TIDINGS

FROM

A.B. F. M. SOCIETY

IN

BENGAL-ORISSA, INDIA.

CUTTACK.

PRINTED AT THE ORISSA MISSION PRESS.
# Bengal-Orissa Field Directory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bhimpore, via Midnapore, Bengal.</th>
<th>Contai, Bengal.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Long.</td>
<td>Mrs. Howard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. A. A. Berg.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Berg.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Naomi Knapp.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midnapore, Bengal.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Ruth Daniels.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Mary W. Bacheler.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khargpur, B. N. Ry.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. E. C. Brush.</td>
<td>Mrs. Frost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. J. H. Oxrieder.</td>
<td>Miss Sarah B. Gowen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Oxrieder.</td>
<td>Miss M. I. Laughlin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Miss Gladys Garnett.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. J. G. Gilson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs. Gilson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamshedpur, B. N. Ry.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. C. A. Roadarmel.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Roadarmel.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subscriptions to "Tidings" may be secured from—
W. H. Lipphard, 276, Fifth Ave., N. Y.
Single subscription $0.30.
Four subscriptions $1.00.
From time to time it has been our purpose to make you acquainted with some of our faithful Indian fellow-workers. It is impossible to say what a large share of the work falls on their shoulders. We love them and appreciate them, but too often we take them for granted, like many other of God's blessings. Sometimes we younger missionaries do not realize the struggle nor the sacrifice behind their lives.

One of these men is Rev. Gangadhar Rath, now in charge of Santipore. I met him at the mela at Santipore fourteen years ago, and heard something of his life-story from his missionary mother who was also visiting there. His missionary father was Mr. Boyer, who died after only a few years of service in Jalasore. Mrs. Boyer, now Mrs. Sunder, now lives in Canada, and recently a little booklet of her authorship fell into my hands. It is "The story of Gangadhar Rath, from Brahmin priest to Christian preacher." I wish I could share it all with you, but must confine myself to a brief outline.

Ganga's birthplace was a little country village twenty-five miles from Cuttack, the largest town in Orissa. Ganga's home was a better sort of mud hut, with several rooms built round a court-yard of hard, dry mud. His family was well off, having land free of taxes that had been given them by a rich worshipper. Ganga is the Indian name of the sacred river Ganges. Rath means Chariot.

In Orissa there are four principal kinds of Brahmins. These are sub-divided into many castes. Ganga's family belonged to the Yadu, or second Veda Brahmins, a caste of great sanctity.
There are many Brahmins and they cannot all perform priestly duties. They cannot become farmers or engage in ordinary trade, though the rules about those things are becoming less rigid. They are often employed by wealthy families to cook for them and to tend and worship the family idols.

Ganga's caste performs marriage ceremonies, recites mystical formulas and invocations, spells and charms when men are taken into caste, and has many such high privileges. In times of trouble and at funeral ceremonies the people come to them to be blessed.

Special ceremonies attend every important step in a Brahmin child's life. At about five his ears are pierced and he is sent to school. Between his seventh and ninth year, Ganga like other boys of his caste, was invested with the sacred thread of the twice-born. When Ganga was twelve, he was betrothed to a girl of nine.

For about a year after his marriage Ganga continued to go to the village school. By that time he had learned all the teacher knew and begged to be sent away to school in a larger place. His father refused, so Ganga determined to run away from home.

Early one morning he left his home without a word of farewell to anyone. He started for Puri, that very sacred city where Jagannath is worshipped. He walked twenty miles that first day and that evening reached a village where a cousin of his lived. He found there was a school at this village. The teacher offered to teach him. Ganga put in his hands all the money he had in the world, five rupees, about $1.50, and began his studies. Before a month the teacher asked for more money, and not getting it, turned the boy out.

Penniless he set out once more for Puri. His cousin went with him and succeeded in getting him lodgings in a monastery of his caste. There he stayed and attended school several months. His rice was cooked in the Puri temple and blessed by the priests. One grain of it was supposed to cleanse away sin.

Ganga was given only one meal a day. He soon developed a troublesome skin disease and he became thin and ill.
One day a Brahmin from a country village saw the sickly lad and thinking he was an orphan, offered to take him home with him, cure his disease and send him to school. So Ganga started off once more in pursuit of knowledge but the Brahmin did not send him to school. So Ganga made an effort to get to a school in Cuttack. After several unsuccessful attempts, he at last found work as a teacher in a village school. About this time he became acquainted with a Brahmin who took a great interest in him. This Brahmin had business in Balasore over one hundred miles away. He asked Ganga to go with him.

