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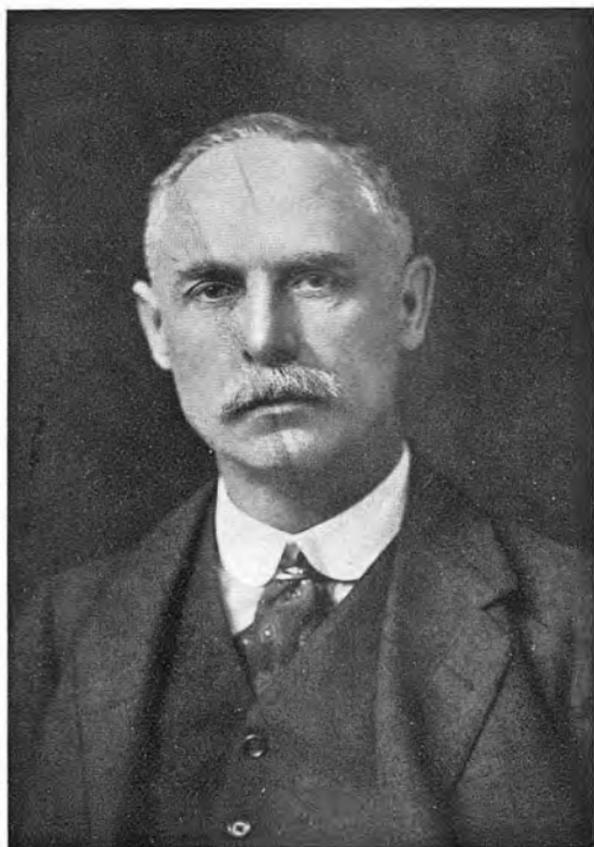


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THE AUTHOR

IN LEPPER-LAND

*A Record of 7,000 Miles among
Indian Lepers, with a Glimpse
of Hawaii, Japan, and China*

BY

JOHN JACKSON, F.R.G.S.

AUTHOR OF "MARY REED"

"LEPERS—36 YEARS' WORK AMONG THEM"
ETC.

THIRD EDITION, WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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EXTRACT FROM PREFACE TO FIRST
EDITION.

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

Preface.

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.

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.

Preface.

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.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

TO accompany this new edition of "In Leper Land" a very brief preface only is needed.

The principal object with which the journey was undertaken, and the book originally written, was the promotion of missionary effort among the lepers of our great Eastern dominion. In the hope that this object may be still further attained, it has been decided to issue the book in as inexpensive a form as possible, while still retaining all the main features of interest. It has been found necessary, however, to abridge the contents somewhat, and portions having no direct reference to the main topic have been omitted.

It is gratifying to note that during the six years that have elapsed since the book was first published, the beneficent work recorded in its pages has been considerably extended. The Society's income has grown from £13,978 in 1900 to £22,188 in 1906. As many as twenty-four new Asylums have been built or are in course of erection, and sixteen fresh centres

Preface.

of work have been added to the Society's list. These bring the total number of Stations at which work is now carried on to seventy-eight, while 8,200 lepers and children are supported or benefited in some form. Of this number 3,200 are returned as Christians—this large proportion evincing the readiness with which these sufferers respond to the only message that can bring them any hope.

The new Asylums erected during the past six years are at the following places:—

Alleppey, Bankura, Calicut, Champa, Dhamtari, Dhar, Kodur, Ludhiana, Miraj, Muzaffarpur, Naini (Allahabad), Nasik, Salur, Sholapur, Tarn Taran, Udaipur, Ujjain, Canton, Tungkun (China), and Laguboti (Sumatra).

Others are about to be built at Poona (Bombay Pres.), and Fusan (Korea), whilst those at Kothara, Meerut, Sabathu and Rawal Pindi have been transferred to the Mission.

Growth so rapid as this is convincing proof that the Society's work is not only meeting a deeply-felt need, but that it is also commanding the confidence of the charitable public. The hope with which this new edition is sent forth is that by it many more may *be helped to know*, in order that they in turn *may know how to help*.

JOHN JACKSON.

33, HENRIETTA STREET,
COVENT GARDEN, LONDON,
October, 1907.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

THE fact that a further edition of "In Leper Land" is needed is in itself an evidence of extended interest in an ever-growing work. There are many indications that the needs of the lepers are receiving sympathetic consideration both in the Mission field and at home. In this beneficent work supply and demand continue to keep pace with each other, so that up to the present the Mission to Lepers has happily found itself able to enter every door open to it. When the last edition was printed a total income for 1906 of £22,188 was recorded as being a substantial advance on former years. This has happily been considerably exceeded during the subsequent years, the average gross income for the years 1908-9-10 being over £30,000. A corresponding increase in the number of lepers supported, benefited, or evangelised, by the Mission has to be gladly reported. The total reached or helped in some measure has now risen to fully 10,000. While this in itself is a matter for thanksgiving and encouragement, the vast multitude still unreached should stimulate all friends of these outcasts to redoubled efforts on their behalf.

Among new centres of work established or decided upon, since the last edition was published, we may name the following :—

Preface.

In India : Raj Nandgaon (C.P.), Madura, Nizamabad, Belgaum and Jeypore (Vizagapatam). In addition to these, Yen Ping, in China, has been re-opened, and a second Asylum for Korea is in contemplation, while the work at Canton is being consolidated and promises hopeful developments in the near future. Correspondence is proceeding with a view to commencing work in Persia, Arabia, and the Straits Settlements.

Advantage has been taken of the issue of this new edition to append to it a short account of the author's visit in 1908 and 1909 to Hawaii, Japan and China. At the same time the principal Indian Stations of the Mission were revisited, and a brief notice of these are included. This added chapter will, in a sense, bring the book up to date, and contribute, it is hoped, not a little to its interest. New illustrations have also been introduced, and we trust the volume will continue to find acceptance among those who sympathise with the most helpless of our fellow-creatures.

JOHN JACKSON.

33, HENRIETTA STREET;
COVENT GARDEN, LONDON,

November, 1911.

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 physical 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 paralysing to one enjoying his first sight of the mysterious East, whose myths and

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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



MARCUS, A NATIVE MISSIONARY, HIMSELF A LEPER.



A CHRISTIAN LEPER WOMAN.—ALMORA.

Bombay.

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

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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 home-like 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.

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

Bombay.

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.

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 six hours were spent in bed, though some refreshing sleep was enjoyed on the return trip by steamer.

Rev. Imam B. Bawa (of the American Marathi Mission), 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

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and myself, together with about twenty 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 emphasised 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,

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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 Mahableshwar. 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

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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

* 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.

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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 newcomers 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 authorised to choose two women to 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.

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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

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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* (80 lb.)."

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 Godaveri 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

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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



ATMARAN AND TWO LEPER WOMEN.—POLADPUR.



LEPERS AND CHILDREN.—POLADPUR.



LEPERS AND TEMPORARY HUTS, NASIK.—THE MAN IS "THE PEACEMAKER."

Nasik.

