"Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." - Heb. ii. 25.

"I would choose rather to sit at the threshold of the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." - R. V. Psa. lxxxiv. 10.

"Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." - Luke x. 42.

The power of choice, as a factor in our lives for good or evil, cannot be too closely guarded. We know that in our spiritual lives as we definitely choose with our wills to have things in accordance with God's will so our faith takes hold of Him for these things we choose, and He works according to our faith. In choosing, one always has two or more paths before him, something must be refused before something is chosen: Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; he chose to take part and even suffer with the people of God.

No doubt, all who read these lines have made the all important decision of forsaking sin and of following Christ; many, doubtless, have made a further and deeper choice of surrendering all to Him and know what it is to have the Holy Spirit take possession of the life. But it is of daily choosing, in obedience to the still, small voice of the Spirit, that we wish to write a little. No matter how wonderful an experience one may have had in the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the life of victory and power is maintained only as one momentarily walks in obedience to His promptings. To be more explicit, let us enumerate a few of the ways in which we may fail or be victorious.

Anyone who has truly entered into the new life in the Holy Spirit is not going to have an easy time of it; there will be times when the heart is pressed and well nigh broken by
the griefs and burdens that the Lord sees fit to allow. How shall we meet such things? shall we hug our grief or our care to ourselves and suffer, and let the enemy press us down, or shall we choose to accept the sufficient grace that is promised us? We shall find, that as we choose with a definite act of our wills so faith rises and takes, and we actually receive grace that lifts us above the hard thing. Alas, that we, with all our knowledge of the Lord's love and power, should so often fail in a hard place because we let our minds dwell on and brood over the thing that hurts, instead of reaching up and taking the grace and balm the Lord is so willing to give! It may be that we have been put in a difficult place of service and the natural strength fails, the human heart says, "I can't," but again we may, in the Spirit, definitely and deliberately choose to have the divine strength come in place of our weakness, and lo, we find God meets us.

How many a day of victory is marred because we have chosen to pass a word of unkind judgment against one of God's children, instead of remaining quiet as the Spirit prompted! Or, perhaps, we have chosen to champion our own cause when misunderstood, rather than leave it absolutely in God's hands. We may say that the moment of choice is a very subtle one, for sometimes our minds work so quickly that almost before we know it we have chosen to speak or act, not as a Spirit-filled man or woman, but in a very un-Christlike manner, and the Spirit is grieved and our influence for God marred. Paul tells of the "lawful things" and the "expedient." If we are selfish and seeking our own we will choose the lawful, but if we really desire to walk in the Spirit, and know the true victorious life, we will choose the expedient and be rewarded by the sweet consciousness of the Lord's smile of approval. And the best of it is, that as we go on thus daily, momentarily, obeying, it gets to be the life habit to listen and act as the Holy Spirit directs, and He is able accordingly to lead us on to greater experiences.

In these days of intense activity, on the mission fields as well as in the homelands, who of us does not know the decision it takes to get time for real prayer? And because we so often choose to go on with our work, instead of going aside for communion and prayer, our ability to hear the Spirit's directing
voice grows less and less and we find far more professedly Spirit-filled Christians walking in the flesh than in the Spirit.

In a tropical, enervating climate, surrounded constantly by people who drain and sap our lives, the nerves and human spirit get worn and it is so easy to give down and live on a low plane; but, right here comes in our God-given power of choice. Let us will to have, let us choose in the Spirit to rise and receive the strength, the grace and the joy that is for us, and which we must have to rightly represent Christ in the dark places of the earth.

Definite decision, especially decision for the right, seems to be exactly contrary to the natural disposition of the Hindu. He believes, as did the Essenes of old, that fate rules all things and that man has no choice as to what he will be. "What is to be, will be," he says, "Why should I try to change it?" And thus we find many who assent to the truth we preach but who seem to feel no responsibility about their personal salvation and who consequently make no definite choice. If they are to be saved they will be saved, if to be lost then lost, what can they do? Thus they argue. But, we who are giving our lives to spread the gospel in their midst, believe that as we faithfully, in the name of the Lord, work among them, the Holy Spirit will convict them of the lie of even old hereditary ideas and that soon, perhaps, many shall choose Christ.

WHITE BUDDHIST PRIESTS.

Good deal of excitement has been caused in the Southern Province of Ceylon by the recent establishment of a brotherhood of white Buddhist monks.

Being in the district of this settlement, I felt led to pay these western missionaries of Buddhism a visit a few days ago. They reside on a picturesque, little island in a backwater lake, quite near the seaside, ten miles north of the ancient little town of Point de Galle. The island is three acres in extent, and with the exception of the small portion cleared to accommodate the newcomers, is covered with thick, forest undergrowth.

In this lovely spot live five, white priests, two of them Germans and three hailing from America. They have each a little wooden hut, say ten feet square. Here, buried away from the world, with changed names, with shaven heads, and
clad in the bright yellow robe of the Buddhist priest, these men, raised in the west, cradled in Christianity, are presumably seeking the so-called enlightenment of Gautama Buddha. The leader of the party—called, I was informed, the High Priest—is a German who had spent a few years in Burmah, where he was ordained a Buddhist priest, and came to Ceylon eighteen months ago. He had gone to a hill station for a change, so I missed him. One of the lay managers of the settlement, a man who has known me for 25 years, introduced me to the hermits, previously obtaining permission to do so from the occupant of each hut in succession. The manager, a staunch Buddhist, needless to say, was boasting of the fact that Westerners were becoming Buddhists, and said, “Who would have thought 25 years ago that Europeans would come here as Buddhist priests?” The island, he prophesied, would soon be full of white Buddhist priests. The first hut we visited was the home of a curly-headed, bright-eyed young man of 30 years of age, who looked and spoke as if he might have just stepped out of a sky-scraper office in New York City. He had lived in 106th-street on Eighth-avenue, near the Central Park. He has not yet taken the robes, and wore the white cloth and jacket of an “Upasakarala,” a religious layman. I spent a short while in conversation with him, and he was interested in knowing that I had been in New York City but a year ago. I mentioned to him, among other things, the conversion of a leading Buddhist of the district at the age of 40, a man who had become a deeply pious and most earnest Christian.