Arriving in Balasore, the Brahmin hired a room and went about his business. Ganga having nothing much to do, roamed about as he liked. The very day after arriving in Balasore, he saw a white man and an Indian, standing on a masonry platform surrounded by a crowd of people. He pressed forward and found they were singing hymns and telling about a new religion. It was Boyer Sahib and Daniel Nayak. Ganga was interested. He went every evening and soon began to ask them questions. He went to Daniel's house to talk and there he met Daniel's brother-in-law who was a converted Brahmin. This impressed Ganga deeply. Instead of returning to Cuttack he remained in Balasore near the Christians. He was then almost sixteen. He had not seen his parents for three years. He posed as an orphan. He wished to become a Christian. He was received gladly. His sacred thread was taken off, and his sacred lock of hair was shaved. That day he broke caste by eating with the Christians.

The missionary loved the boy and became responsible for his support. He spent hours teaching him. He made wonderful progress in Bible study and also at the village school. About three months later he was baptized. His faith was strong, his face shining with happiness that Sabbath morning, when his missionary father baptized him in the little village tank before many witnesses.

One day soon after this, a boy came running from school to the missionary in great excitement. "Ganga's father and brother have come and are taking him away."

The missionary went and pleaded with them to leave him, but they
would not listen, and the boy was not yet of age. The Christians wept that night and many fasted. What would be the fate of the boy? Would four months teaching prevail over his mother's tears, his father's anger, the scorn of relatives and pride of caste?

For eight months nothing was heard of Ganga. Then one morning he appeared, thin and pale but with the same happy smile.

This was his story. After leaving us he walked with his father and brother the one hundred and twenty-five miles to his village. They cooked for him on the way, but he was given his food apart. He was not allowed to sit nor sleep near them. At home he was given a cowshed to live in. His mother brought him his food and often wept over him. He was carefully watched and never allowed to go out alone. His hair was not cut during the eight months nor his clothes washed. He was given Hindu books to read but could get no Christian books. He tried to talk about Christianity, but no one would listen.

At first he stayed in his father's house who tried in every way to get him taken back into caste. A difficulty existed, but his father-in-law at last succeeded at great expenditure. A day was set. Brahmins from far and near were to be feasted and given valuable presents. Ganga was to take the customary nauseous draught necessary to restore caste consisting of milk, honey, cow-dung, cows-urine and butter.

Just one week before the ceremony, Ganga managed to escape and came at last to Balasore.

Shortly after this, at his own request, he was sent to the Bible School for training Indian preachers at Midnapore. Dr. Bacheler was then Principal. He ran away once but returned with renewed interest.

When Ganga was eighteen, an effort was made to get his Hindu wife to join him. But instead of any reconciliation, she said, "You are an outcaste, a beef-eating sweeper. Go away I will not come with you."

Then she and his parents all three cursed him, a fearful thing for a Hindu.

He was now without wife, father or mother. In accepting Christ he had lost home, friends, relatives, everything. Even his beloved missionary father at about that time entered into his Heavenly rest.
Ganga went back to the Bible School at Midnapore, and there after a time he met and married a lovely Christian girl. She was in every way a help-meet to him, but in about a year, she too left him. Then followed several years of unhappiness, estrangement from his friends, and only when he reached the depths of misery did it occur to him like that other prodigal, to make a new start. Pride and anger left him, and he acknowledged his faults. His troubles were lessons in patience and humility; in sympathy and understanding for the trials of others, lessons the Brahmin or the prosperous Christian were not likely to learn. His faith and love grew and his service began to be blessed.

Of his many forms of service, his literary work is especially worthy of mention. He composed some Oriya tracts in verse, and finding how acceptable they were, began to put into rhyme gospel portions, for the Oriya loves to drone or sing his scriptures. His most successful book was a life of Christ in verse.

Ganga now has a very happy home, with a dear little boy. He needs your prayers in his work at Santipore, for the upbuilding of the Christians, and the winning of the non-Christians round about.

"I do not regret my sufferings," he says. "They were necessary. I am glad of them. I am happy. I may die to-day, to-morrow. My one wish is that my work may live after me. I wish that my tracts and gospels may go on preaching for me and bringing many to Christ after I am gone."

---

THE MIDNAPORE, Y.M.C.A.

This was begun as a branch of the Calcutta Y.M.C.A. Owing to a financial crisis in 1923, they felt they could no longer maintain the Midnapore work. The building was offered to our mission for use, and Rev. H. N. Sircar has been carrying on the work along evangelistic lines. It provides contact with the non-Christian school boys outside of school hours, and also with the older men, who attend the weekly lectures and otherwise take advantage of the privileges of the library, etc.

Several young men have been deeply touched, and it is Mr. Sircar's
earnest wish that you remember this work, that through Bible Study and personal contact, these young men may see their need of a Saviour and accept Him as their own.

THE W.C.T.U. IN INDIA.

Missionaries everywhere take a great interest in the cause of temperance. Some may think it rather superfluous knowing that both Mohammedans and Hindus are forbidden by their religion to drink. The sad fact is that drinking is on the increase among them both, while the Christian community, in striving to imitate western civilization also imitates its vices including intemperate drinking.

