by any missionary, and no provision appeared to be made for religious instruction—a need which it is to be hoped may be shortly supplied.

CHAPTER XXVIII

RAMACHANDRAPURAM

THE place which is burdened with this most awkward appellation is a village situated in the rich delta of the Godavery, between Rajahmundry and Cocanada. It is one of the stations of the Canadian Baptist Mission, a society which is doing a successful work in the district. It was a long and weary journey from Calcutta to Ramachandrapuram, but I was rewarded by finding it one of the most interesting and hopeful centres of leper-work in the whole of India.

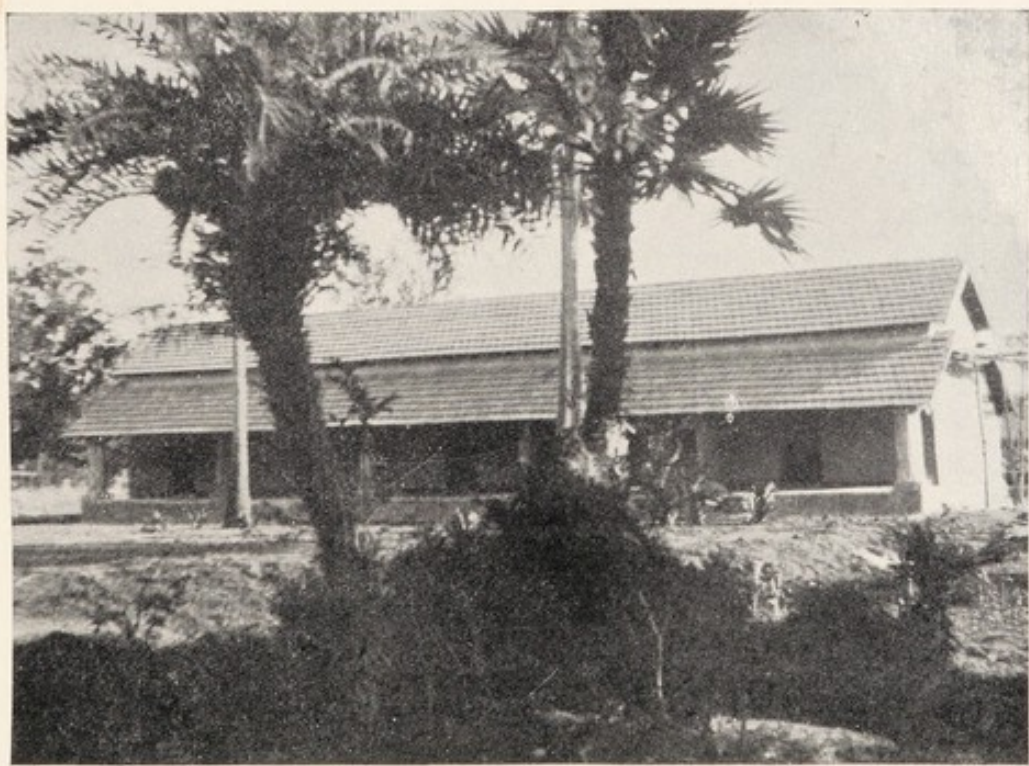
From 2.15 p.m. on Wednesday till midnight on Thursday was spent in the train, and at the latter hour I reached Cocanada. Here I was met by a messenger from Miss S. I. Hatch, one of the Canadian Missionaries, who has taken up the cause of the lepers in a very hearty manner. I was driven through the sleeping city to the canal, where I found Miss Hatch's comfortable house-boat, with Dr. Woodburn, a medical worker of the Canadian Society, on board and in command. To glide gently along (towed by coolies) through the still and starry night, was a welcome change from the heat and noise of the train, and the twelve hours on the canal were really enjoyable travelling.

As the Ramachandrapuram Asylum for Lepers has made so promising a beginning and has before it a future of great usefulness, some account of the circumstances which called it into being may not be without interest. This can best be given in the words of Miss Hatch, who has evidently been called of God to befriend the despised lepers of this wide district. In a statement recently issued, she refers to the frequent cases of leprosy with which she came in contact in her itinerating work among the villages of the district. After stating that two bright, attractive pupils in the girls' boarding school at Cocanada had to be sent away as lepers, Miss Hatch continues :—

“ I had been accustomed to receive milk also from a Christian family in one of our villages, whenever in their vicinity. The head of this family is a leper, his toes are affected and the ends of his fingers have been eaten away. His ears and face are full of blotches and unsightly. It is not likely he touched the milk, but it seemed best to refrain from taking it from there henceforth. There are eleven other lepers in the Mala (or low caste) section of that one village. These circumstances brought the question of leprosy very near home, but for the period of two years or more, I had, what I little suspected at the time, a leper in my own household. He carried my water for bathing and cooking, brought my supplies from long distances, helped wash my dishes, &c. Blotches were on his face, but the eating away had not begun. He complained of weakness and was saved from such heavy work as carrying supplies, but for his faithful



Temporary Huts for lepers. Ramachandrapuram.



**A Ward of the new Asylum, Ramachandrapuram.
Note the Contrast!**

services I still retained him. Not until Mr. and Mrs. Davis came in 1898, did I discover that it was really leprosy he had. The poor fellow only lived a few months after leaving me. His mother and sister, I heard later, both having the disease, had put an end to their own lives, rather than live out their misery and poverty.

“The terrible condition of the lepers, their helplessness and hopelessness, the great prevalence of the disease, especially in our *taluk*, where there is no segregation, the rapid increase, which must be still more rapid in the future, being the subject of conversation one day at the dinner table, Mr. Davis surprised me with the question, ‘Why do you not open an asylum, Miss Hatch, and have J—— (a medical student I am supporting) take the charge of it?’ It was an entirely new thought to me, and that day we had special prayer together over the matter, and I think it was on that same day I wrote a hurried note to the Superintendent of the Almora Asylum, asking about work among the lepers, and requesting him to give me Mr. Bailey’s address.

“Thus began, in the latter part of 1898, that correspondence and work which has resulted, under God, in the establishment of a home for lepers in Ramachandrapuram, superintended by the Canadian Baptists, and supported by the Mission to Lepers in India and the East, a realization my most sanguine hopes would scarcely have anticipated.”

As still further showing the need of some provision for the lepers of this district, I may cite the following facts: Dr. Woodburn recently saw at a large mela,

or fair, scores of lepers, some of them with legs rotted away to the knees, exposing their ghastly condition in order to obtain alms. Rev. J. E. Davis, who knows the country well, many years ago knew one man in a certain village who had leprosy. Now, in that village, there are twenty cases. In the *taluk* of Ramachandrapuram there are at least two hundred villages, with a population of about 250,000. Among the low caste people alone of twenty-five of these villages, quite one hundred lepers were found, and there is no reason to regard these as especially leprous villages. What an appalling amount of misery and suffering this suggests when taken as representing the condition of the twenty-eight millions of Telugu-speaking people among whom no other leper asylum is known to exist!

The terrible havoc this scourge may work in one family is strikingly shown by the case of the late native pastor of the Cocanada Canadian Baptist Mission Church. This man's brother, who lived with the pastor and his family, was a leper. The pastor had three sons, who were greatly attached to their uncle, and frequently in contact with him. Subsequent to the uncle's death, every one of these three youths developed the disease, as did also their mother. I visited the latter, and found her a devout Christian woman, who was patiently awaiting release from her sufferings.

The uncle was a member of the Church, and felt his condition acutely—especially when the Communion Service came round, and he had to partake outside the door of the church, and from a separate cup. On

these occasions he would say: "I long to go. I shall not have to be outside at the supper of the Lamb."

The "Mr. Bailey" referred to by Miss Hatch was Mr. Wellesley C. Bailey, the Secretary and Superintendent of the Mission to Lepers in India and the East, and I may here note that the case of Ramachandrapuram is a typical example of the way in which most of the twenty-seven Asylums of that Society (which are now sheltering upwards of two thousand lepers) have come into existence.

A missionary is moved to compassion by the hopeless misery of the lepers in his locality. He waits awhile, and wonders if anything can be done for them. Probably, in the meantime, he communicates with his own Society, only to find that its funds are overtaxed already, or are not available for the object he has in view. Happily he hears that a Society exists for this special purpose, and a correspondence begins which usually results in the establishment of an Asylum for the homeless lepers of the district.