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 had 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 every one. He nursed a fellow-leper through small-pox, 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

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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

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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 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,

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

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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 bodily 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

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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.

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 days' 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

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lepers in the Asylum, which fact, since heredity may be disregarded,* emphasises 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 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.

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

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

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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.

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

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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 Claire 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,

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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, etc., gave the place quite a festive appearance. To me their chief

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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

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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. Jost, 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 might take his own life, but he has now learned that he can still be useful, and 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

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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

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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

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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 catechise 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 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



RHAIBAI, THE LEPER BIBLE-WOMAN (IN THE CENTRE) AND HER CLASS OF LEPER WOMEN AT NASIK.



LEPER WOMEN READY FOR A RACE.—CHANDKURI.



LEPER WOMEN AND THEIR ONLY SHELTER BEFORE THE ASYLUM WAS BUILT AT CHANDKURI.

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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 sixteen 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 neighbouring

Mungeli.

hut, and, seated on our baggage, we greatly appreciated our meal. A pair of first-rate trotting bullocks brought us by fairly civilised, if not macadamised, 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 fifty 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 forty-nine 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

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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.

Mungeli.

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

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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 baptised 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 baptised, 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 forebode 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 baptised in the afternoon attended at the Mission

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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. Uffmann (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, emphasised 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 Christ came to the rescue of those who were homeless, helpless, and

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hopeless. An appeal was made to the Mission 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 Mission) 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.”

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

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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.

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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

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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 alleviating 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.

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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 7 pice (1½*d.*), and for males 8 pice (2*d.*). 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 12*s.*). 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,

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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 revisited 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 1889, through excessive devotion to the interests 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 show 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

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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

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are also divided. For them, too, is a school for boys and girls. In both places are different masters, care-takers, 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.

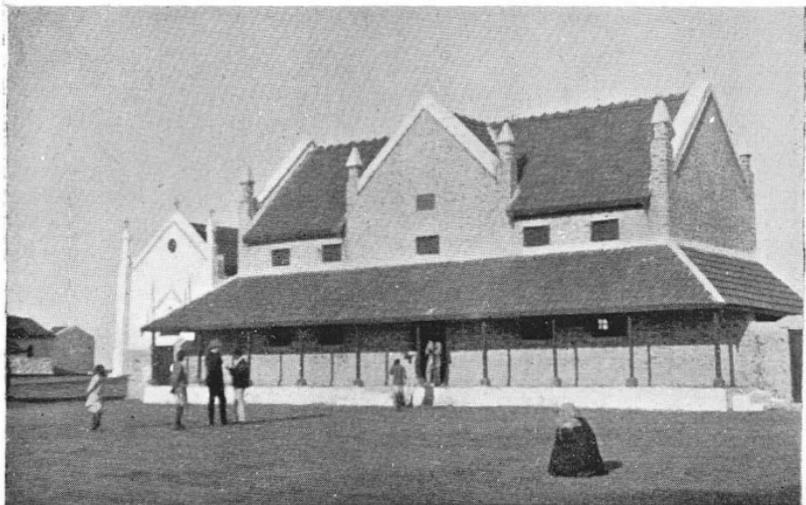
"The parents of some of them who were here are now dead. We, too, one by one, will die. In all likelihood they will live longer and enjoy true religion, and in the future be witnesses for the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and for true religion in this dark country; they will also be able to do something for 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!

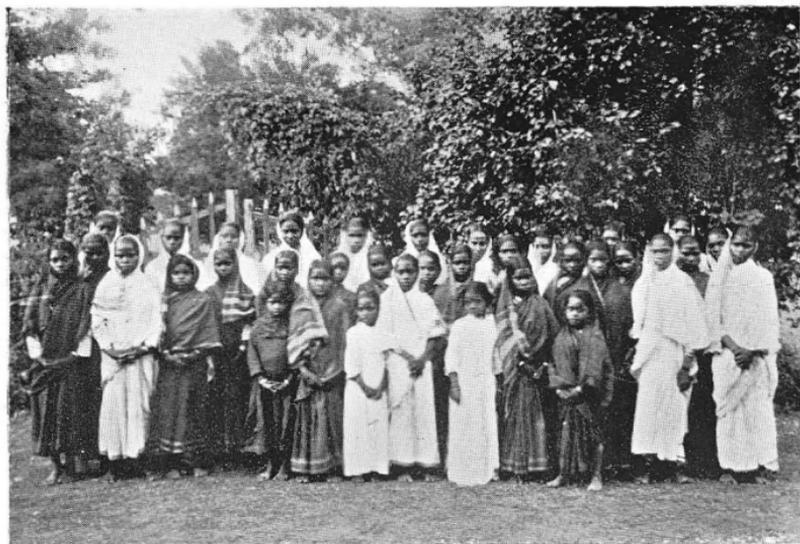
"We all send 'salaams.'"



THREE LEPER DRESSERS ATTENDING A BAD CASE.—CHANDKURI.



THE HOSPITAL.—CHANDKURI.



UNTAINTED GIRLS.—CHANDKURI.



CHRISTIAN LEPERS AND TEACHERS.—MUNGELI.

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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 points. 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

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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 fifteen minutes longer to the lepers than

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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 baptised in the Triune Name. Many could only advance to the front 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 seventy-seven 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 baptised persons in the Institution to 557.

Chapter VIII.

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.

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,

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scrap-books, garments, etc., of which a generous supply had been sent by sympathising 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, etc., 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

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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 chapter, 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,

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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

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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 IX.

Asansol (Bengal).

WITH Mr. Wellesley Bailey's volume, "The Lepers of our Indian Empire," as my guide, I found no difficulty in recognising 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 death-bed he called them all around him, and begged their forgiveness if he had ever grieved them by an unkind

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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.

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 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

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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.

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“ 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,