Ceylon Buddhists have during the last 30 years been rapidly assimilating Christian ideas and nomenclature. They now have Sunday-schools, commemorate Buddha’s birthday as Christians do Christmas, speak of Gautama as “our Lord,” Buddhist temples as “Churches,” and Buddhist priests are given the title of “Reverend.”

The next monk I visited is also a pure-born American. He appears to be about 45 years of age, had, he told me, been raised in Wisconsin, and also knew New York City well. Before the interview he had asked our guide whether our party were Christians or Buddhists, and, rightly or wrongly, I fancied, from his opening remarks, that he was prepared for discussion. But I imagine he soon discovered I had not come to argue, and we had a friendly chat. He agreed with me, or appeared to do so, that soul-satisfaction was to be found alone in God. He had the shaven head of the Buddhist priest, was clad in the yellow robe, and had been ordained a few months. I invited him to visit me in Nuwara Eliya.
The occupant of the next hut visited, apparently between 40 and 45 years of age, told me he had been brought up in Texas, and had lived there from sea-level up to an altitude of 11,000 ft. At first he seemed to receive us somewhat coldly, but became quite friendly as he found we were not bent on controversy. He had a rather nasty sore foot, caused, he said, by wearing sandals on his bare feet. He took the yellow robes six months ago, and had, he said, been in Ceylon nearly a year.

Another of the monks, also claiming the prefix of "Rev.," was temporarily living in the house of the High Priest—the only substantially built house in the settlement. It was a nice little house, slightly larger than the others. A striking picture of a human skull was the chief decoration of the one room of the house. There was also a well-stocked book-case. All the four monks had Pali books before them as I entered their huts. Pali—a dead language—is the sacred language of the Buddhists, and is a sister language to Sanscrit. This man, who is a German, told me that he had travelled all over the Continent of Europe, had spent a good deal of time in Russia, and also knew Lausanne well. He appeared to be second in seniority to the High Priest, and struck me as being an intellectual man.

Our party (my two friends and I) were greatly saddened by our interview with these poor men. We were united in the opinion that they feel the loneliness of their situation, and that none of them appeared to find the least joy in the life they were living. I hope friends will join us in very earnest prayer for them. Their presence in Ceylon as Buddhist priests is, I need not say, very harmful to the cause of Christ.

I ask special prayer for one of the monks, to whom, I believe, the Lord spoke during our visit. I had talked of the possibility of knowing God. "Many profess to know Him," he said. "True," I answered, "but few have the blessedness of the experience. It costs something to get to really know Him." "It costs more to give Him up," he replied. This, of course, meant that he had adopted the blank atheism of Buddhism. I repeated, "It costs something to get to know God," and added, "but it is worth it all. O, to really know Him, know Him intimately, it is the _sumnum bonum_, the highest good." His assumed atheism seemed scattered to the winds, and he said, deliberately and with emphasis, "I guess you know Him." "By His grace I do," I added, quietly.

Will the reader pray for these deluded men, and pray also that more Christian teachers may be sent to this country to preach the glad message of salvation in Christ Jesus?—A. S. Paynter in "Life of Faith."
A WAYSIDE SCENE.

BY MRS. FRANCES BANNISTER.

We are to sketch for you to-day a familiar scene on one of the public roads leading to the busy town of Bhusawal. The skill of an artist lies in the knowledge of lights and shadows, but, we fear, the pleasing effect of our picture will be nil as the whole scene is one of evil shadows. To begin with, we have a dark background, as dark as superstition, idolatry and ignorance can make it. The accompanying shades of materialism, fatalism and error, with our central figure—an evil, debauched, old woman—make a picture dreadful enough to please Satan himself. It is to this central figure we wish to draw your attention.

As we sketch her, she is sitting cross-legged on a bamboo mat on the hard roadside, drumming the fingers of one hand into the palm of the other, and muttering to herself in half undertones. Her face shows all absence of soap and water and has received a coating of ashes as a substitute. Down her chin runs the red juice of the pan, (beetle nut) a cud of which she is chewing. Her finger nails have been allowed to grow to a claw-like length, and this, together with her disheveled hair, bedraggled clothing and wandering, expressionless eye, makes her the repugnant, repulsive creature she is. The shades may be drawn even deeper and we find her lost to all sense of decency and propriety, bereft of her faculties she is but little removed from the beasts, whose habits she imitates. Believing her to be a menace to the public good, we sought her removal to a more secluded spot, but we were to learn our impotency, as she was able to defy the would-be interposition and hold her ground and stay where she has been for years, and where she may be found to-day. This brings us to the forefront of our picture—the people. Here too, the shades must necessarily be dark and scarcely less dreary than the foregoing. Our finer sensibilities have been shocked by the picture thus far and we turn away with loathing while the words witch, wizard, hag, involuntarily escape our lips. Not so is she regarded by the Hindu mind. To them she is little less than a god or goddess. Groups of men, women and children of all classes may be found sitting about her at nearly any hour of the day, with their offerings of food and money.