Miss Hatch shall tell us in what an unexpected and interesting manner her need was met:—

"Mr. Bailey, after quoting part of my letter in 'Without the Camp,'* in which I refer to the great number of lepers, and to the fact that no leper Asylum existed on this coast nearer than Madras, three hundred and fifty miles distant, closed the article in the following words, 'We very earnestly commend this opening to the prayers and sympathies

* The Quarterly Magazine of the Mission to Lepers. 6d. per annum, post free, from the offices of the Society.

of our Canadian friends.' Mrs. Kellock, of Perth, Ontario, (widow of Dr. Kellock) having seen this article, wrote to me 'I have been thinking very much, during the past year, of the sad and lonely condition of the poor, suffering lepers all over the world, and while these thoughts were occupying my mind, day after day, your letter came that was published in the last number of "Without the Camp" (April, 1899). After reading it over and over, I saw that here was the way opened for me, and so I conferred with no one, but simply laid the matter before the Lord. . . . My heart has gone out to the poor lepers since I was a child and read the wonderful story of our Lord healing them, and now I am glad I have the privilege of helping them a little. It is my prayer that very many of them may come to the Lord Jesus and thank Him, for it is for His sake it is all done.' "

Mrs. Kellock most generously gave the Mission to Lepers £500 for the erection of the Asylum and of a chapel for it, and has thus worthily and appropriately perpetuated the memory of her late husband, Dr. Kellock, whose name the Asylum will bear.

As showing the interesting character of the work at Ramachandrapuram from its earliest stages, I quote from a letter written about September, 1900, when there were only four inmates living in temporary huts made of leaves. Miss Hatch, who had just returned from a short furlough, wrote as follows:—

"On the day of my arrival home, I visited the 'Queen's Garden,' as our leper home has been called, and was very pleased to see it looking so green and

fresh. Everything had been put in order by our caretaker, David. The four large mango trees were clothed with their fresh green leaves, the new building stood out conspicuously, and the four lepers, as they emerged from their leaf-huts, looked exceedingly glad to see me, and gave me a warm welcome. We called them together, and I questioned them as to the lessons they had been learning during my absence, and I was very gratified indeed in hearing what they had learned.

“The latest comer I had not seen before, and he astonished me most of all, for he, though an old man, over fifty I should judge, had learned, and was able to repeat, most of the commandments. This was a wonderful achievement for a poor outcast leper to accomplish in so short a time. After the lessons, I asked about their singing, and now I could see by their faces they had a surprise in store for me. Then Rudriah, of whom I have written before—our ‘gifted soloist’ I think he may be called, for, although a leper, he has a very fine voice, and our Telugu lyrics, you may know, are very sweet and beautiful—this Rudriah arranged his cloth and settled himself for a real good time, having made the other three sit together a little apart from him, his disfigured face greatly lighted up the while. As he proceeded with verse after verse, the others joining in a refrain after each verse—he singing the narrative only and they singing by themselves the refrain—we felt our hearts burn within us, and thanked God for the power of Christian song, even as displayed by these poor lepers.

“ He did not leave off until he had sung forty lines, repeating each line over, the refrain coming in between every two lines. This was part of a new narrative hymn, or poem, entitled ‘The Real Incarnation,’ written by a Telugu Christian, from the jeweller caste, and published recently by our Society. There are, in all, two hundred lines, and, in time, Rudriah will probably learn them all. David says they have attracted many passers-by in the singing of these hymns, and many and many a one has stood by the roadside to listen to these people as they have thus been singing the story of redeeming love. God grant that they may be the means of bringing the message of salvation to many souls, even as did the four poor lepers at the gate of Samaria.”

On my arrival Miss Hatch welcomed me at the bungalow, which she shares with Mr. and Mrs. Davis. At two o'clock, after I had rested, she accompanied me to the new Asylum, which, under her able and devoted supervision, has started so hopefully. Already I found there were forty-five inmates, though only nine of these (the women) were occupying permanent houses. A large number had been turned away, especially of women, who could not be received because they had with them healthy children for whom there was no accommodation. It was saddening to see the number of untainted boys and girls already in the Asylum, and when the buildings are complete and all lepers applying are received, Miss Hatch believes she will have thirty to forty untainted children forthwith.

It is pleasant to be able to add that this urgent

need for a Home for these hapless little people has been supplied in a manner scarcely less interesting than that in which the Asylum itself was provided, and one which illustrates the international character of the work of the Mission to Lepers. Miss Jessie Bole, the Superintendent of the Home of Rest for Sunday School Teachers, at Hastings (in connection with the S. S. Union), had been kindly interesting her visitors in the needs of the lepers and their children, and at the time of my leaving for India had collected upwards of £100. It was her hope that some special object might come under my notice to which this sum could be applied, and when I saw these bright little children, some of them in the arms of their leprous mothers, and all unconscious of their danger, I felt at once that their rescue was the purpose to which the thankofferings of the Sunday School Teachers should be devoted. To this suggestion Miss Bole readily responded, and it was with great pleasure I received from her, after my return, the sum of £127, with which a Home for the untainted children of lepers at Ramachandrapuram will be built. Like the Asylum, the Home will commemorate the name and service of a good man. It will be known as the Dr. Philipps Home, in memory of a devoted clerical missionary to the Sunday Schools of India, who was supported by the International Bible Reading Association—a branch of work of the Sunday School Union.

We approached the Asylum down a winding road well-lined with lofty palms and mango trees. The site is a very beautiful one and suitable in every

respect. It is well outside the village and on the main road leading to the next one. As the new buildings progressed they were the object of great curiosity on the part of the passers-by. When told for whose accommodation they were intended, they exclaimed, "All this for the lepers! Why, it will be Heaven for the lepers!"

At the time of my visit only the ward for women was occupied, but two large wards for men were in course of erection, and have since then been completed and tenanted. Meanwhile the lepers were sheltered in temporary huts of palm leaves and matting.

I may add that I found Miss Hatch was wisely, and in accordance with the special desire of the donor, making the buildings of the Asylum thoroughly good and substantial. They are of fair size, and the men's wards have each five rooms accommodating four inmates, and have a covered cooking place at the back as well as a verandah in front. The foundations and floors are made especially strong to resist the ravages of the white ant, and both floors and verandahs are well cemented. The roofs are divided by a foot of wall between the verandah and the house, and are covered with Mangalore tiles. Altogether I think they are perhaps the best houses of any Asylum of the Mission, though in no respect too good and with nothing unnecessary or extravagant about them.

The lepers gave me a very touching reception, and it was clear that my visit was a great event to them. These poor souls, so lately homeless and helpless,



Three singing lepers, Ramachandrapuram. Rudriah in the centre.



Christian Lepers, Ramachandrapuram.

evidently regarded me as an embodiment of the Spirit of Christian love which had provided this haven of refuge with all its undreamt-of sympathy and kindness for *them* ! (Poor things, just as though I had done anything for them, and it had not all been Miss Hatch and Mrs. Kellock, and "Without the Camp" as the connecting link!) They all, except one poor woman who was too ill to move, assembled on the grass and sang most heartily some of their Telugu lyrics led by Rudriah, whose usually musical voice was somewhat marred by a cold. He then, as spokesman, welcomed me on behalf of the lepers, and said they had prayed for me daily since they had heard I was coming. Mr. Davis interpreted a short reply for me, after which a dozen caps were distributed as prizes to those who had correctly committed to memory the last six verses of the first chapter of St. Mark.

On Saturday morning we visited the Asylum again before breakfast, specially for a service at which all the lepers gathered, save the poor old woman who was too ill.

This was poor old Jaggama, who ever since her admission had been in so loathsome a condition that the other women, though kindly disposed towards her, could not endure her presence in any of their houses. So she had to "dwell alone" in a little hut of leaves. When we spoke to her she tried to raise herself, but was too weak to do more than project her ulcerated and mutilated feet out of the entrance to her hut. She was a high caste woman, and had quite recently come into the Asylum. She had heard

that lepers were kindly treated, and received some wonderful "teaching" there. So one day, in the absence of her daughter, she got herself conveyed in a neighbour's bullock-cart to the Asylum. David, the genial and kind-hearted caretaker, at first hesitated to receive her, owing to her helpless state and the scarcity of room. But she silenced his objection by assuring him that he was her "eldest son," that she wished to receive "the teaching." and, in short, flatly refused to go. Those who are familiar with the readiness with which native converts "adopt" the missionaries as their parents, particularly in time of need, will easily understand this old woman claiming David as her son.