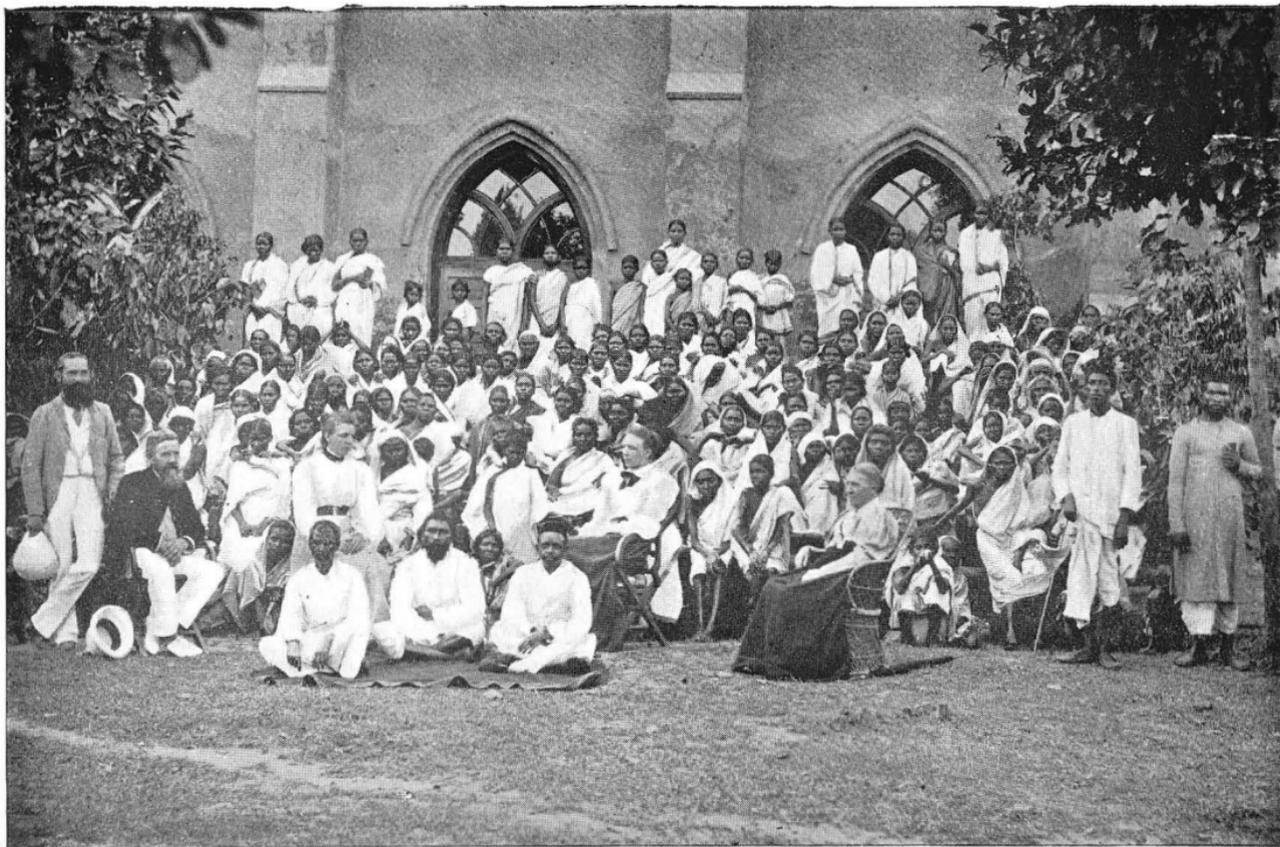
“ Asansol, India.”



LEPERS AT WORK.—PURULIA.



THE LEPER BAND.—PURULIA.



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 X.

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 some 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.

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As showing 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, etc. 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

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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. M. 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.

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.

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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 keynote 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

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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 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.

Chapter XI.

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,

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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

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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 evangelisation 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

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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 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

* 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.

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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 authorised to impose fines for disobedience to any order made

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under the Act, as well as to demand sureties from lepers for their compliance with its requirements.

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.

Chapter XII.

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

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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 recognised. 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

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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

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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

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

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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 summarised 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 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

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

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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 Congress of Leprologists, which sat at Berlin in 1897, under the presidency of the late 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 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.*

* *Nineteenth Century*, December, 1889.

Chapter XIII.

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.

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 seventeen out of the twenty miles we accomplished that day.

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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 storeys, 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 wooded 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

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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

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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 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, notwithstanding 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

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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

An Indian Snowstorm.

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 "callesh 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 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

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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 XIV.

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 needs of these poor sufferers with unflinching sympathy for a period of nearly forty years, but his kindly care for the lepers was only part of the

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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.

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 baptised 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

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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 132 lb. of flour, 24 lb. of dahl, 6 lb. of oil, and 6 lb. 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 pine 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

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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 realised afresh what a scourge of humanity this dreadful disease is. It was touching to see a motherless child of eighteen 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.

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

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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 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.

Chapter XV.

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

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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

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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.

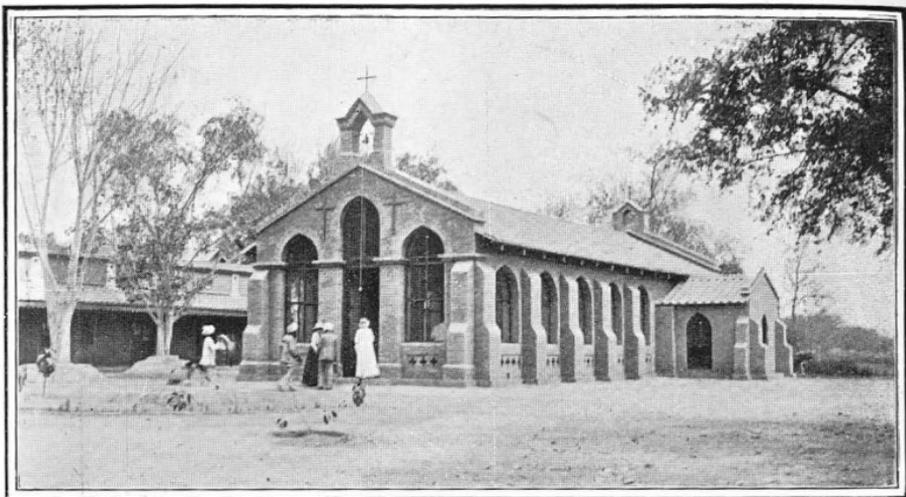
Soon after clearing the highest point of the ridge, Chandag Heights became visible, beyond two intervening ranges, and standing out against the still more distant snows. Steadily down, by a well-wooded and winding way we went, till the day's march ended at Naini, where the bungalow is charmingly located,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



A STREET SCENE IN ALMORA.—NOTE THE BARBER AT WORK.



A GROUP OF THIBETAN SHEPHERDS AND ACROBATS.
Photographed at Almora.



THE LEPERS' CHURCH.—TARN TARAN ASYLUM.



A GROUP OF BAD CASES IN THE OLD VILLAGE AT TARN TARAN.
NOTE THE OLD HUTS IN THE BACKGROUND.

Almora to Chandag.

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

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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 part, 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

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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 recognised 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 XVI.

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*.

“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 civilisation—that is if railways, as is too often assumed, are synonymous with civilisation. 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

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(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 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

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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

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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

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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

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at first seemed a smooth slope, soon became a rocky precipice, which necessitated a considerable détour. 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 wave-like 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

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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 XVII.

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.

* "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 Bros., Ltd., Keswick House, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.; or the Mission to Lepers, 33, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

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Here it can only be briefly summarised. 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

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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 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 Sir Jonathan Hutchinson, F.R.C.S., of London, will be recognised 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. *All these four experts, 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 working life, if under healthy conditions. Aided by these, he anticipated that her naturally strong constitution would for years withstand the inroads of

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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 sympathised 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 over-strain 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

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a rare occurrence. 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 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.