Her soothsayings and power to read the future, as she claims, together with the fact that no harm has come to her through all these years, unprotected on the roadside as she is, though exposed to the fierce rays of the tropical sun and the drenching rains of the monsoons, have deified her in their minds. They see
that the darkest midnight, with all its terrors and fancied ghosts, which they so much fear, has no dread for her, for here she may be found at all times of the night, alone with the howling jackals and crying hyenas. Herein is seen the cunning of the enemy, caring for his own for his own ends. Now a sketch or two of the different groups which come in turn, and our picture is finished. Here are six or eight men sitting and standing, all intent on her words. By their dress we know them to be Kunibis (farmers). They are seeking knowledge regarding their crops. “Will the season be favourable? Which will be the auspicious day for sowing our fields? Will famine again sweep all away by its ravages?” they ask. With her answers they set forth, regarding her prophecies as divine, and to act accordingly. Now comes a group of Brahmin women. Their smoothly brushed hair shows an abundance of cocoanut oil and is platted at the back. Ornaments of gold can be seen shining among the braids. They too kneel at her feet with their offerings and implore her help on their behalf. They hope through her magical arts to learn the secret of increasing the number of their offspring, or how to appease an offended husband. Neither are they disappointed, but offering their gifts they depart with satisfied faces. Now their place is occupied by a Brahmin gentleman. High born, as he considers himself, college educated though he be, speaking English and officiating as a Government servant, dressed “spick and span” with the greatest care to cleanliness and order, fearing even the shadow of a low caste man falling across his path, he too brings his offering and seeks the knowledge which he believes belong to the gods alone. So they come and go, the Mohammedan in his turn, all seeking to know what lies in the future, hidden from human eyes. Some are seeking lost friends from whom they have been separated for years, some as to whether their sick will recover, and others the common-place things of life.

One and all are ready to own her power and to worship at her shrine. How truly they have changed the truth of God into a lie, and worship and serve the creature more than the Creator! Little wonder if God gives such up to reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient. And should His wrath be revealed from heaven against all such ungodliness and unrighteousness who of us could wonder? Such is the dark picture before us, and we leave it with you without comment, except to say this sad state of things is being enacted every day in India. The saying “like god like worshipper” is only too true and the hearts of the people are dark and hard through the multitude of gods they worship. May the glorious light of the gospel soon shine in, lighting up sad India from east to west and from north to south. Thank God for the bright spots amid the darkness! May the
day soon come when the lights shall predominate and the darkness flee away; then shall a glorious picture be the result, one not only pleasing to man but acceptable to God.

MERCY.

BY MARY COMPTON.

“Be ye merciful” and “God be merciful” are parts of two Scripture passages which have been worked out in our midst lately and which glow with real meaning to us, perhaps as never before. Last year, while preparing for the district work and asking the more experienced what we would need to take with us, (this was our first experience in village work) we were advised to take a few simple remedies along, as the use of the same often gives openings otherwise closed and lost. So we took the advice and the medicines.

As we neared our camping place the cry was heard, “The sahibs have come, let us go and see!” So, by the time our tents were up and we were fairly settled in them, not only the curious had appeared but a few suffering ones had come also. Among the last named came an old, decrepit, wicked, sore-covered man, to look at whom fairly turned us faint. We had not the courage to undertake his case that day, for we were very tired, but we told him to come the next day, which he did, and thus began and continued services rendered daily to quite a number of sufferers. But of this old man especially we wish to tell you. By the exercise of prayer and close vigilance and nursing, when we came to leave the place, several weeks later, he was in a vastly different condition physically, and in his soul too we believed, because, as we treated his suffering body we also tried to get the knowledge of the “Saving Light” into his heart. However, he gave no evidence of having received the Light beyond the promise to pray daily to Jesus.

Now a year has elapsed, and we are again in the same place, and privileged to tell again of the love of God and His power and willingness to save.

For a day or two our old man did not appear and we concluded he must have died. But not so, for eventually he came—more emaciated than ever, but not a sore was to be seen upon his body and his eyes shone as he told us his story. In a feeble voice he declared he had kept his promise to pray to God, and
that he had the assurance in his soul that the Lord had saved him.

Less than a month from that day we were sitting at our tent door, and suddenly, the customary wail for the dead was heard. Upon inquiry we learned that our old friend had passed away, and a leap of joy came to our hearts for we felt we should meet him again—a redeemed soul. He was a poor man, had few friends, and as far as we know, only one son and he a cripple. When the old man became so ill and could no longer work he was turned out of his house to die like a dog, and so he had lived for months under a banyan tree, accepting anything the people would give him to eat. But, he heard the life story and embraced it—Praise God!

In comparison, may we tell you of another old man, the oldest, save one, in the entire, large village. He was a man of much wealth, great-grandfather, grandfather and father of many. While he lived, he had all he could wish for of this world's goods and would have none of the true God. This man also died, a few days after the man of whom we have just told you. A far greater scene and noise was created, for being so old and wealthy, the whole town turned out to wail. And why? Because, forsooth, in a few days the relatives of the dead would give a great feast to all in his honour. Such a sight! All the men followed the corpse to the burning place, as many as could taking turns in carrying the bier. A rich, silken cloth was the top-most of seven to cover his body; lighted torches burned at the four corners of the bier. A man walked ahead, carrying a vessel of burning incense; a cart laden with sweet-meats and small coins, which two of the relatives dispersed right and left to the people along the road, was driven in advance of all. The women, wailing continually until long after the body had been born away, finally proceeded very slowly toward a large pond near our camping place, there to bathe and wash their garments defiled by death.

Hundreds of dollars will be expended in honour of this man, but ah, "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Unlike the first old man, he received all the pageant possible here, but failed of the great reward and the welcome of God into heaven. No thought of God's mercy, no cry for pardon, and at last God has to say to him "Thou fool," but to the poor decrepit one who accepted His mercy, "Come ye blessed."

And as we ponder, our hearts cry out with intense longing, "Oh for more power and life to help many more to see and receive the true light!" Brethren pray for us.
FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT.

BY MRS. S. P. HAMILTON.