So there I found her, in a perfectly helpless state, but being most kindly cared for by Addema, one of the other leper women, who regularly washed her loathsome sores and cooked her food for her day by day.

Addema herself had been a heathen until her admission, a short time previously, and was now patiently tending this poor old creature. She was equally surprised and delighted at being rewarded by the gift of a quilt for her unselfish care of her fellow sufferer. The old woman is of the Brahmin caste, and when I asked her, through Miss Hatch, if she had any hope for eternity, she replied "Oh, yes; I pray to Jesus all day, and I shall go to Him soon. Here I have found kindness and love, and here I will stay till I die." A fortnight later her sufferings were mercifully terminated, but not, we may hope, till her instinctive, though uninstructed, faith had brought

her spirit into vital union with Him who is "The Life indeed."

It was a pathetic sight that awaited us when we made our way to the wide-spreading mango tree, under whose welcome shade our stricken congregation had gathered. Most of the faces were maimed and marred, and the limbs terribly mutilated, and the wistful look in the bright eyes of many betokened an unsatisfied soul. Rudriah led them in the hearty singing of a couple of hymns, after which Jonah, another of the Christian lepers, offered an earnest and really spiritual prayer, its burden being "Oh, such boundless love and mercy to such poor, unworthy people as we!" After part of the third chapter of St. John had been read, I spoke to them on the matchless theme of verse 16, and right eagerly they drank it in, thanks to the clear and earnest interpretation of Miss Hatch. *God loved: God gave: we believe: we have!* How divinely adapted was such a Gospel to the needs of so helpless a people. As the marvellous plan was unfolded, many a nod and audible response showed that the message was reaching these sad and hopeless hearts.

Special prayer had been made daily, from the time they heard they were to be visited, by the Christian lepers, already seventeen in number. And now it seemed as if the answer had come. At the close of this service, during which we had been very conscious of the Divine Presence, we requested any who wished to openly confess their faith by baptism to stand up. We warned them not to do it to please us, nor with the hope of gaining any earthly advantage, but *only*

if they really repented and believed the Gospel. Quietly and reverently *nine* rose, and these will, it is hoped, be added to the church among the lepers, after due instruction and observation of their conduct.*

There had been fourteen baptisms shortly before my visit, so it is evident that God is very specially blessing His work among these outcasts of Hinduism. A hymn extolling the love of God, and a prayer by David, the teacher and caretaker, brought this hallowed service to a close. David is a very able and devoted helper, and is well seconded by Martha his wife. He was the pastor of a neighbouring church and she a Bible-woman, but both of them seem to have a genuine love for the lepers. David has a particularly happy and cheery manner which is very refreshing amid surroundings so sad, and is clearly the right man in the right place.

Reference has been made to Rudriah and his singing, which certainly was remarkably good for a man far gone in leprosy. He had trained some of the others to take part with him in a kind of "action song." In singing this Rudriah stood facing three of the others, and he sang the solo part, and they the chorus—changing sides at each verse. Rudriah was the first leper received into the Ramachandrapuram Asylum, and was for some months sheltered in a poor little hut of palm leaves, in which he was kept awake by the rats, snakes, and mosquitoes, that came out and worried him at night. When asked what he did, he replied, "Oh, I just lie awake and sing to my Father, and He comforts me."

* I learn since that eight of these nine have been baptized.

Rudriah's life-story is mainly made up of sin, sorrow, and suffering. Here it is, as related by himself, and done into English by Miss Hatch :—

“ I am about thirty. My father and mother died when I was young, and I was a very wicked lad. This has all come upon me because of my own sin. It is not my father's or mother's sin. I used to thief and lie and play the devil constantly. When I think of all these, I say, ‘ O my Father, forgive all my sins.’ Yes, I used to lay 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, and bring it down and drink it. Then I used to steal fruit, wrap it up in a little bundle of straw, and go home with it on my back. Then I would often go at night and steal grain out of the heaps of grain, 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 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. What would have become of me had I died then ? At one time, a man was coming along and saw me fall into the well and pulled me out. At another time my courage failed me, and I caught hold of the bucket lift and pulled myself out.

“ I tried many things to get rid of my sins ; used to bathe in the tank every day at sunrise, and do *pukah* 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 would 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 get a good supply of fruit and other dainties. Oh no! I had no peace in my soul. I did not then know any hymns, but used to sing many heathen songs. Although I tried so many ways 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 Godavery, 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 me two rupees for my expenses, 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 each two of the three plantains. Then we wanted to bathe in the tank—the *sudras* there refused us permission, so we waited till they had all lain down, and we bathed in the night. But after all this trouble, and labour, 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, and I had often thought of going to him, but was afraid he might not receive me, as I was a leper. At last I

did find 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 sins, and He heard me. Now my Father keeps all the evil spirits away from 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 favour, God's grace. It is all so wonderful to me that my soul and body too should be so well provided for. My favourite hymn is 'God our Daily Portion.' I never cease praying for that lady, Mrs. Kellock, 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. Jesus has suffered that I may be saved from suffering further for my sins."

I append to Rudriah's autobiography a copy of his favourite Telugu hymn, the translation of which, probably, somewhat spoils the poetry in order to give the sense.

GOD OUR DAILY PORTION.

We only are undone,
We only are sinners,
Thy mercy we have seen,
Oh, save us by grace.

Chorus—Day by day, only Thou
O God, art our portion,
Thou only our Creator,
Our Saviour, Preserver,

Tho' sin, the world, or Satan,
Would seize and devour,
Thou, our Rescuer, Thou only
Canst save and deliver.

Tho' all labours and losses
And trials surround us,
How great is Thy grace
Which Thou, God, dost show us.

When Thy name we receive,
Tho' stripes may abound,
Thou, O God, art our Father,
Thou, O God, even Thou.

We have demons we worship.
But Thou, God, didst call us,
Thro' him, Thy loved Son
Thou in mercy didst call us.

The savor of Thy Word,
Thy Word which is truth,
Hath showed us life's way,
The life everlasting.

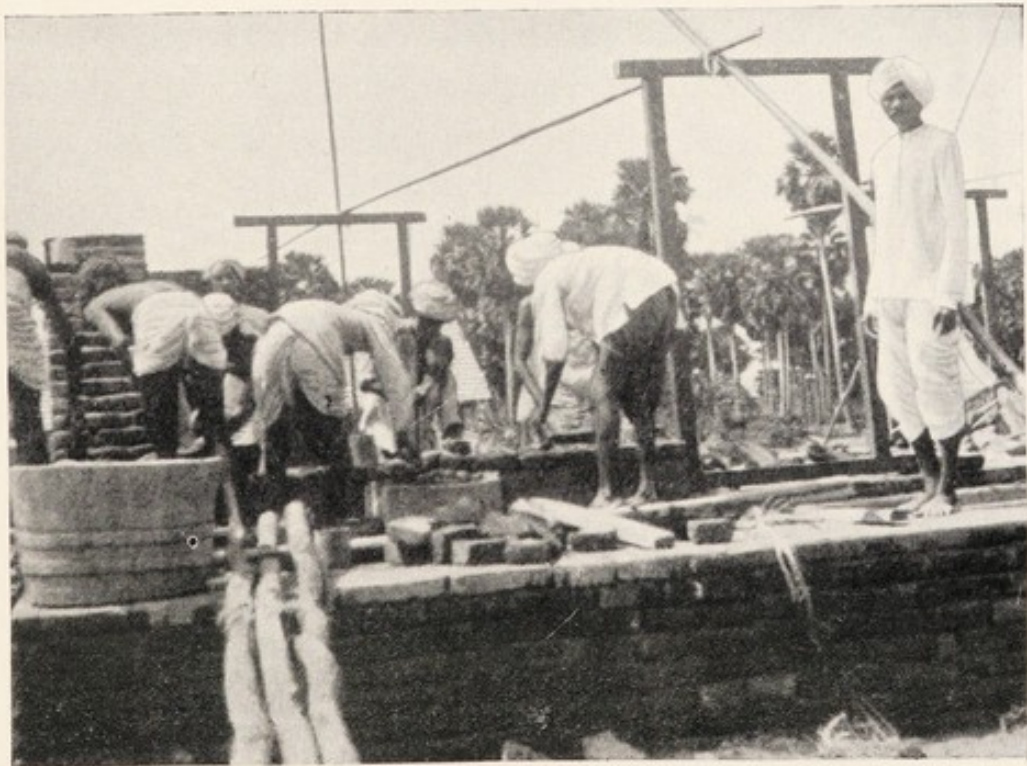
The riches of Thy Word,
Is the food of our soul,
Oh, encourage, encourage us
To live for and serve Thee.