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 tenour 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

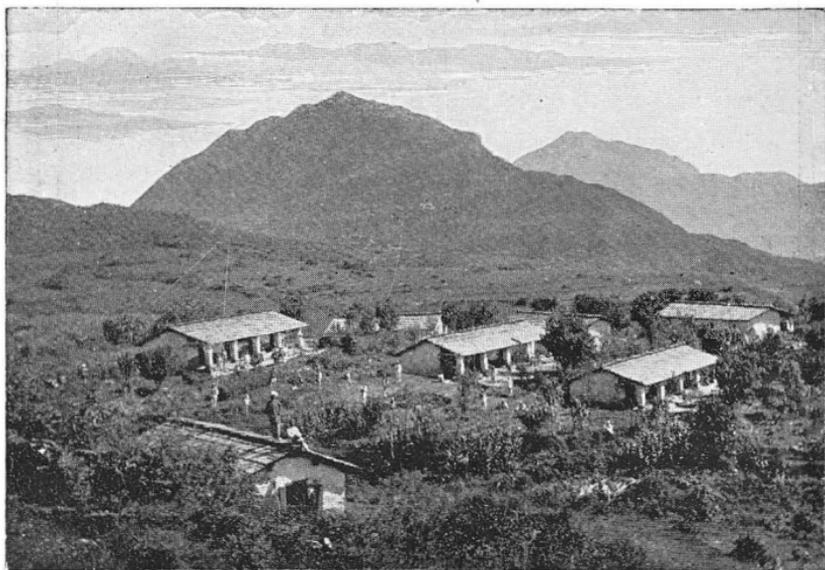
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enfeebled health and with so insidious a disease as leprosy undermining her constitution, has, nevertheless, been able for ten years to do more than an average Missionary's duties, the foregoing facts would carry much weight. But this is emphatically 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 emphasise 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 recognise 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.



MISS REED'S HOUSE.—CHANDAG.



PANAHAHGAH (= PLACE OF REFUGE). THE MEN'S ASYLUM.—CHANDAG.



VIEW FROM THE ASYLUM GROUNDS, CHANDAG.

IN THE CENTRE IS A DEEP VALLEY FULL OF MIST. THE MEN ARE MISS REED'S SERVANTS.

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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.

Chapter XVIII.

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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 thirty-eight 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

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of some of the pathetic life-stories with which work among lepers especially abounds.

The many services Miss Reed and I held with her 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 nine 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

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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

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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 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.

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

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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 of 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 engaged in prayer, she read Psalm lxiii., 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. Jogiyan 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.

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

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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."

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This answer afforded an opportunity for still further emphasising 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.

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 realised that it was their

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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.

Chapter XIX.

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.

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 encamp-

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ment 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 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

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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.

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,

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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 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.

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

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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.

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

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Meerut, among whom he would be glad to place a teacher.

These two are specimens of a considerable number of leper settlements to be found in 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.

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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

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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 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

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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 that they would consider if it could be provided.

There were 146 inmates, of whom forty-eight 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 institution 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. Bhose 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 XX.

Saharanpur, Ludhiana, and Ambala.

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.

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.

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

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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.

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.

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,

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and here also I had my first and only experience of a "rickshaw." This conveyance made another addition to the large variety of vehicles I had met with in India, and of which it was by no means the least comfortable.

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 Sabathu 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.

"One 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 four are able to read, and their Bibles are evidently treasures to them."

I was sorry to see ten or twelve untainted children spending their early years amid the dangerous and

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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 Sabathu (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."

Saharanpur, Ludhiana, and Ambala.

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.

The Ambala 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.

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“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.”

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 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 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

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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 for about ten years rendered faithful service in that capacity.

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

“ He seems 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.

* 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.

Chapter XXI.

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

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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

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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 focussed 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 (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

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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 arisen, 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

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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. 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 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."

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

"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."

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In the following year we hear that the little Church is becoming too small for the leper congregation. The number of baptised 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 baptised 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."

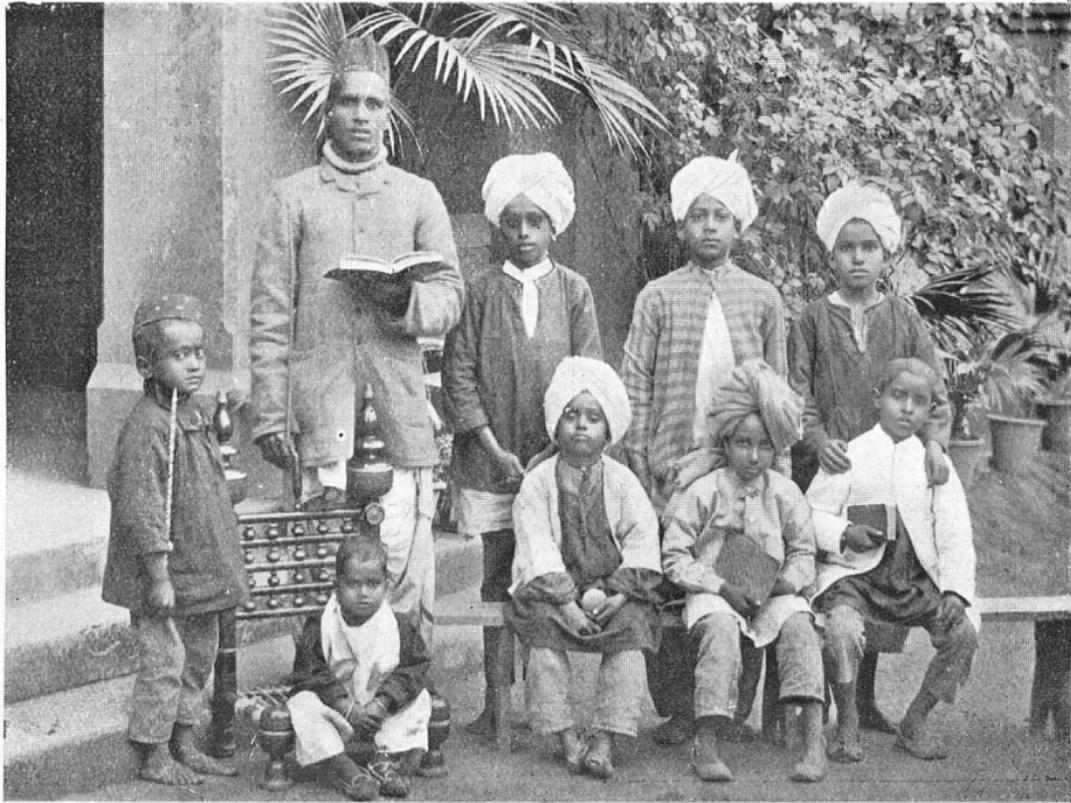
The Gurkha just referred to was one of the Christians who, to the number of forty, gave us such a welcome on the occasion of my visit. I was attracted by the tidy, soldier-like appearance of this man as he sat with his child by his side during the service we had, and at which Mr. Guilford interpreted 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