THE last month of the old year found us nearing the familiar harbour, Bombay. As we drew near India's shores we breathed the petition over many times that we might be soul-winners. Soon after landing, we completed the last part of the long journey, and were glad to drive into our old home compound again, where we had spent a term of five years, beginning with the terrible famine of nineteen-hundred, during which Mr. Hamilton erected the Church and bungalow. Before reaching the spot we saw, from a distance, many bright coloured papers floating in the breeze, which bespoke of a warm welcome, and, sure enough, for the dear native Christian friends had erected a temporary archway from the gate to the house and covered it with bright coloured paper flags. Over the gate was the word 'welcome' in the vernacular. As we drove under it up to the house we soon saw it was not only written over the gate but in their hearts. One man kissed our hands over and over and the joy of meeting was mutual.

After a few days, we started on tour, and pitched our tent near the Watruck river in a mango grove, at a place called Wasna, located near the centre of our district. The plan of work God showed us here was to hold meetings evenings, visit homes in the day time, and stay in one place until souls were saved, or we had liberty to leave. We did not try to cover ground. We have trusted too much in the mere proclamation of the gospel without the demonstration of the Holy Spirit. We do not want their faith to stand in the wisdom of men. Real victories were won in prayer before going to the meetings. The Spirit of God began to work and one old woman was much impressed. She had been so full of superstition it seemed to show on every line of her face, but one day in a meeting she gave her heart to the Lord. We could almost tell the moment she crossed over the line and Jesus entered her heart, as she slowly and deliberately broke a knotted, leather cord she wore on her neck and threw it away. Each knot signified a vow to some idol worshipped to keep away disease, etc. Her face lighted up with a new found hope and the superstition gave place to a settled peace and joy, for Satan lost his kingdom in that precious soul. It was an inspiration to see her go down into the baptismal waters a little later.

Another heart which the Lord opened was that of one of the younger women. She also wore a charm, but of a different type. It was to keep away evil spirits, especially her husband's first wife's spirit. There were two feet engraved on the charm, tinted with gold and were supposed to be the foot-steps of the
former wife. She soon discarded it, as she too was shorn of her superstition, and came out of darkness into the gospel light.

After a series of meetings, a baptismal service was held and those who had accepted Christ were baptized by Mr. Hamilton. We have seen but few such joyful services. There is joy in heaven when one soul repents and it seemed as if not only the heavens reverberated with joy that day but the old mango grove also. It was contagious for not only the baptized ones but the onlookers all seemed to be filled with joy. Two old ladies, three young married women and five men were added to the company of believers. All were in the same spirit of victory when they assembled for the evening meeting. We cannot be satisfied until these ten souls are also baptized in the Holy Spirit, for on this hinges the secret of the overcoming life. They have received Jesus as Saviour, they need now to accept Him as king, so He can be unveiled to their vision and sanctify as well as justify them. There are other candidates in the same place. One is a man addicted to the use of opium. Please pray that he may be freed from the fetters that bind him.

The following Sunday we held a meeting and partook of the Lord's supper under the trees. (It is on our hearts to build a small church in this part of our district.) Dear Punja Mana, one of our spiritual and faithful native preachers, was present with us and passed the wine. A few days later he was called up higher and we did not see him again except at the funeral. You may have read a short sketch of his life by Mr. Turnbull in a former number of this paper. As he lived, so he died, and he passed triumphant into the presence of his Lord. He leaves a wife and three beautiful boys.

This is the commencement of India summer but we hope to remain on tour another month at least.

We must stand before God, as did Abram for Lot, to pull these precious souls out of spiritual Sodom. Are there not some who will stand in that same attitude with us in prayer for them?

May He who gave the command to go and disciple all nations, baptizing etc., multiply the numbers of those who come out of darkness into light.

We move among poor, darkened souls,
Bound fast by Satan's chains,
Who know not that the Saviour died
To cleanse them from their stains;
May we, through all the darkness dim,
Hold up the blood-stained cross,
Counting not our lives as dear,
Glad to bear suffering or loss,
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SOME OF THE LITTLE JEWELS IN MATAR.

BLANCHE HAMILTON.

In a village not far from our tent are four little orphans. On another page we told of a woman who wore a charm to keep away evil spirits. She has a little boy and girl, Lazarus and Mary. These four little orphans are their cousins. We saw them yesterday, and sat down on their porch to tell them of Jesus love. The father died a few months ago and not long after, the mother called them together, gave them some Indian sweets in the evening, and while they were partaking of them, she quietly slipped away and was not seen for several days, then she was found dead in a neighbouring well. Our horse was tied to a tree under which was an idol about a foot long. For some reason or other the horse wanted to smell it and the hideous thing, besmeared with red paint, fell on its face, like Dagon, which you may have read about in first Samuel. Someone standing near helped it up, but the horse did the same thing three or four times and each time the idol fell on its face. An old woman, smoking a pipe near by, was so worried she stayed near to protect it. Her face was as hard and dark as the stone she worships. No one knows Jesus there, will you not pray that the four little orphans may find Him?

What a contrast are their lives to the little tots on our compound where there are no idols! One Sunday we had the Lord's supper and the little ones seemed rather sad as they could not take part in it too, so shortly after the meeting was over, they seated themselves in a row on the floor, Indian fashion, and called for the left-over bread and wine and had a little prayer meeting themselves. When we go home to the bungalow they jump and dance for glee.

We were holding another meeting in a dark village a few days ago and as usual all the children came to listen. A vendor came in town to sell vegetables. One little girl ran and got a handful of grain from her mud home and we watched to see what she would do. She traded the grain for a long green onion. That was the best stick of candy she could buy! Her little forehead was completely covered with red paint, that, with her uncombed hair and scanty dress, made her look wild indeed. We began to talk of Jesus and the tears would not stay back as we saw even the tiniest ones being taught to fear idols. When we knelt down to pray after finishing our talk, there was a chorus of little squeaky voices, all praying out loud together, and several little hands outstretched as if to receive something, (they
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hold out their hands to the idols while praying.) What a lesson for us to expect something when we pray!