Do Thou constantly fill us
With faith, hope, and love,
'Thou only excelling One,
Thou only excellent.

Rudriah's singing and suffering terminated a few weeks after my visit. He passed away peacefully, leaving behind a memory of great affliction bravely.



Carpenters at work on the new Asylum, Ramachandrapuram.



Bricklayers building the new Asylum, Ramachandrapuram.

and cheerfully borne, and a bright and clear Christian testimony. To have afforded a haven of rest, as well as a place of service, to poor Rudriah as its *first* inmate is surely a hopeful augury for the future of this Asylum.

Here again, through the kindness of the lady whose gift had already gladdened the hearts of the lepers in other places, I was enabled to give them a little feast which they immensely enjoyed. When we went down to the Asylum at the time appointed, we found all the lepers, except old Jaggama (whose portion was taken to her hut), seated in a large semi-circle with their plates and drinking vessels before them. Grace having been sung, Miss Hatch, together with two of her young Bible-women, and David and his wife, were soon busy dispensing liberal portions of rice, curried mutton, &c., which were eaten with a relish that a dyspeptic gourmand would have envied. I noticed several untainted children sharing the portions of their parents—a perilous pleasure to the little ones.*

It was, I think, David who suggested that it would add still further to the enjoyment of the feast if I would myself serve the lepers with the sweetmeats, which I was very glad to do. From two large baskets I accordingly dispensed luscious balls of sugar and *ghi*—the latter being, I believe, a kind of clarified butter—together with some cakes of melted sugar, which reminded me of an infantile attempt to make

* This mingling of healthy children with leper parents is only allowed temporarily pending the building of the Children's Home, which it is hoped may be ready by the end of 1901.

toffee. These saccharine luxuries are, however, greatly enjoyed by the lepers, into whose lives but little "sweetness" in any form enters. As I passed from one to another they held up their poor fingerless stumps, under their wraps or garments as a rule, with evident enjoyment and gratitude. Before we left they sang to us, and expressed their grateful thanks to all their friends in England, to the donor of the feast, and to myself for having travelled so far to visit them. That my readers may have an idea of the ingredients and the cost of the "feast," I will transcribe the bill which was afterwards handed to me by David :—

				Rs.	as.	ps.
Rice, six measures	...	...		2	4	0
Tamarind, three visses...	...	...		0	9	0
Good oil, one seer	...	...		0	5	0
Dhall, six seers	...	...		0	12	0
Salt, three seers	...	...		0	4	6
Onions, one viss	...	...		0	1	0
Fuel	...	...	...	0	8	0
Milk	...	...	...	0	4	0
Plantains	...	...	...	0	1	0
Pendalam—four visses	...	...	...	0	5	0
Mutton	...	...	...	2	0	0
Currystuff	...	...	...	0	4	0
Cocoanut and cloves	...	...	...	0	3	0
Leaves	...	...	...	0	2	0
Sweetmeat	...	...	...	2	0	0

Total 9 14 6

Equal to 13s. 2d.

Taking the round sum of ten rupees the cost of this banquet works out at a fraction under fourpence per head, as the guests numbered forty-five. I should add that special portions, with one or two added delicacies, had been set apart for Miss Hatch and myself. These, I need hardly say, we tried our utmost to appreciate.

By 6 p.m. on Saturday evening we were on board the house-boat for the return to Cocanada. Our party comprised Rev. J. E. Davis, Dr. Woodburn, Miss Hatch, and myself. The first ten miles of this trip were, I think, the pleasantest of all the seven thousand of my journeyings in India. The evening air was balmy and pleasant, the sunset truly Eastern in its splendour, and our intercourse congenial, while our boat glided gently along towed by coolies at a slow walking pace. The banks of the canal were lined with several varieties of palms, all graceful in shape, as well as by other trees. When the glories of the sunset had died away, the firmament became gradually studded with stars, and the fire-flies sparkled around us. Myriads of these bright little insects were dancing in the air like so many tiny stars that had left their lofty orbits and could find no rest on earth. As their little dark-brown bodies were invisible the effect was striking and beautiful, and the whole scene inexpressibly restful to a weary traveller.

Some hours of sleep prepared me for the engagements of the Sunday in Cocanada, where I found the Missionaries had arranged for me to speak three times. First at the native service in the morning,

then to a meeting of the educated natives in the afternoon, and to the European congregation in the evening. The morning and the evening services were of the usual character. At the former my interpreter was Rev. H. F. La Flamme, and at the latter my audience understood English.

The meeting held in the afternoon was of a different description. It was an attempt to interest the Hindu residents in the needs of the lepers, and in the work of the Asylum at Ramachandrapuram. It had been announced that I would give an account of my tour, and of the work of the Mission to Lepers. It was the first time a meeting of such a character had been held in the Mission Church, and we felt very dubious as to how many of the well-to-do Hindus would assemble in such a place for such a purpose. However, about thirty-five attended, which was as many as I, at any rate, had expected.

They all understood English and gave an attentive hearing as I spoke of work among lepers generally, and of the local Asylum particularly. While endeavouring not to offend their prejudices I gave them clearly to understand that the undertaking was entirely Christian in its conception, as it would be in its management, and that while welcoming any help they might be led to give us in caring for *their lepers*, it could only be on the distinct understanding that it was emphatically a Christian Institution. Indeed I emphasized the point that we looked upon such work as especially embodying the very Spirit of Christianity in regarding even the outcast leper as a fellow man to be pitied and helped, and as a

soul to be redeemed. They showed considerable interest and asked some questions at the close, while the financial result was encouraging. The leading lawyer, who acts for the Government and is a man of high character, gave 275 rupees as a donation, and promised ten rupees monthly as a subscription, while several others gave smaller sums.

The extent, as well as the methods, of Christian work among these outcasts from their own faith evidently came as a revelation to these intelligent members of the native community, and they were, I believe, much impressed. At the close of the address, the lawyer already referred to rose and said he had been, not only interested, but humbled by what he had heard. He felt ashamed that so much should be done for Hindu lepers by Christians of another race, while they themselves had done nothing to care for them. He felt that the least they could do was to assist in a work which was, not only one of true charity to the unfortunate, but was a real boon to the community at large. He closed by promising the gifts already mentioned. This meeting may, I think, be regarded as an encouraging experiment, and goes to show that considerable assistance may be forthcoming from native sources for the prosecution of a work of such undoubted public benefit as the segregation of lepers.

In concluding the account of my especially interesting visit to Ramachandrapuram and Cocanada—where I felt thoroughly at home with the warm-hearted Canadian friends—I may add that I was assured that the establishment of the Leper

Asylum has already had a most beneficial effect on the general work of the Mission in the district. This work of caring for the lepers is an object lesson of practical Christianity, and appeals strongly to many who are both unable and unwilling to receive new and abstract ideas of Christian truth.

It is due to the missionaries of this centre and to the Christians of Cocanada, to say that they all show the heartiest sympathy with the work among the lepers. One young medical missionary, a lady, quite recently arrived from Canada, had contributed one hundred rupees towards the Asylum, while two other missionaries present at the evening service became subscribers, and many members of the Mission promised contributions.

CHAPTER XXIX

SHOLAPUR, POONA, AND MIRAJ

THE journey from Cocanada to Sholapur was mainly over the Nizam's railway, through the native state of Hyderabad—a line which is truly Eastern in its slowness. Twelve miles an hour for forty-eight hours was the average rate at which I travelled between the two points named. During most of this journey I was the only European passenger in the train, and was, on the whole, treated with a degree of consideration in keeping with that fact. Did I wish for chota hazri? Then a telegram was sent forward and tea and toast awaited me two stations further on. Would I dine in the evening? Then I found, two hours later, that I was the solitary partaker of a repast of five or six courses, three of which I would willingly have sacrificed for a cut of British roast beef. But I may here bear record that I found the refreshment arrangements of the Indian railways surprisingly good, all things considered, and the comfort of the carriages and the courtesy of the officials all that could be desired. Once, however, during these two very hot nights, I was so consumed by thirst that I was compelled to patronize the "pani-wallah," or common water-man, who is on duty at most large stations to supply the natives

with drinking-water. To the surprise of this functionary the "Sahib" hailed him, and held out his hands for water like any low caste native. But the water was at least *liquid*, and my thirst was overpowering, so I was grateful. I have said that I found the Indian railways comfortable. Gratitude compels me to confess that in my case this comfort was enhanced by the possession of a letter commending me to the kind offices of railway servants in India generally. For this I was indebted to a retired director and manager of Indian railways, whose name is held in high respect on all the principal Indian lines, and it secured me not a few favours and privileges, of which I here make grateful acknowledgment.