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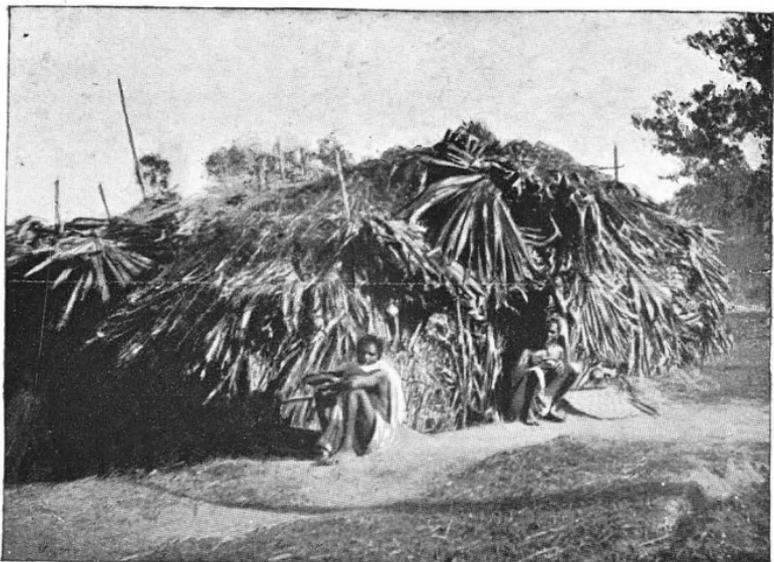
who care for them—especially to “Bailey Sahib,” whose visit they remember so well.

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



A GROUP OF UNTAINTED BOYS AT TARN TARAN, WHO ARE BEING SAVED FROM BECOMING LEPERS, AND ARE BEING TRAINED FOR HEALTHY AND USEFUL LIVES.



TEMPORARY HUTS FOR LEPERS.—RAMACHANDRAPURAM.



ONE OF THE MEN'S WARDS.—RAMACHANDRAPURAM.

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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 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.")

*A new Asylum, built by the Mission with help from the Government, has since taken the place of this village of mud huts.

Chapter XXII.

Ramachandrapuram.

THE place which is burdened with this most awkward appellation is a village situated in the rich delta of the Godaveri, 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

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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, etc. 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 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

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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, a correspondence which has resulted 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 realisation 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 Ramachandra-

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puram there are at least 200 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 two sons, who were greatly attached to their uncle, and frequently in contact with him. Subsequent to the uncle's death, both of these 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 " Mr. Bailey " referred to by Miss Hatch is 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

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over-taxed 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 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 to 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.’ ”

* The Quarterly Magazine of the Mission to Lepers. 10*d.* per annum, post free, from the offices of the Society.

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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

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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

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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 thank-offerings 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

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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. Phillipps' 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

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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, 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.

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

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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.

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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

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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 in his 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,

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

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he replied, "Oh! I just lie awake and sing to my Father, and He comforts me."

Here again, through the kindness of my wife, 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, etc., 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 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

* 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.

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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.

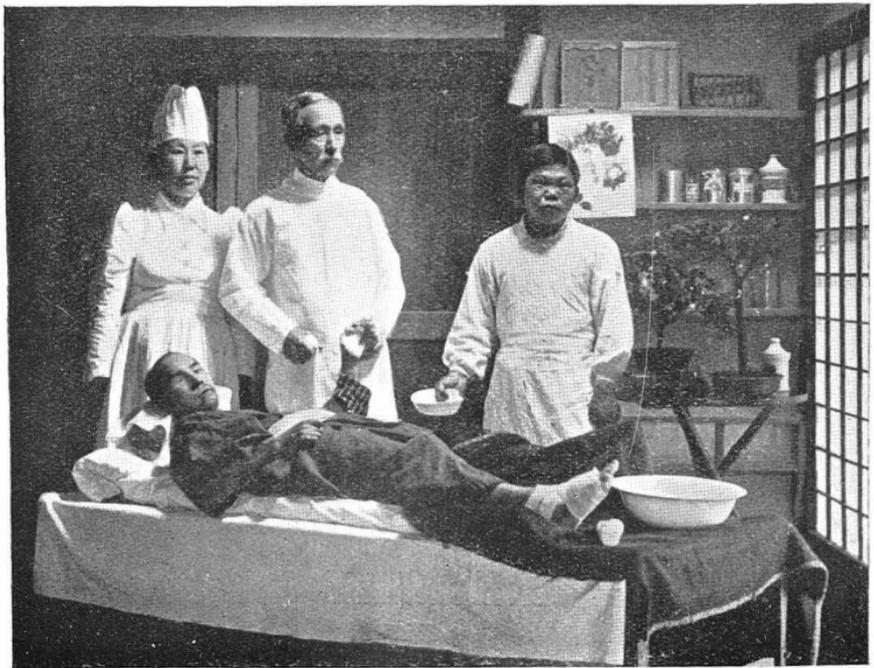
Taking the round sum of ten rupees the cost of this banquet works out at a fraction under fourpence



THE "BOULTER" WARDS FOR WOMEN.—RAMACHANDRAPURAM,



CHRISTMAS AT TOKIO ASYLUM.



A SIMPLE OPERATION ON AN INMATE.—TOKIO ASYLUM.

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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.

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 inter-

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preter 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 emphasised the point that we looked upon such work as specially 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

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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.

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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 XXIII.

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. 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 patronise 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,

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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.

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

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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 baptised 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 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 were willing

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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,

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letters received since my visit speak of many more inmates.

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. The 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,

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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 baptised 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

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were desirous of being baptised, 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.*

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

* A new Asylum is now (1907) being built at the joint expense of the Government and the Mission to Lepers. It will be under the management of the Mission.

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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 were 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."

Sholapur, Poona, and Miraj.

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 utilised 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.

Chapter XXIV.

A World-Tour.

THIS volume concludes with some brief notes of a tour round the world in 1908-9, nearly eight years subsequent to the experiences depicted in preceding chapters. By way of explanation, the following paragraph from "Without the Camp" (the official organ of the Mission to Lepers) for July, 1908, is quoted:—

"As many of my readers are aware, Mr. John Jackson, the Organising Secretary of the Mission, has been in poor health for a year or two, and his recovery from the severe illness of last year has been found to be incomplete. With a view to effecting a permanent restoration, the Committee have granted Mr. Jackson six months' leave of absence, in the hope that a prolonged sea voyage, together with a time of rest and change, will enable him to take up his work again with renewed energy."

The winter of 1908-9 was spent in a tour round the world—in many respects, a memorable experience, and not least so on account of the opportunities it afforded of visiting some of the Society's stations in Japan and China, as well as several of the most important ones in India. Although we had been well aware of the existence of large numbers of lepers in the great lands of the utmost Orient, and the Mission had long been aiding them, it was no small advantage to gain first-hand knowledge as to numbers and conditions, and

Hawaii.

to be able to compare these with those obtaining in other lands. A rapid summary of an intensely interesting tour must suffice. From this must be excluded much that might be well worthy of record, did space allow.

The voyage over the Atlantic and across the American Continent from New York to San Francisco, presented the ordinary features of interest. After a week spent in the Californian city we sailed out through the Golden Gate in the teeth of a cold wind, and over a tossing and angry sea. Next day, however, the voyagers felt that the Pacific Ocean was not misnamed, and five days of calm seas, blue skies, and bright sunshine, yielded the rest and recuperation so sorely needed.