Please pray that these little jewels may get, as one little girl expressed it, much salvation or a big salvation.

OTHER SHEEP.
BY MRS. CHRIS. EICHER.

SINCE our earliest years in India our hearts have been drawn toward the neglected taluka Jalgaon, Berar, and we had hoped to be free to take up the work of evangelization there, and to have a mission station somewhere within the county, that we might be able to reach every part from that centre. But the shortage of missionaries to carry on the already established work, and the pressing needs in other parts of that work forbade our starting into any new territory with the expectation of taking up regular or permanent work there. However, at last the time came when we were to have the opportunity of visiting and giving out the gospel in at least a small part of that needy field.

About noon one day, with our bullock carts, we crossed the Purna River that marks the boundary of Jalgaon, and shortly after sunset reached the place where we desired to pitch our camp. It was almost full moon and by the aid of its friendly light we soon had our camp in order and were ready for a meal of rice and curry.

Next morning, Mrs. Alle Garrison and I started out to visit the women of the nearest village, Soolaz by name, and our hearts were made glad by the welcome we received. We explained to the women that our husbands had come with good news for the men of the village and we had brought the same news to them. This met with general approval, “That’s right, that’s right, the men come to teach the men and women to teach the women.” The women seemed to open their hearts and take us in at once, but what gave us much more joy was the fact that a goodly number of them seemed to open their hearts to take in the message as well as they could. We never saw high caste women have so little fear of defilement, on account of their caste, as they did in this place, and in the adjacent villages. They would sit as close to us as possible, put their arms around us and sometimes invite us into their houses. We soon learned the cause of this openness of heart.

One morning we were going from one part of the village to another to give the gospel message to a fresh company of women, and were invited to sit down in a court yard in the
shade of the wall of a mud house, which though very plain was scrupulously clean and neat. After a short conversation with the women, talking of things which were of common interest to them and to us, we sang a hymn and began to tell them the sweetest story the world has ever heard. As we talked an elderly woman stood up in front of us and confirmed all we were saying and would even go ahead of us at times. Seeing that the story was not new to her we asked, “Bai where have you heard this story?” Ah she said, “Ranoba of our village has a Bible, both Old and New Testaments, and he reads it to us every Sunday, so I heard it in his house.” This woman soon left the crowd but in a few minutes returned, leading by the hand a feeble old woman who was almost blind. She was brought and seated close beside us on the mat they had spread on the ground for us. As she sat down some of the women near by whispered, “She is a preacher” and in our minds flashed a momentary fear that she had come to advocate Hind－

usm and hinder the message, as old women sometimes do in the villages, but our fears were soon changed to joy. As the old woman sat and held our hand in hers, we said to her, “Well Bai, you are very old and death must be near,” but almost like a flash came back her answer, “No, I am not going to die, He has promised in the Book that He will take me.” We marvelled at such a word from an old woman in such a place where missionaries had very seldom been, but as we went on with the story of Jesus and singing sweet gospel hymns, she seemed like a thirsty flower that was drinking and drinking and yet longing for more of the water of life. We asked her where she had heard the Word, and she too had heard it through Ranoba’s reading it in his house to all who wished to listen. We asked her if she had confessed her sins to Jesus and found peace. “Oh yes” was her answer, and the look of joy on her face confirmed her words. She came with us to another part of the village, for in order to reach all the women in a town or village, we have to visit different sections of the place, as the women, or at least most of them, are not allowed to go about freely, and to reach them we must go where they are. In this place too she drank in the word of life joyfully. After a few days we went to the village again and tried to find the dear old woman; one woman said she knew where she lived, and, taking me by the hand started off to find her, but when we reached the house, the women who were there told us she had gone to a distant village and would not be back. This we did not believe, but felt it was only a ruse to keep us apart. We felt sorry not to be able to see her and give her another word of cheer along the way, but we had the comfort of knowing that Jesus knew
just where she was, and they could not keep Him out by excuses. We feel sure that we shall meet dear old Rakmabai when the Lord makes up His Jewels.

We were not kept long in suspense as to who Ranoba might be for he soon came to the camp and told how that nearly thirty years ago Mr. Fuller had visited their village a number of times and preached, and how three other men beside himself had bought Bibles and read and believed the word, but, on account of the awful persecution that was sure to follow, they had not been baptized. Three of the four men had died, some of them leaving a bright testimony that they were going to be with the Lord, and he alone was left. He still holds back from baptism but says that if it were not for that and the persecutions that always follow it, there are a goodly number of their village who would openly turn to the Lord and become Christians, for they know it is the only way of salvation.

Since the days when Mr. Fuller used to visit these villages they had received the gospel from missionaries only two or three times, and even then the missionaries had to leave their own districts, needy as they were, and give a few crumbs of the Bread of Life to these neglected ones who receive it so gladly even though they do not at once walk in all the light as we see it.

In every village that we had the opportunity of visiting, until the time came when we must go back to Bodwad to take up the regular routine of studies in the training school, we found the people eager for the message, and it was hard to tell them we could not at best come back before another year. They would beg us to come back next day and when we would tell them we must go to another village next day, "Then come next week," but we could not promise that. We can only look to the Lord to open the way that we may be able to go to them in another year, for that district is distant from Bodwad, and we are occupied with the teaching and other work of the young men's Training School for the greater part of the year.

When we look at the thinned ranks of our missionaries on the field, and realize what it will mean in another year, when those who are worn out have gone home for rest and change, and no new recruits to take their places, our hearts are sad. And when we consider that there has been allotted to our mission for evangelization large sections of territory in Berar, Jalgaon, Akote and Daryapur talukas (counties) being among them, each of these districts having hundreds of villages and many very large towns, we realize that many hundred thousands of people, for whom Christ died, and who are in a special way given to us as a mission for evangelization, are being almost, or
altogether neglected. They are being deprived of the message of eternal life because there is no missionary to go to them and no mission station from which centre might radiate the Light of life.