On arrival at Sholapur, I found myself again in the Bombay Presidency, which reminded me that I was nearing the completion of the circuit I had set myself to make. Here I was met by Rev. L. Gates (of the American Marathi Mission), with whom I proceeded in the afternoon to the temporary Leper Asylum. We were joined on the way by Dr. P. B. Keskar, an Indian medical missionary, who shares the work among the lepers with Mr. Gates. They are assisted by a native pastor, who, though advanced in years, and retired from active duty, still renders useful service among these outcasts.

The Asylum for destitute lepers in Sholapur originated during the famine of 1899-1900, when Dr. Keskar appealed on their behalf to the Committee of the Mission to Lepers. He found about two hundred lepers in the city and *taluk* of Sholapur alone. They were in a destitute condition, and suffering greatly for want

of food and clothing. A year later the Society was able to remit the money for a permanent building, the erection of which had just been begun at the time of my visit. Referring to the need for an Asylum at Sholapur, Mr. Gates wrote at the end of 1900 :—

“ In reference to a Leper Asylum here, there are about twenty lepers in the Home now. There are a dozen or more in the poor-house, who will come as soon as we have room for them. There is no place for lepers in all this district besides this Home, and no probability of any Asylum being started within one hundred miles of us on any side. The Collector and Municipal Officers have recently told me that they hoped this work would be permanent, as there is need of a Leper Asylum here. This is an ideal site for such an Institution.”

Lady Northcote, whose husband is Governor of Bombay, expressed her warm sympathy with the project and sent a contribution towards the cost.

In the hired house in which the lepers were located pending the building of the Asylum I found thirty-one inmates, among them being five little leper children, and five women, the remainder being men.

They looked well-fed and clothed and were comparatively mild cases with two or three exceptions. The contrast in this respect with a similar number in some places (say at Saharanpur) was most marked, and seemed to indicate that the disease in this district is of a less virulent type than in many others.

I found that ten of the inmates were Christians, six of whom have been baptized in the Asylum, and

several others have expressed a desire for baptism. One of these was a good-looking young man named Maroti, who was formerly a great smoker of bhang, but has now quite given it up. His great desire now is to go home and tell his friends of the Saviour he has found. Among the women was Lydia of whom Dr. Keskar gave the following account:—

“She lost her parents when she was very young. She does not remember the time when she was attacked by the disease. When famine broke out she was led to the Government poor-house. One day I went there and asked whether anyone was willing to go to our newly-started Asylum. She was the first to promise, and came with me. After she came to our Asylum she learnt of the love of the Saviour, and after some time asked for baptism. At her own request her name was changed from Phatma to Lydia. She seems to me a real child of God, and very happy in the Lord Jesus Christ. She leads an exemplary life, and we all love her.”

All the lepers willingly attend at the morning and evening prayers, which the old pastor conducts daily. They sang a bhajan or two very nicely, and united in repeating the Lord's Prayer, after which they listened with attention to the address I gave them, with Dr. Keskar's help as interpreter. They entrusted me with messages of grateful thanks to all their friends in England. There appeared to be the beginnings of a very hopeful work in Sholapur, and I have no doubt the effort so recently inaugurated will prove an immense boon to the lepers of the district.

We afterwards drove to the site of the new Asylum.

This is a mile or so from the town, and is in a very suitable situation. It was formerly the infantry lines, and there is an excellent well on the ground.

The ground is ten acres in extent, and has been granted by Government at a merely nominal rent. The collector, Mr. Maconochie, has expressed his intention of having any wandering lepers in the district sent to the Asylum.

I found the foundations laid for two blocks of eight and nine rooms for women and men respectively, and Mr. Gates hoped the buildings would be up and the lepers transferred by midsummer. After this it is probable that the numbers will increase, indeed, letters received since my visit speak of many more inmates.

In Sholapur I saw much that was of great interest in the general work of the station, which is one of the most successful of the American Marathi Mission in Western India. There are sixty-four workers in the city and its fifteen out-stations, with 1,151 scholars in the Sunday Schools. Eighty-nine additions to the Church in Sholapur in 1900 indicate a healthy spiritual growth. It was a real pleasure to see the pupils in the two schools presided over by Miss Harding and Miss Fowler go through their kindergarten exercises. With circles and lines marked on the floor to guide them, these little people performed the most complicated evolutions with ease and enjoyment. They sang a "washing song," with appropriate action, and with the most roguish expression on many of the little faces, whose white teeth and black eyes shone out so merrily. They ranged in

age from three to seven, and the majority of them were waifs rescued from death during the recent famine.

Sholapur was the centre of one of the worst famine areas, as the bare and poverty-stricken appearance of the country for many miles round bore witness. At one time there were 2,600 people employed in relief work on the camp, under the supervision of the Mission, and here, as in many other places, the missionaries rendered invaluable assistance to the authorities in the administration of the famine funds.

The garden of the compound was being watered by a well which may be said to have been *dug with knitting needles*. "How?" Why thus. Mrs. Gates being laid aside by illness knitted a variety of useful articles. These were sold and the money was used to pay the famine-stricken people for digging the well. This suggests to me to say how twice blessed was much of the money given for famine relief. It not only enabled the starving people to purchase food, but the labour they gave in return for it dug wells and tanks, made roads, built orphanages, schools, churches, and Leper Asylums, while its disbursement through Missionary channels served to underline and emphasize the teaching of Christianity by the Missionaries. At Sholapur commodious and substantial buildings have been erected by famine labour which will stand the Mission in good stead for the next half-century, among them being the new Leper Asylum.

It was a pleasure to see the "living stones" of the spiritual church also, and to be permitted to address

a large gathering of the native Christians at their weekly Church meeting.

Several hopeful branches of Industrial work are being developed under the practical management of Mr. Gates. Well-fitted carpentry sheds give each class of boys in the school a daily lesson in the use of tools. Rug-weaving is being taught to both boys and girls in another department in which ten looms are at work, while washing classes teach them lessons in practical cleanliness. The general medical Mission work carried on by Dr. Keskar in the city is greatly appreciated, and large numbers pass through his dispensary annually, all of whom are benefited physically, and many, it is hoped, spiritually as well.

Another night in the train brought me to Poona, where I was hospitably entertained by Rev. J. Torrance and Mrs. Torrance of the United Free Church of Scotland. Poona has some of its hottest weather about the end of March, and the thermometer rose to 102 degrees in the shade during my short stay. For an unseasoned novice this was sufficiently warm.

As usual my first call was upon the lepers.

Immediately after chota hazri, Mr. Torrance drove me out to the Asylum. It is beautifully situated on the outskirts of the town, and has accommodation for twice the number of lepers I found there, viz., forty-two. About eighteen others, poor, blind, and destitute, find a home here as well. The houses are airy, well-built, and some of them even handsome. Most of the blocks bear inscriptions setting forth the names of the Parsee gentlemen by whose generosity

they were erected. There is, however, no air of home about the place, and the supervision is by no means thorough. The medical attendance is represented by a weekly visit by a native hospital assistant, and the general management is in the hands of a clerk, who acts for the Committee who control the Asylum. This Committee represents the Municipality and the native community, but with no Christian or missionary member. The food is all cooked together by a Marathi woman before being served out, and a trifling sum is given as a money allowance. I was glad to hear (from the clerk) that the lepers are not allowed to go in and out at will, but are expected to remain. It is to be regretted that the vacant rooms are not occupied by some of the vagrant lepers who still infest the streets; the moment I left the railway station I was accosted by a begging leper, in an advanced stage of the disease.

Regular Christian teaching is given by a catechist, who is provided by the Mission to Lepers, and works under the supervision of Mr. Torrance, who also himself visits the lepers occasionally.