We attended a W. C. T. U. meeting a few days ago here at Mussoorie, in the Himalayan mountains where we have come for vacation.
A most interesting paper was re-read, which was given first last year by Mrs. Z. D. Browne, telling of some personal experiences in the work at Jamshedpur. You recall that Jamshedpur is a large steel manufacturing city. That there is a very large cosmopolitan population including many Americans, and British. That the very large salaries, and the lack of restraints of home surroundings make it very easy to lower the standards of moral living.

Mrs. Browne says, "For the past five years it has been our privilege to live there and make a home where all sorts of men are welcome. Our first year we had to feel our way making friends. It is very hard to speak of some of these experiences because of their confidential nature. One or two must suffice. A young man not yet thirty years of age, who had been here a number of years, was drawing between $500 and $600 a month. He should have been well off but left only a Ford and a small insurance policy which could not begin to provide for his wife and child. I stayed with the wife, in fact kept the keys which Mr. Blank wanted as he wandered about hunting for brandy. Four men could not hold him in bed. Chloroform had no effect on his poisoned stomach. Finally the two doctors asked me to tell the wife there was no hope. It was a terrible death, cursing his wife, accusing her of awful sins in the hearing of all the men and doctors. But just half an hour before he died, he stopped raving, opened his eyes, saw Mr. Browne holding him by the hand and slept peacefully into eternity. He was such a kind-hearted man too. Three weeks before, he had been at Mothers' Day service and tears streamed down his face as he thought of his old mother. Three times he tried to stop the drink habit, but his strength of will had gone.

Within the same month the temperature rose to 125° and 128°, so can you not sympathize with these white men standing before open furnaces of boiling metal? A few minutes at the furnaces and then they must get back a few feet for a cool drink. The company provides all the soda the men drink, but if they are accustomed to brandy they keep up their strength with that. Fourteen white men were down with delirium tremens at one time. In one week we had three deaths among the Welshmen at the Tin Plate Mills and buried them from our house,
as their families were not here. Drink was at the root of it. One walked four miles at midday with no topi—sun helmet. Another rode on a wild horse and was thrown against a rock. Many a time we have picked up the men on the road and taken them to their homes, or ours. It is heart-breaking to see men of good standing in home churches do like this.

One American, and a good Christian at home was safely over D. T.'s, and on his way to be present at his daughter's debut in Italy, where she had studied in grand opera. He was safely on the train to Bombay, but before sailing, he drank some more, and was buried at sea. All his daughter cabled back was, "Heart-broken."

With all these men we have tried our best and in most cases we had failed. My husband said, "we must do more." I have known him to stay with a man eight hours with no food, and only get back in time for service, get up and preach and then go back to his man and see him asleep.

He would not approve of my saying this but I know he has done as much as any man could do. We longed to help the men to be strong enough to live on in Jamshedpur—and fight the drink habit. They and the patient wives of some need the prayers of every W.C.T.U. member.

Many years ago a fine young Scotchman came to the town of Midnapore as Magistrate. One day he called on Miss Coombs, one of the missionaries there, a sketch of whose life appeared in June Tidings. Miss Coombs asked of his mother and found she was a strong temperance woman. Then she asked, "Where do you stand?" Rather independently he said, "India is different and I've taken my first "peg" to-day. Miss Coombs excused herself and went to her room where she could not help shedding tears. When she returned she talked pleasantly of other things, but the young Magistrate did not fail to see she had been weeping.

A few years ago as Miss Coombs was about to leave India for the last time, the W.C.T.U. in Darjeeling had a farewell in her honour. Mr. Gourlay, then Secretary to the Governor of Bengal and later chosen to represent India at the Peace Conference was asked to preside, he being a personal friend of Miss Coombs. He paid her a beautiful tribute and told of the day years ago when he went away from a short call
determined, "If my taking a "peg" causes a good woman tears, that is my first and last."

Our English and American friends need a helping hand just as much as our Indian friends. To neglect them would be disastrous to the cause of Christ in India."

—

PERSONALS

Mrs. L. C. Kitchen, at home on furlough, reported a delightful time at the Northern Baptist Convention in Chicago, and of meeting others of our mission family there. Mr. Kitchen is studying and hopes to return to the field in 1928.

Mrs. H. I. Frost has had to take her little daughter Eleanor to U. S. for special treatment not obtainable in India. She has a facial paralysis due to a fall over a year ago. Mrs. Frost left the four boys in school in Mussoorie, and Mr. Frost is carrying on his work in Balasore as usual.

The Mississippi Valley is not the only one which suffers from floods. They have been wide-spread through our field the last few weeks. They cause great suffering among the poor villagers, whose houses and crops are both destroyed. Mr. Howard is spending sometime at Manikura, one of his out-stations. Many of the mission houses which had just been repaired, were seriously damaged. He is living in one drycorner of what was the church, happy to be among the people, sharing their sorrows and privations.