Dear reader, will you not unite with us in prayer for these great needs in this part of the "field?" First of all, we need more Spirit-filled workers from the homeland and from among India's own sons and daughters; and secondly, let us pray for money to build stations in these needy districts so that those hundreds and hundreds of thousands in the "back rows" may also have access to the Bread of life.

TOURING IN MEHMADABAD DISTRICT.

BY CORA HANSEN.

As the readers of the India Alliance doubtless know, it is only during the winter months that we are able to tour among the Indian villages. In the rainy season the roads are such that it is impossible to get around, besides, at this time of year the people are in the fields working. In the hot season the heat is so great that one can not with safety live in tents. The most favourable time for touring is therefore from the middle of November to the middle of March.

As this present touring season was drawing nigh, we decided to tour in two parties, that we might reach more people with the gospel. Mr. and Mrs. Turnbull were to tour in one part of the district and Miss Woodworth, of the Kaira Orphanage, and myself to tour the other part. In the meantime Miss Woodworth was taken ill and was unable to come with me, hence, it fell to my lot to tour alone, with the help of a native catechist and Bible-woman.

Our first camping place was Asmand, a village about five miles from the town of Mehmadabad. This is a good centre from which we were able to reach fifteen villages. Last year we camped for three weeks near this village and since that time the Lord has worked in a marked way among the low caste people of the place.

During the great famine twelve years ago a man and his wife, Dona and Gunga, came from this village to seek work from the missionaries living in Mehmadabad. Relief work was being carried on at that time and Dona and his wife were given employment. After they had been in Mehmadabad for some time the Word of God found entrance into their hearts and they were both converted. Although very ignorant, they had the assurance that they had passed from death unto life, from the
service of satan to serve the only living and true God. After the famine was over and the people returned to their village homes, Dona was kept at Mehmadabad and for several years he was my bullock driver. He was very faithful in his work and often, as we went to villages to preach the gospel, he would tell in his simple way what the Lord had done for him. While staying in Mehmadabad, a little girl, whom they called Anandi (joy), was born unto them. After some time, when I was transferred from Mehmadabad to take up work at another station, Dona took his little family and went back to his village, Asmand, and made his living by farming. Dona's mother, two brothers and their families, besides a number of other relatives, live in this village and for these Dona and his wife prayed and worked most faithfully. But they were all very indifferent to anything said or done for them and all prayer seemed for a long time to go unanswered. In the meantime, two more little girls were born into the family and on account of their three little girls Dona and Gunga suffered much persecution from the heathen relatives as these insisted upon having the little ones married in childhood, which is their way of doing. Dona and Gunga stood firm and would not listen to the voice of the evil one through their relatives. Although the pressure was very great at times the Lord gave them grace to resist.

The eldest brother Bhika's wife was a terror in the place, she would quarrel with everybody and use very vile language. Dona used to say sometimes that there was no hope of his relatives becoming Christians as long as Jeti, this sister-in-law, lived. But, praise God! what is impossible with man is possible with God.

Soon after we left this place last year the Spirit of God began to work among the "dry bones" and a great change has taken place. The old mother, Bhika and his wife Jeti, the younger brother Dava (who is blind) and his wife, besides four other relatives have come over on the Lord's side, and most of them give very clear evidence of having been born again. We had blessed times with these babes in Christ while camping near their village this year. Dona has now left and has been given land in Mr. Turnbull's farm colony where he is very happy.

As I needed someone to drive the bullocks this year, Bhika was asked to come and do the work. He and his wife have been with me over two months now and he often tells with great joy of the great change that has taken place in his life and also in the life of his notorious wife, Jeti. Once, in speaking of her, he said, "If anyone was ever saved my wife is; she used to be like a lion but now she is like a lamb." We praise God for all He has done.
The gospel has lost nothing, it is still the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.

After having preached the gospel in all the villages we could reach from Asmand, we said good-bye to this little flock, and after committing them to the Lord, we moved on to our next camping place near a village called Sadra. This is also a good centre for work. A Christian teacher, Rutna Prama, and his family live in this place where he conducts a daily school for the low-caste children and has meetings among the village people. About twenty boys attend his school, some of whom are reading in the second book. I was very much interested in this work and it gave me great joy to hear the children repeat the ten commandments and many other passages of Scripture which they had learned by heart. I believe that already the Word of God has taken root in some of their hearts, and who knows but that God may use some of those little ones to bring their parents unto Himself? The low-caste people all over the district are very anxious to have us teach their children and we could do much more in this way had we the means to carry on such schools.

From Sadra we visited a large village, Maij, where a native evangelist lives and faithfully preaches the gospel in the surrounding towns. Here also, we have a school among the low-caste children which is very promising, indeed. For some years, in fact ever since we started work in this village, there has been a feeling of animosity among the high caste people, so much so, that on two occasions they have set fire to the Christians' houses. Once it was the house of our native preacher, and a little over a year ago, the house of a Christian widow was also set on fire in the middle of the night, when she and her almost-blind son were asleep within. The one that did the evil deed also locked the door from outside so that the inmates could not escape, but God in His mercy caused someone in a nearby house to wake up and go outside; he saw the fire, gave the alarm, and opened the door before any harm was done to those inside. Knowing these things we feared we would not receive a very good reception when we went to preach this year, but, to our great surprise, the people were friendly and we had good attendance in the three meetings, held in different parts of the village.