Though carried on in the face of much adverse influence, this simple ministry has borne good fruit, and there have been not a few conversions during the two or three years the teacher has been at work. But owing to the anti-Christian spirit existing in the Asylum, these converts have gone to Pui or Poladpur for baptism, and have joined the Christian community in these places. The first bright and active Christian leper to whom the reader was introduced in this book was one of these; Atmaran at

Poladpur. He was the first to come out decidedly for Christ in Poona, and nine or ten others have followed since, none of whom have felt strong enough to be baptized and remain as Christians in the Poona Asylum. This degree of bigotry and opposition to Christianity among the lepers was happily confined to Poona, so far as my experience enabled me to judge. It arises, mainly from ignorance, but partly also from the Christian work being of recent date though it is fostered, possibly, by the fact of the institution being under entirely non-Christian management.

As the catechist reported that six or eight of the lepers who had been under instruction for some time were desirous of being baptized, I thought it well to appeal, on their behalf, to the Hindus and Mussulmans for toleration. We called them all together, and after the Christians had sung a bhajan and prayer had been offered, I spoke to them through Mr. Torrance. I showed them, in the first place, what the Christian people of Great Britain were doing for the lepers of India. I then pointed out that in all our Christian Asylums, the Hindus and Mussulmans were just as freely admitted and as kindly treated as the Christians. I appealed to them on the ground of their common affliction to live together in peace, and to grant to those who wished to become Christians the same liberty they themselves enjoyed. They all listened attentively as I went on to show them some of the blessings that Christ offers to the lepers, as freely as to the healthy and the wealthy, and at the close they promised, with seeming sincerity

that the Christians should not be persecuted or molested in any way. As one of the six candidates for baptism appeared to be a man of superior intelligence and some influence, it is hoped they will be enabled to live down the opposition, and that a much needed Christian element may be introduced into the Poona Asylum.

On my return to Poona the following week I was invited to address the United Missionary Prayer Meeting which is held monthly in the Presbyterian Church. It was cheering to find a goodly gathering of Missionaries and European friends with some Christian officers and several soldiers. There was a spirit of decided sympathy with our work among the lepers, and it was, to me at least, a very refreshing meeting.

A visit to the Home for widows in Poona, founded by Pandita Ramabai and now superintended by her daughter Manorama, interested me greatly and prepared me for the still more responsible undertaking carried on under the immediate supervision of the Pandita herself at Khedgaon.

Of the interesting day spent there, I transcribe an account written at the time for "All Nations."*

"It was a day of hope for the child widows and famine waifs of India when God led Pandita Ramabai out of the darkness of Hinduism into the light of Christianity, and the sights I saw in a day's visit to Mukti were such as to fill me with thankfulness and hope. Let me note at once what is, perhaps, the

* An illustrated monthly magazine, published by Marshall Brothers, Paternoster Row, E.C., 1/6 per annum, post free,

most hopeful feature of this great enterprise, viz., that it is an entirely native product, and is carried on without European help. As one of the standing difficulties of missionary work is the inability of the average Indian Christian to bear responsibility, it is an especially hopeful sign to note that one of the largest philanthropic institutions in India owes its inception to the faith and devotion of an Indian Christian, and, what is still more striking, that Christian a *woman!*

“Probably a brief record of what we saw, in the order we saw it, will best convey to the reader some idea of this “Home of Salvation” (as its name, *Mukti Sadan*, denotes).

“An hour and a half in the train from Poona brought us (that is Rev. J. Torrance, and myself) to Khedgaon, the wayside station from which Mukti is only half a mile distant. As we sighted the gate a long procession was streaming in—the girls returning from their morning bathing at one of the wells, whose constant supply of water is one of the many mercies the Pandita so gratefully recognizes in her lot.

“We were received in the office, in which we found the directress seated on a low settee before her desk in true Indian style. After a short chat we were remitted to the kind care of Davidas Gangudra, her chief male helper. He showed us to a guest room, where refreshments awaited us, and afterwards acted as our guide over all the Institution.

“Our first call was upon the Kindergarten School, in which eight classes, numbering upwards of two hundred little waifs from three to six years old,

were receiving such instruction as their undeveloped minds were capable of absorbing. Though their faces as a whole were bright and happy, not a few still bore traces of the privation and suffering they had already undergone. They sang prettily a native lyric in praise of "Mother," though their only mother is one whose large heart finds room for 1,760 of other women's children.

"In the next large building we found no fewer than 750 girls, all busy with their lessons, which were suspended while they sang, in Gujrati, 'Nothing but the blood of Jesus.' In other school-rooms hundreds more were at work, while about a hundred and fifty were in Hospital with fever and other mild and ordinary ailments.

"Later in the day we were permitted to see this great family feeding. The staple food is rice, but this is supplemented by other cereals and vegetables. Twice a day (with a 'snack' between) these hundreds of hearty appetites have to be satisfied, and the responsibility of feeding so many will perhaps be realized by the fact that just about *one ton of grain per day* is consumed. On each side of the central kitchen two immense eating rooms open out, and in each of these, squatted in six long rows on the floor, about 750 girls are now waiting for their meal, a few of the faces seeming still to bear the effect of famine in their pinched appearance. Quietly they wait, each with her three metal vessels before her—the plate for rice, the bowl for curry, and the drinking cup. But the bowls are not needed to-day, and the rice has to be eaten without the accompanying relish,

as discipline for bad behaviour at morning prayers. Grace is said, and then there emerges from the kitchen a stream of helpers, each with a huge tray of rice on her head, and soon some fifteen thousand fingers are busy, for knives, forks, and spoons are regarded as superfluous luxuries at Khedgaon.

“Presently dinner-time for the guests came round, and the two European visitors squatted manfully cross-legged, on the little square boards on the uncarpeted earthen floor of Ramabai’s dining-room, and tried their hardest to enjoy the curry and rice, the chappaties, and sweetmeats. As a concession to our inexperience, a spoon and fork were allowed each of us, and our gratitude for the kind hospitality shown us was not unmixed with a feeling of relief when the meal was over, and the legs might be untwisted again.

“Reference has been made to the fact that this vast work is under purely Indian management, and it is specially gratifying to note that almost all the 150 young helpers are themselves waste material from the famine of 1897. Rescued from starvation then, taught and trained in the intervening years, these whilom jungle waifs have been transformed into able and devoted helpers of their younger sisters in misfortune. ‘I am thankful,’ says the Pandita, ‘that God has given me a band of 150 noble young women, who are incessantly working for their sisters day and night. There are forty-five matrons, each of whom has thirty girls under her charge. They are proving themselves real mothers to the girls.’

“The future of her family is naturally a subject of

much prayful concern to the directress, and various forms of industrial work are being developed which will utilize the labour of the girls, six hundred of whom are already over fourteen years of age. It is hoped that many will lead useful lives as teachers and Bible-women. Some will marry, and others will earn their living by weaving, sewing, embroidery, knitting, basket-making, &c. It will thus be seen that the near future of this great Institution is pregnant with possibilities of temporal and spirit good, not only to the inmates themselves, but, through them, to a much wider circle.

“Mention must be made of the Rescue Home—‘Home of Grace’ is the translation of its native name. In this establishment, across the road from the main buildings, some two hundred girls, betrayed and sin-soiled, are being patiently and lovingly led into a life of purity and usefulness. Many of them are mere children, but have already painfully found that the way of the transgressor is hard. The youngest mother here is only fourteen, and thirty-two others are under sixteen years of age. May the compassionate Christ reveal Himself in saving power to every one of them!

We must surely admire and thank God for the faith that, without endowment or guarantee, other than the Divine promises, has shouldered a responsibility so great as this, and the least we can do is to unite our prayers to those of the believing band at Khedgaon that God will still supply all their need. ‘God has never suffered us to want or to be ashamed,’ said Ramabai, in our farewell chat

before leaving this Home of Salvation, and after we had knelt on the mud floor in prayer to Him who is a Father to the fatherless, and who has said, 'Let thy widows trust in ME,' we went on our way with our hearts cheered and our faith strengthened by what we had seen and heard at the Mukti School and Mission."

A journey of some sixteen hours brought me to Belgaum, in the Southern Marathi country, where I was the guest for three days of some old English friends, Mr. and Mrs. Villiers F. Hunter. The night in the train between Poona and Belgaum made the seventh out of ten consecutive nights that I had spent in travelling, including the two on the house-boat. On this last one, the heat was so great that, in the early part of the night, I was glad to lie on the bare leather of the couch, clad only in thin pyjamas with all the windows open, and my feet projecting out to catch the air.