A stay of a fortnight in the Hawaiian Islands afforded an opportunity, of which I gladly availed myself, for a visit to the well-known Leper Settlement on the Island of Molokai. After a steamer-trip from Honolulu, followed by a somewhat adventurous journey across the island in a motor-car over a bullock track, for three hours in the dead of night, I found myself at the top of the precipice which forms a natural barrier shutting off the Leper Settlement from the rest of the island. This *pali*, to use the Hawaiian term, is 1,800 feet high at the lowest point, and so precipitous that I was glad the horses provided by the courtesy of the Superintendent (Mr. MacVeagh) were awaiting us at the bottom, and not at the top!

A cordial acknowledgment is due to the President and Officers of the Board of Health for the Territory, who provided facilities for my journey, and treated me as their guest during my stay at the Settlement.

In Leper-Land.

Here I found a community of about 800 lepers, together with nearly 100 healthy people—assistants, or relatives allowed to attend on the more helpless cases. On the material side nothing is left undone to render the lives of these exiles comfortable and pleasant. Liberal food and other allowances are made by the authorities: the medical staff is efficient and sympathetic, and no reasonable need is unsupplied. Religiously, the residents in the Settlement are ministered to by two Roman Catholic Churches, two Protestant Churches, and two small Mormon Meeting-houses. The Bishop Home, for men and boys in advanced stages of the disease, is presided over by Brother Joseph Dutton, aided by four other lay brethren, and the Baldwin Home fulfils a similar function for girls and women, under the charge of five resident Roman Catholic Sisters. These are really small Asylums within the Settlement, and their inmates are well and kindly cared for. The memory of Father Damien is still cherished at Molokai, and his mantle of self-sacrifice appears to have descended to his friend and, in a sense, his successor, Mr. Dutton. As the Mission to Lepers is in no way connected with the Settlement at Molokai this altogether too brief reference is all that can be permitted here to a most interesting experience, which the writer hopes to treat more adequately elsewhere.

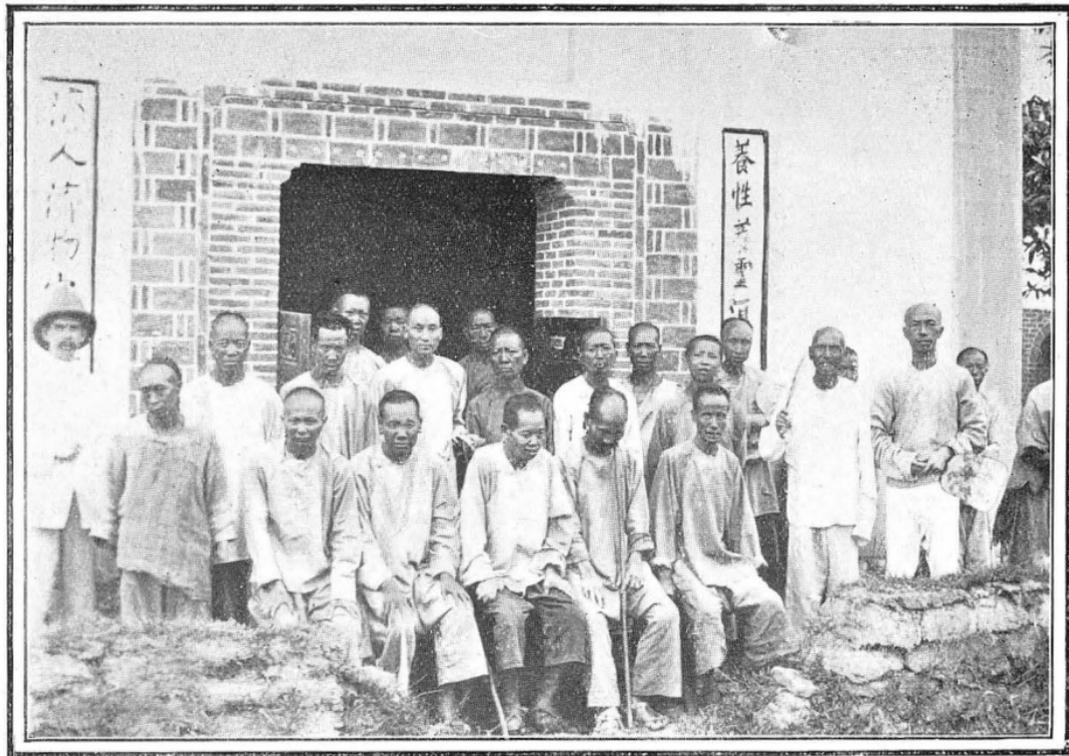
My visit to Japan proved to be opportune, in view of the action of the Government with regard to the lepers. As already recorded, the Mission has provided an Asylum for the outcasts of Tokio, and largely aided another at Kumamoto, in the South Island. The former of these had for some years been under the



LEPERS MAKING SHRIMP BASKETS.—TUNGKUN ASYLUM.



THE LEPER CHURCH.—TUNGKUN.



SOME OF THE INMATES, KUCHENG ASYLUM.—FUH-KIEN.

Japan.

sympathetic observation of representatives of Government. Here they had seen with surprise the extent to which humane segregation, medical care, and kindly sympathy, could alleviate the sufferings, and brighten the lives of the most hopeless of human sufferers. It was with intense interest that I learnt from Professor Kitsato that the Government was about to build five or more central Asylums, in which to care for at least the worst of the 28,000 lepers of whom they had official knowledge. At the time of writing (April, 1910), the first of these—at Tokio—has been opened, and is affording shelter to 148 inmates. This forward movement by the Japanese authorities is full of hope for the thousands of sufferers in that fair land, and we trust it will be vigorously followed up, alike in the interests of the lepers and of the healthy community. Though so far no systematic mission work has been undertaken in this new Institution, it is hoped that this may become possible later on. Meanwhile, occasional services are being held, and the missionaries are welcomed by the lepers, and their messages readily listened to. I found the Asylum built by the Mission to Lepers fifteen years ago giving a home to upwards of 100 lepers, who were comfortably housed in well-kept wards, and who gave me a warm welcome in their clean and neat little Chapel.

My visit to the Canton Leper Village will not soon be forgotten, nor the service in the Chapel, with distribution of Christmas gifts to nearly 100 Christian lepers. I met poor Un Ho, the blind leper, to whose faithfulness is due the introduction of Christianity to this forsaken village. In the Home built by the Mission for Untainted Children, Dr. Boyd, of the American

In Leper-Land.

Presbyterian Medical Mission (to whose courtesy and hospitality I was greatly indebted), and I spoke to, listened to, and distributed gifts, to seventeen boys and girls—a number that might be doubled so far as accommodation is concerned.