While in the village the native evangelist took me to see a sick, heathen woman who was very near death. We told her of the great love of God who sent His Son Jesus to be the Saviour of the world, that we might have our sins forgiven and go to heaven. She was too weak to speak very much, but said over and over that she was a great sinner. We told her that the grace and mercy of the Lord Jesus were greater than all her sins,
and that if she would believe on Him He would surely forgive her and take her to Himself. After prayer we left her repeating the name of Jesus. Six days later she died, and we have a hope in our hearts that she went to the Lord, for has He not said, “They that call upon the Lord shall be saved.”

At the same time, in the same quarter of the village, a young man lay very low with typhoid fever. He had decided for Christ a short time before and the Christian brother in the place has hope of his salvation. When we went to see him he was delirious and did not know what he was saying, but he seemed so happy and holding up his hands he said, “See my hands are clean.” We trust his heart had also been made clean through the precious blood of Jesus. His love for the Christian worker and his wife was very great and only when the worker’s wife brought him food would he eat. This impressed his heathen relatives very much and when he had passed away they allowed the little band of Christians there to bury him as a Christian.

At the time of writing we are in our third camping place. About eighteen villages can be reached from this point. In Varsola, the village nearest our tent, there has been only one Christian woman for some years, but she has been true to the Lord and this year a few others have decided to join her on the way to the better land. Pray that they may be true followers of the Lamb.

It is our earnest prayer that the Word of God, as it is being daily preached to the people, may be as good seed sown in good ground, that will bring forth much fruit unto salvation. “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” 1 Cor. xv. 58.

AKOLA NOTES.

BY MRS. P. L. EICHER.

In our Mission Compound in Akola you will find a row of rooms, with mud floors, one or two windows and a door each, occupied by twenty-three of our Mission boys who are learning a trade in our Mission Work Shop. These boys are from about fifteen to twenty-two years of age, some being bright and willing workmen while others are not so promising. They are boys, just like our boys at home, and are just as fond of a good game and fun as any one. They are kept quite busy so have very little time for recreation.
Every morning from 6 to 6:30 they have worship, then eat their meal of jawari bread and chutney, after which they all go to the shop, ready to begin the day's work at 7 o'clock. Each goes to learn the trade he intends following through life, being taught by some of our married Christian men who have previously learned that trade.

At 12 o'clock they return to their rooms to eat their noon-day meal of, perhaps, jawari bread and dahl (pulse); then back again to the shop to begin work at 1 o'clock. However, before beginning the afternoon's work, all the workmen of the shop have prayers together, then keep on working till 6 o'clock. The boys then come home and have their evening meal which may be bread and kardi, (a preparation of thick milk, dahl (ground fine) seasoned till hot with red peppers and spices of various kinds. We give them meat and rice two or three times a week, since they have so much muscular work and need stronger food to give them strength.

They do their own washing and mending of clothes each week. Saturdays they are free from work at 4 instead of 6 p.m., then they go to the river to bathe, after which they beat their clothes on stones in the water till they are clean. The process of washing on stones is not a good way of making the clothing last long, but that is their way of doing it, and what matters if they tear them, it is only a question of mending a little more. We have Tuesday evening of each week set apart for this purpose, and they all come into the bungalow, bringing with them the clothes they are to wear the following week. Then begins the fun of putting on patches. These are seldom, if ever, of the same colour as the garment, but this does not matter to them, as they rather like having different colours, the brighter the better.

Now a little about the spiritual condition of these boys. I am sorry to say it is not what it should be by far, and for this very reason I tell it, that you may join with us in praying for them. Not all of them have had a real heart experience of salvation, and those who have been saved seem discouraged and even doubt their salvation. The trouble with so many of them is that when they do anything wrong, instead of confessing it at once, they wait, and it grows upon them, and from one sin they go to another, and then the enemy makes them believe they have never been saved. We are trying to impress upon them the fact that, though they sin, they have an Advocate, Jesus Christ, who is ever at the right hand of the Father, interceding for them.

I am glad to say God is working in the hearts of some of them, and only yesterday one of them was taken down with high fever and he at once recognised God's voice speaking to him. He called me to him and asked forgiveness for having
disobeyed and for having been dissatisfied with his food, etc., and said, "God is punishing me and I see I have not been living right, for I have not walked with God. I know the other boys are watching me and I have not had a good influence over them." He groaned and cried, and I know God heard this dear boy in his distress. We are praying the Lord to deliver him of the fever just as soon as he has learned the lessons God wants to teach him, and to bring him into a large place spiritually.

We often pray that we may be made a blessing to these dear boys, for we love them and want to be as father and mother to them, for they need some one to love them and teach them not only a trade, but how to obey God and serve Him faithfully, and be a blessing to those about them. Please pray with us that those who are not saved may seek the Saviour, and that they may one and all surrender their hearts and lives to God and let Him have complete control of them and make them soul-winners for Him.

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A HINDU ENGAGEMENT

It goes without saying that there is little romance or love-making in Hindu engagements. It is entirely a business arrangement between the parents; and the parties who have most at stake—the young people—seldom see each other till after everything is settled. Caste is the great determining factor in all cases, as no one in India can marry outside his or her own particular caste; and everything else—age, position, compatibility, etc.—must be sacrificed to this uncompromising tyrant. Let me give you an example. A teacher I once had asked me on one occasion for ten days' leave, in order that he might arrange about a husband for his daughter, who, he explained, was so terribly "big" (i.e., grown up) that he was affronted at her not being provided for, and as he could not come to terms with any of his caste fellows in the neighbourhood, he wished to seek elsewhere! After some discussion I gave him the desired leave, and off he went with his daughter, a bright, pretty little girl, returning within the specified time, apparently very well pleased with herself. I had always been interested in the girl, as she was quick and clever at her lessons, and of a gentle, nice disposition, so I was naturally curious to hear what kind of a husband she had gotten and all about the affair. I proceeded to ask her father a few questions, as I knew by previous experience that he was not likely to volunteer much information unasked, though longing all the time for an opportunity of relieving his mind.