Mr. and Mrs. Hunter, though not in official connection with any society, have been engaged for many years in missionary work, and I found them at the time of my visit (like so many other missionaries) surrounded by a large family of famine orphans. For these little waifs, who are in this case all girls, they were caring with all possible kindness, with the able assistance of their daughter. Pending the building of their own bungalow, I found my friends living in one of the large wards which will, later on, be occupied by the orphans. On the Sunday morning we had a service with the children. They sang very cheerily the bhajans and hymns Miss Hunter had taught

them, and I was struck with the very bright, intelligent expression on most of the faces as they listened to the address which the native teacher interpreted for me. I don't know if it is anything more than the keen, black eyes that impart such an intelligent look to Indian children, but I scarcely saw a really stupid-looking child in the country.

The last of the mission stations to which my tour among the lepers brought me was Miraj, the capital of a tiny native state, in the Presidency of Bombay. The first voice to be raised on behalf of the neglected lepers of this district was that of Dr. Wanless, of the American Presbyterian Mission, who wrote to the Mission to Lepers, in 1896, as follows:—
“ I have for some years had it upon my heart to do something for this unfortunate class of people (lepers) in our district, for whom absolutely nothing is being done, either for the leper parents themselves, or in separating them from their untainted children. There is a large number of these wretched people in the Southern Marathi country, and the nearest Asylum for lepers is located at a distance of about 150 miles from Miraj.”

Dr. Wanless and the lepers of Miraj had, however, to wait for three years at the least, and we find him pleading again in 1899, in the following terms:—

“ I know of one village, eight miles from here, in which there are over one hundred lepers, and they seemed needy when I was out there, in March last. There is no Leper Asylum in this part of the South Marathi country. The Kolhapur State began a building near Kolhapur several years ago. They laid

the corner-stone, which was subsequently stolen, and the foundation stands as it did then, and nothing more has been done. . . . With reference to the other native States, I know of none which attempts anything for the lepers. I think I could secure land gratis somewhere near Miraj if there was the promise of a building and future support of the Institution. I would be glad myself to take the oversight of an Institution, near here, for the poor lepers, as they come almost daily to our dispensary. I often wish something were done to make a home for them. I have seen some very pitiable cases among children, where there has been no attempt at segregation.

(The stolen corner-stone is amusingly characteristic of "how they manage these things" in the minor Native States of India).

Shortly after the receipt of this appeal the Society was happily in a position to say to Dr. Wanless, "Arise and build," and in the latter part of 1900, he reports progress as follows:—

"We are employing about 125 famine people on the new site in digging the well and improving the site generally. We will probably quarry the stone for the buildings from a field near by, thus giving additional work to the famine people. We are feeding and clothing about sixty-five lepers at the present time."

Shortly before my visit the number of lepers in receipt of relief had risen to ninety, but owing to scarcity of funds it was much reduced at the time I was there. But this falling-off was only

temporary pending the building of the Asylum, which I found well advanced. Dr. Wanless has been fortunate in securing a good site between the main road and the railway, and at a convenient distance from the town and the mission station. The stone excavated in the digging of the wells has been utilized in the erection of two good wards, one each for men and women. These were almost finished when I was there and have since been occupied.

Much to my regret Dr. Wanless was absent through ill-health, but his *locum tenens*, Dr. Harding, and his young wife, made me welcome, and showed me the large Mission Hospital, by means of which so much suffering is being relieved and by which the savour of Christ is spread abroad among the thousands who visit it annually, and who carry the good news of healing and hope to the regions round about.

A pleasant run through the picturesque scenery of the Western Ghats brought me back to Bombay, where my final week in India was spent, and where I embarked on the *Persia* of the P. and O. Line for Europe on April 6th, being one of upwards of five hundred passengers. After an enjoyable passage my travels, which had extended to fully 20,000 miles, terminated at Charing Cross on the 21st April.

The reader who has patiently accompanied me to the end of my journey will not need to be assured that I returned with my faith in the great work of Foreign Missions stimulated and strengthened. Missionaries would be the last to claim infallibility for their methods or perfection for their work. Their

ideals are high and their material is often defective. They are too conscious of the difficulties of their task to minimize them. But they are holding the high places of the field in the name of the King of Kings, and they know that, however fierce the fight, the issue is sure. The European and American workers, seconded by their Indian helpers, are doing more, directly, for the moral elevation, and, indirectly, for the good government of our great Eastern Empire than all other agencies combined. And this is the testimony, not of one who might be regarded as prejudiced in their favour, but of an influential, non-Christian native journal. By educational, medical, and industrial, as well as by spiritual and philanthropic effort, the vital force of Christianity is steadily, if slowly, supplanting the lifeless creeds that have so long held the races of India in bondage. Behind these methods and energizing them are the devoted lives of the missionaries on the field, the earnest prayers of the Church at home, and—without which these would be in vain—the “strong Son of God, Immortal Love,” with whose words this volume may most fitly close.

“Go and shew . . . those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them.”