One hundred miles up the East River took us to Tungkun, where the Mission to Lepers co-operated with the Rhenish Mission in building and supporting a much-needed Asylum. The well-built wards were in every case overcrowded, and the inmates were unanimous in their demand for additional houses. In order to limit the number of applicants, and to assist the finances, a premium was charged for admission for a time. The eagerness of these outcasts to enjoy the protection of the Asylum was evidenced by a man who begged for over a year in order to save the twenty-five Mexican dollars (about £5) to secure his acceptance. In another case an old woman, whose son was a leper, sold the house which was her only remaining property, to raise the amount for his admission. The moral tone of the Tungkun Asylum appeared to be excellent, and the inmates grateful and cheerful; but there were many advanced cases and some very hideous disfigurements.

On my return to Canton, I called, in company with Dr. Boyd, on the Head of the Police Department. He was courteous and sympathetic, and well disposed to work hand-in-hand with the Mission in dealing with the leper problem as it affects Canton and the Province of Quan Tung, in which he estimates the number of cases to be fully 15,000. At present, however, the position appears not to be clear enough for any definite action on either side. Meanwhile the efforts of missionaries

Penang.

to succour the lepers of Southern and Central China are doing not a little to remove the prejudices alike of the officials and of the masses of the people. So competent a judge as the late Sir Robert Hart formed a high opinion as to the value of their efforts. In a letter to Dr. Kuhne—accompanying a donation of £100—he wrote on December 22nd, 1907: "I sympathise deeply with the sufferers, and the world should be thankful to you and to men like you. . . . Your work must be of a most trying kind, and must tax your strength, but it is good work—none better—and the blessing of God goes with it, and the approval of all men."

The next point at which I found any considerable number of lepers was at Penang. Here, through the courtesy of Dr. Fry, the Officer of Health, I was enabled to visit the Government Leper Asylum on the Island of Pulau Jerejak, a few miles from Penang. This Settlement was, at the time of my visit, reserved for male lepers, though it was hoped shortly to provide a similar one for women. Here I found some 400 men located on the shores of a pretty bay, with a background of wooded hills, in well-built and well-kept wards. A liberal dietary is provided, of which rice cooked by healthy people is the staple item. The greater majority are Chinese who have come to the Straits as coolies, which is the case also with a minority of Indians, mainly Tamils. In the Federated Malay States the number of lepers is estimated at 1,000, and the authorities are gradually segregating the worst cases. There is a small Asylum at the Capital, Kuala Lumpur, containing about forty, and seventy Malays are cared for in a settlement by themselves. Religious work in the Asylum at Pulau Jerejak is represented

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by the occasional visits of Protestant and Roman Catholic missionaries, whose ministrations are welcomed by the lepers.

A short, but enjoyable, visit to Mandalay made me acquainted with the successful work of the Home for Lepers there, managed by the Wesleyan missionaries, and maintained by the Mission to Lepers. I found about 140 inmates of both sexes, and an unmistakable air of *home* prevailing in this Institution, though the buildings are by no means imposing. It was, I think, typical of the tone prevailing in the Asylum, that the first sound that greeted us on entering was the singing by the lepers of "Jesus loves me, this I know." Some of the twenty-five untainted children provided for in the boarding schools of the Wesleyan Mission were remarkably bright, pretty girls. The Protestant work for the lepers of Mandalay has for many years been under the efficient supervision of the Rev. A. H. Bestall, aided by Mrs. Bestall and Miss Norah Butt. On Mr. Bestall's return to England in 1908 he was succeeded by Rev. T. G. Phillips. Through the courtesy of the priest in charge we were permitted to inspect the large and well-built Roman Catholic Asylum in Mandalay, sheltering some 200 inmates.

I must content myself with the merest summary of the Indian part of this tour. In Calcutta, accompanied by Rev. B. Grundy, of the C.M.S., I visited the Government Asylum in the suburb of Gobra, in which only 151 lepers were being segregated at that time. It is to be hoped, however, that the quarters then empty have since been occupied, as there were many pronounced cases still at large in the city—as many as 100 in one ward, according to Mr. Grundy. At

Bankura.

the time of my visit twenty-five expected to be discharged shortly as being no longer "lepers," according to the Act, which permits—if it does not require—their release when there are no longer open sores. A limited, but useful, work is done by the Indian catechist, supported by the Leper Mission, and superintended by Mr. Grundy, who also conducts a weekly service.

At Bankura, Bengal, I found about 115 lepers as happy as such sufferers can be made, under the efficient and sympathetic care of Rev. F. W. Ambery Smith. The site of the Asylum is well chosen; the houses well planned, and the whole Institution forms an appropriate memorial to the benevolent donor of the funds for its erection—the late Mrs. Bryan, of Brighton.

My visit to the "Edith" Home for Untainted Children awakened memories too tender and sacred for detailed reference. This Home is the memorial of my wife and myself to our own little daughter, and it was with real, though chastened, joy that I found it filled with bright and happy boys and girls who enjoy the affectionate care of Mrs. Smith. There were decorations, recitations, and songs, in honour of the occasion, as well as a distribution of gifts and prizes.

A visit to the Purulia Asylum proved that the noble work that awakened my enthusiasm eight years ago was still prospering under the efficient direction of Revs. F. Hahn and Paul Wagner. On my first visit the large leper congregation assembled in their Church to bid me welcome, their spokesman being Mansingh, one of the few who remembered my former visit. On the following day, at another gathering in their brightly-decorated Church, it was my privilege to address them on the ever-appropriate topic of

In Leper-Land.

John iii. 16. It was an impressive spectacle, that large congregation of one-time homeless outcasts, now uniting so heartily in singing the praises of the Divine Friend of the lepers. Sadly pathetic were the leper children in front—fifty of them, from three years and upwards. But, in spite of their affliction, they were the leaders of the singing, and several of the boys manipulated their musical instruments with great vigour.

Service over, the boys, singing as they went, led the way to where some 400 portions of *matai* (sweetmeats) were awaiting distribution—a never-failing source of enjoyment to the lepers. Prizes for good conduct and for reading were then distributed to those to whom they had been awarded. It was a pleasure to hand volumes of "The Pilgrim's Progress" and other books to old friends like Sara, Shusilla, Mansingh, etc.

On the following day the officers and members of the Christian Endeavour Society were to the fore. The Society is well organised and successful, and is responsible for a service in the Church once a week, in which many take part. It is gratifying to find the principal members of the native staff taking an active part in the work of the C.E. Society, including the doctor and the shopkeeper.

The religious tone of the Asylum continues to be satisfactory. There were fifty-four baptisms during 1908. That these poor people have the spirit of Christian giving is shown by the amount of their church collections, which amounted for the year to £27 1s. The distribution of this is interesting. Part goes to poor widows and orphans of lepers; part to the support of their own native pastor; and part

Purulia.

to the British and Foreign Bible Society. Out of the balance they have a simple love-feast or treat.

I left this noble institution deeply impressed by its efficiency and Christ-like character. Those who contribute to it, as well as those who carry it on, may feel assured that they are co-operating in an undertaking that is doing not a little to promote the Kingdom of God in India.