"So you have got Juvri married, have you?"
"Yes, Sahib."
"I hope suitably."
"Yes, Sahib, I think so."
"To a young man?"
"Not old, Sahib; only a few years older than I am myself."
(He was at least fifty!)
"Well, is he in a good position? What has he to support Juvri on?"
"It varies, Sahib. Sometimes he makes more, sometimes less."

Wondering what this fluctuating occupation was I asked point blank, to be met with the unblushing rejoinder—
"He is a beggar."
"A beggar!" I said. "Why does he not work?"
"Because, Sahib, he is lame and in delicate health, and that is all he can do."
"And why," I exclaimed in dismay, "did you marry a nice, young girl like Juvri to a man like that? She can’t have any happiness with him, and she may be left a widow any time, and you know what that will mean for her."
"But, Sahib, he belongs to my own caste, and I’m a poor man and could not afford to get anyone better. The girl had to be married, and what could I do?"—Mrs. H. R. Scott.

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**A CHRISTIAN’S DEATH.**

**BY MRS. O. LAPP.**

Last week we were called to the death-bed of one of the oldest Christians, Kissan by name. He was always such a quiet man that sometimes one wondered just what his profession of Christianity meant to him. He had suffered much with asthma so that he could not even drink water or lie down.

The afternoon before his death Mr. Lapp and I went to see him. In prayer my husband asked the Lord very definitely to give the old man rest and to enable him to drink. After prayer he asked to lie down, and we left him seemingly much more restful. About one hour later a neighbour woman came in and he asked to be set up again. This woman said to him, "Uncle, won’t you drink a little water?" "Water!" the old man said in surprise. "I just drank a large cup full of water. I am no longer thirsty." His wife who was standing by said, "I have given you no water, from whence did you drink?" The reply came again, "Yes I have drunk, Jesus came and gave me a whole drinking cup full of water and I no longer thirst." After that he called his son and gave him his last words of counsel. He died that same night between 11 and 12 p.m.
The next morning I went down again, and it seemed to me that I had never realized so clearly the difference between the death of a Christian man, saved out of heathenism and idolatry, and a heathen as I did then. The friends and relatives were all gathered about, some weeping, some trying to comfort and help, but there was a blessed lack of the awful wailing and chanting that accompanies the death of a heathen. As it was a chilly morning we all sat outside in the sun and had a prayer meeting. Paul's verse, "We sorrow not as others who have no hope," came to me with fresh unction; and I praised God again for the gospel that is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. In the evening, at 5 p.m., his body was laid away, and while there was grief yet it was not as those who have no hope of a reunion.

ITEMS.

On Thursday, January 9th, our friends in Akola had the privilege of witnessing a double wedding. Mr. A. I. Garrison and Miss Mary Leavitt, and afterwards, Mr. K. D. Garrison and Miss Addie Delaney were joined in marriage by Rev. W. Moyser assisted by Rev. W. Ramsey.

Our reporter, being a man, finds it impossible to describe the brides' gowns for the benefit of our lady readers, but simply says, "they were dressed in white and looked pretty."

There was a bit of sentiment too about these marriages, Mr. Moyser, who performed the ceremony, having been himself married at the same place many years ago by the father of the bridegrooms. We are so glad to see these young couples starting out upon a term of united service for the Master. If they were good missionaries singly, they ought to be ten times stronger when united, "one shall chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight."

No sooner was the ceremony over than these dear missionaries began packing for their honeymoon which they will spend going about from town to town and village to village in their tents, preaching the good news of Salvation through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May they have many years of joyous, loving and fruitful service. [We regret that this account appears so late. We intended to have it printed in our February number, but by mistake it was omitted.—Ed.]

Mrs. Erickson writes that she and Miss Case have recently had the privilege of meeting Mr. W. E. Blackstone in Poona,
where he was the guest of some American friends. His talks on
his trip through the Orient and the fulfilment of prophecy were
most interesting and inspiring. Mr. Blackstone deeply regretted
his not being able to meet more of the Alliance missionaries
while in India. He said, "Give my love to them all and tell
them to be faithful, for it will not be long ere our Lord returns."

Mission wells at Bodwad and Khamgaon are being deepened.
The scarcity of rain last year and year before has been a
severe test to many wells that are ordinarily good.

An unwilling native bridegroom recently came to Kham-
gaon to his wedding (that was to have been) with dishevelled
hair, a dirty shirt, dusty and badly worn shoes, an indifferent
spirit, and a suddenly-discovered bad record. All this had the
desired effect, and the bride-that-would-have-been had a
fortunate escape.

Cheering reports come from nearly all the touring parties
this year. Good crowds and good listeners are met in most
villages. In the Gujarati villages, quite a number have come
over on the Lord's side, and Mr. Hamilton has baptised ten con-
verts from one village.

One of the missionaries on the Marathi side writes: "After
visiting a village and giving the gospel the people said, 'Sahib,
this story is true and we would like to follow your Jesus. If
you will come every week and teach us we will serve Him.
Otherwise, it is impossible, because we cannot read and have
no one to teach us. Do come.' This should call for our earnest
prayers."

Miss Woodworth, who has been ill for some time, has gone to
Teethul by the sea-side for a change. We would request prayer
for her, that as she rests in the quiet and enjoys the sea breeze, the
Lord may give her the real touch of healing.

The united, executive committee of the mission met in
Mehmadabad, April 2nd. The members of the Marathi com-
mittee are Messrs. Rodgers, Moyser, Carner, Hagberg, P. Eicher,
Mrs. Moodie and Miss Bushfield. Those composing the Gujarati
committee are Messrs. McKee, Andrews, Duckworth, Culver,
Turnbull, Miss Wells and Miss Hansen.