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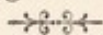
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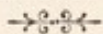
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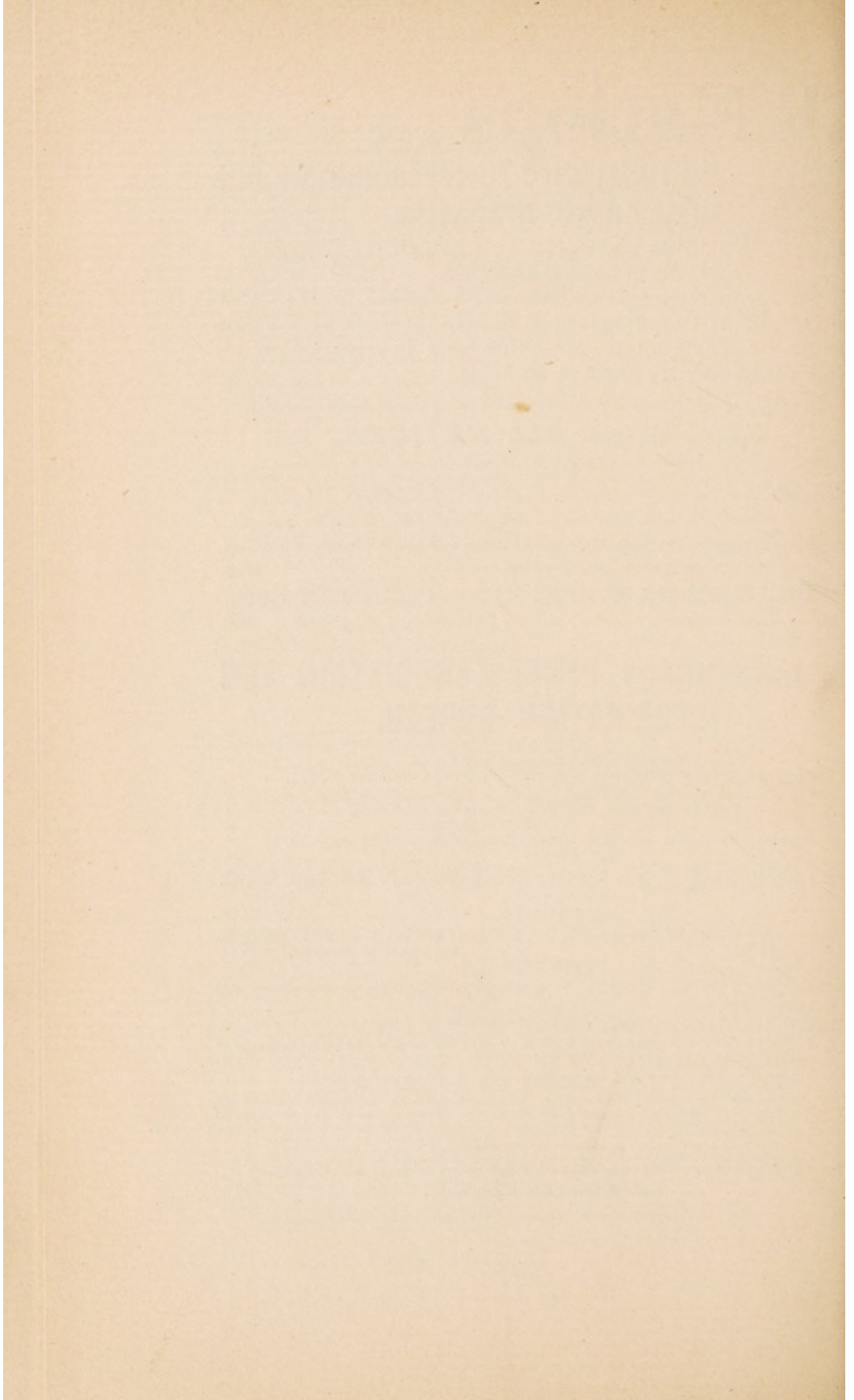
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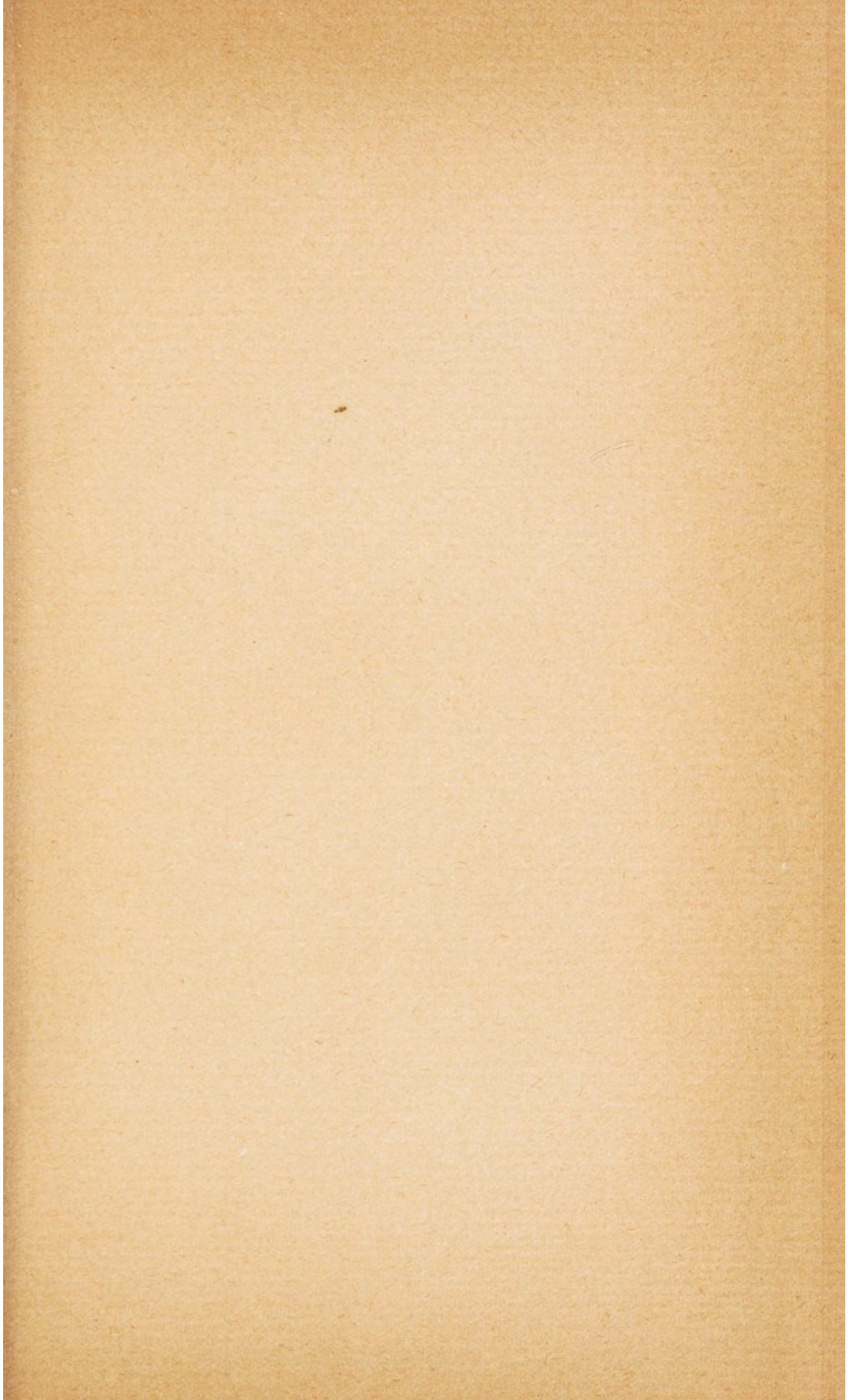
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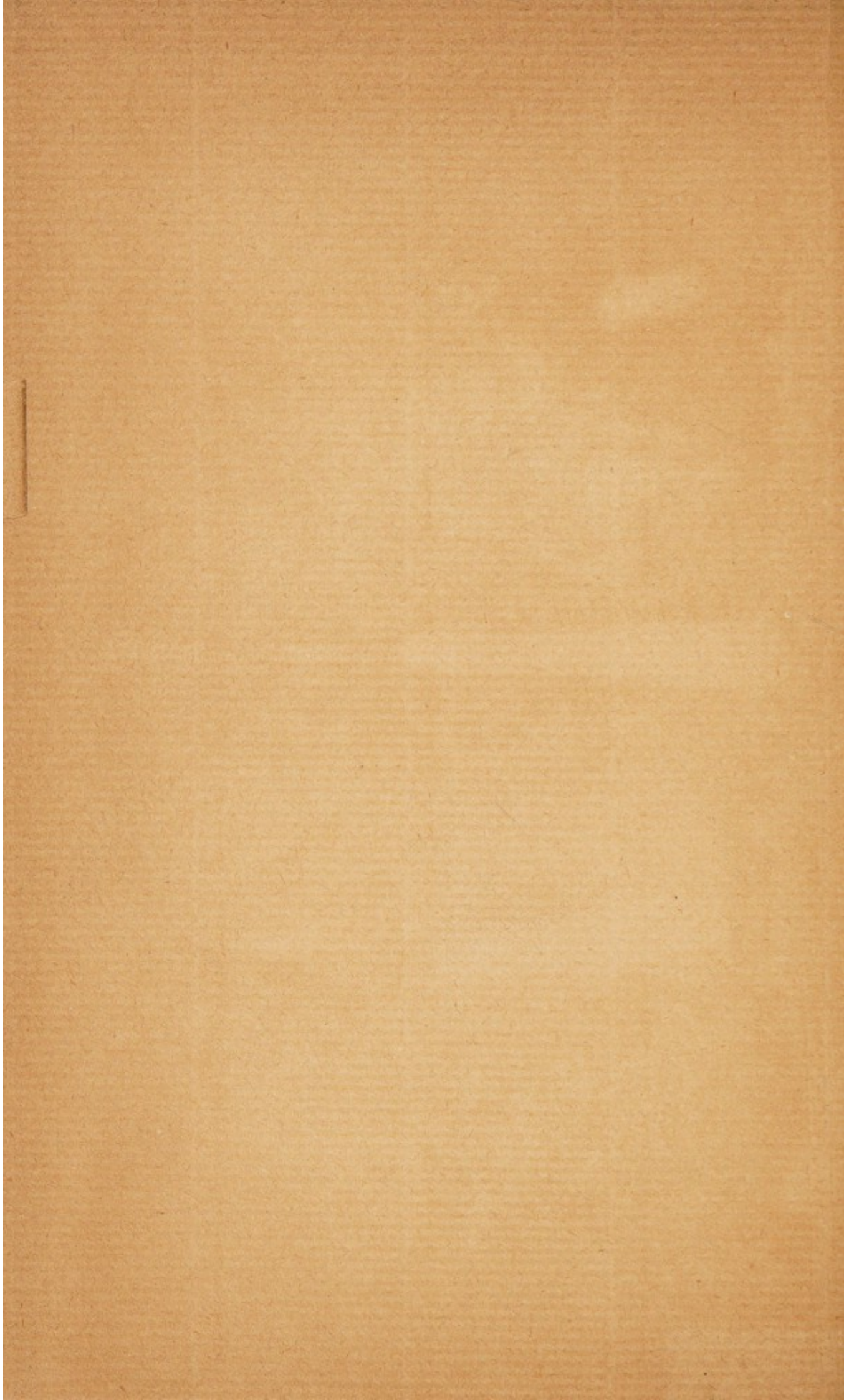
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