With profound regret we learned of the death of Mr. Hahn, which took place at Mussoorie on May 3rd, 1910. The loss of this devoted worker was, and will be, severely felt, not only by the lepers, but in connection with the work of the Gossner's Evangelical Mission in general. He was a gifted as well as a devoted missionary. As stated elsewhere, his services on behalf of the lepers were recognised by the bestowal of the Kaiser-I-Hind Medal of the First Class, while his labours in translation and other literary work were highly appreciated. It was as early as 1883 that Mr. Hahn first appealed to the Mission to Lepers on behalf of the sufferers of Lohardaga (in Bengal), and from that date till the close of his life he was a devoted and self-sacrificing friend of the lepers.

From Purulia to Chandkuri was the next stage of this interesting journey. Here I was welcomed by Mr. W. H. P. Anderson, who for four years had been in charge of what is now one of the largest, as it also is one of the most thoroughly organised and equipped, of the Asylums of the Mission. From an account written at the time of my visit I quote the following :—

“ I will try at once, this Sunday afternoon, and while

In Leper-Land.

the impression is fresh, to describe the service of this morning. As I sit in the Church on a platform two steps above the level of the floor, and look out through the open door, the scene is a bright and pretty one. Down the path leading from the entrance gate to the Church door, young trees are growing, and flags are waving, and an arch of evergreens erected by the lepers bids welcome to their guest. While the congregation of nearly 300 lepers and about 100 untainted children and helpers are gathering, I am contrasting this lofty and airy Church with the old low-roofed and overcrowded building in which I last worshipped with the Chandkuri lepers eight years ago.

“Next my mind travels back to the spring of 1904, and to my first meeting in Boston, U.S.A., with Mr. W. H. P. Anderson, the results of whose devoted work of four years I see on every hand, and who is to reap some of the fruit of his labours in the Baptismal Service of this morning.

“As the lepers gather and seat themselves quietly and reverently, I recognise a face here and there: notably the happy countenance of Bayan, who reminded me on our first meeting yesterday that she had, eight years ago, invited me to come again, but that I had ‘been a long time coming.’

“Mr. Anderson seats himself at the organ, which was made in his native town of Guelph, Ontario, and was the gift of a Mission Sunday School there. Soon a volume of vocal harmony fills the building as choir and congregation unite in singing ‘Christ for me.’ The prayer service is led by Rev. Mr. Jost, and is partly liturgical. The responses are made heartily by the lepers, of whom about 240 are Christians.

Chandkuri.

“ Mr. Jost then interprets, with emphasis and expression, as I am assured afterwards, my address on John iii. 16, the words of which are on the wall before their eyes. First comes a reference to their old Church, and to my former visit. Then a brief account of Mr. Anderson’s call to the work, and to the sacrifice that call involved. On this is based an appeal to his flock to give him true and loyal support in his difficult work. His self-sacrifice, as well as the gifts that have made this Asylum with all its benefits possible to them, were then enforced as proofs that the text is true, and that God’s great love is the source of it all. Finally, the supreme expression of that love in the gift of His Son is made the ground of a plea for love to one another, and for surrender by the non-Christians to the claims of Christ.

“ The collection is taken—in coin and in kind—the ‘ kind ’ is in offerings of rice saved from their allowance. Several rise from their places and quietly advance and place on the steps of the platform special thankofferings, in some instances as many pice as the poor maimed hands can hold.

“ Mr. Anderson then, as pastor of the Church, gives to the new converts the baptismal charge, concluding with the Confession of Faith, audibly repeated by the candidates. In groups of five or six they rise in response to their names, and advance to the table and receive the sacred sign in the Triune Name. One or two are blind, and are led forward by friends, others are sorely crippled, and are also willingly and gently assisted to rise. It is pathetic to note the poor stumps of hands removing the saris from their heads and re-adjusting them.”

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At Raipur (C. P.) I found seventy-six lepers in comfortable quarters at a Municipal Asylum to which the Mission to Lepers makes an annual grant. The buildings are good and well kept, and the situation safe and healthy. Some of the lepers are keen gardeners, and their plots are fruitful and well-cultivated. The inmates gathered at the entrance to welcome me, and some of them made a pathetic attempt at an Indian dance to the accompaniment of the tom-toms.

A considerable source of revenue here is a tax, or octroi duty, of one anna on each cart of grain entering the town. As this has averaged nearly Rs.3,000 (= £200) per annum of recent years, it speaks well for the trade of Raipur, since it represents about 48,000 cartloads annually.

At Allahabad I found a most hopeful state of things, so far as the lepers were concerned. Under the practical and sympathetic care of Professor Higginbottom, of the American Presbyterian Mission, nearly two hundred of the inmates were enjoying the shelter of well-built wards, and finding healthful occupation and interest in their gardens—the latter, a branch of the work which has been taken up here with unusual thoroughness.

Established many years ago, the Asylum was in 1906 a neglected and almost forgotten place, sheltering a few lepers, most of whom only remained because too helpless to run away. The authorities, represented by Sir J. D. La Touche, responded readily to the suggestion that the Asylum should be transferred to the care of the Mission, with Professor Higginbottom as Superintendent.

Raniganj.

Aided by official encouragement, as well as by substantial grants, soon a transformation was effected. Not alone with regard to the betterment of their bodily conditions was this true, but with regard to moral and spiritual matters the improvement was equally manifest. In the first three years after the transfer, nearly 100 lepers were found desirous and prepared for baptism, and it was my privilege to join them in their first Communion Service in the new and airy Church. An excellent Home for Untainted Children near by was protecting some bright boys and girls from contamination, and affording them a Christian education.

At Raniganj, Bengal, I found that considerable extension and improvement had taken place since my former visit. Not only had additional land been acquired on which new wards had been erected, but a much-needed new Church had lately been completed. Though I was struck by many sore disfigurements, and even ghastly mutilations, in this Asylum, it was on the whole a cheery congregation that greeted us in the new Church, with its twelve doors standing open to the air. An elder has been appointed for each ward of twelve people, and these were seated at the end of the rows in the Church. The singing of this large gathering of Christian lepers was especially hearty, and their earnest response to the prayers was most marked. I only wish the generous donors to the new Church could have witnessed the sight of these grateful worshippers assembled in their new house of worship, with which they are delighted.

Mr. Bleby kindly interpreted the short address I gave to them, and when at its close I asked if they

In Leper-Land.

had any message for their friends in England, there were several prompt responses, both from men and women. One man in an advanced stage of the disease said, "We see that we owe this Home and all our comforts to the love of Jesus, and we are now on our way to live with Him." Another said, "We were dying in sin and misery, but are now happy in this Asylum and in the love of God." Another, "I thank God for bringing you to us again. We pray for you and for all our friends." A woman, who spoke with deep feeling, said, "When my father and mother turned me out, and everybody drove me away, God's people provided this Home for me. Here I am happy, and here I have learned of Jesus Who is 'the Way, the Truth, and the Life.'"

The reader who has patiently accompanied me to the end of my travels 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 minimise 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. By educational, medical, and industrial, as well as by spiritual and philanthropic effort, the vital force of Christianity is

Finis.

steadily, if slowly, supplanting the lifeless creeds that have so long held the races of the Orient in bondage. Behind these methods and energising 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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