March 1924

TIDINGS
FROM
A. B. F. M. SOCIETY
IN
BENGAL-ORISSA, INDIA.

Dr. Murphy's Oxenmobile.

CUTTACK:
PRINTED AT THE ORISSA MISSION PRESS.
Subscriptions to "Tidings" may be secured from—
W. H. Lipphard, 276, Fifth Ave., N. Y.
Single subscription 80.30.
Four subscriptions $1.00.
EDITORIAL.

We are happy to see that the number of friends of our little paper is growing. It is not our aim to make this a magazine, but just a newsy letter from us on the field to you at home, and of course one may write much more informally in a letter than in a magazine article! We wish we might supply these free, but the price merely covers the cost of printing. Last year there was some misunderstanding as to the mailing and we are sorry that many of you lost some of the numbers. That has been adjusted now, and Miss J. E. Coombs, of West Bowdoin, Me., a niece of our dear Miss Lavina, so many years a missionary here and now retired, has most generously offered to mail your copies to you. You may continue to send your names and subscription money to Rev. W. H. Lipphard, 276 Fifth Ave., N. Y., as formerly.

We feel that the delay in this number deserves a word of explanation. It was to have been our Annual Report Number, but our missionaries have been so very modest in making their reports that March is half gone, and we have in hand only two! We had a fine Conference in January at which Mrs. Goodman, Miss Prescott, and Mrs. Strong were present, and cheered us with many helpful suggestions, and their earnest desire for a better understanding of our problems. But we thought we'd give you a rest from conferences this time and relate some of the cold season touring experiences. Mr. Frost and family and Miss Doe were out, as well as the Murphys and Howards, but we are sorry they
have not been able to send us a report in time for this number. You will be glad to read the message from our newest missionaries, Mr. and Mrs. Brush.

COLD SEASON TOURING.

BY MRS. MURPHY.

I'm reminded of a story I once read called "The Emancipation of Mother," for after over twenty years of work in schools and the care of boarding homes for boys and girls, it seems like another life to be free at last for work in the district.

Our new house-on-wheels is a great curiosity to the people. It's very funny to hear their guesses as to what it is. Some call it a ship, because they have seen boats equipped with table, chairs, etc., and one called it a rail-road car, judging from the general appearance and the interior in particular as seen from the door in the rear. Moving on around to the side they see the rubber tyres and decide that it is a motor car, then on around to the front where they see the yoke, and are amazed to learn that it is pulled by bullocks!

On the chassis of a discarded motor-car we built a light wooden frame enclosed with mosquito net and over that woven mesh wire to keep out all intruders including mosquitoes and the million insects attracted by lamp-light.

It measures 14'×8'×5' 6"; has two folding bunk cots, table and chairs. The comissary department is equipped with two small oil stoves, steam cooker, and a small table with dishes and food supply boxes, all very complete. It has many little conveniences, so we may live in comfortable camp style, yet it saves the packing and extra work of having to pitch a tent.

Our "camp" consisted of four preachers, three Bible women and our two selves, besides three cartmen, as two tents were carried for the workers.
During our recent six weeks' tour, our objectives were villages where we have good schools. These were centers from which other villages and schools within a radius of six miles were reached.

Previously the missionary has always had to hurry to get around for school inspection, but this time he took it more slowly, stopping a week at each place—time to get acquainted with the people.

Work among the women in inland villages has been almost nil. It is not strange therefore, that boys from these villages who go to the Bhimpore schools for three and four years, and having learned of Christ and want to be His disciples, do not take the decisive step. Why? Because of opposition in the homes, especially from mothers and wives.

These were the women we wished to see and we went to see them in their homes. There are such a lot of things they need to know. One thing we tried to help them understand was that while their sons and husbands have had a chance to hear the Gospel, they, the women, have not had that chance, so are still afraid and ignorant. The Bible-women did fine work. Always after an hour or so in more formal methods of singing and giving the message, they would go to one or two women for a personal talk. Often they asked the question, "If your husband becomes a Christian will you run away,"—a very common thing—and the reply most often was, "No, we will come with him."

At Silda, a large town twenty miles from the Railway, the high caste women have seen very little of the world, and only hear what their husbands are able, or wish to tell them. Here I and the Bible women were received in some of the best homes. One was that of the most wealthy cloth merchant in the town. We were received graciously, and the young sixteen year old son who acted as host, served us very nice tea and cakes. Over twenty-five women listened as long as we would stay. The singing and the message, too, was new. One old lady sitting quite near listened with wonder as the tears stole down her cheeks. Another morning I went alone to a Brahman's house where two young women received me with all the deference shown to their own priests. Lying on the veranda was a woman in great distress. They told me that ten days before she had lost her only
son. She refused food and would daily lament until she fainted and would lie as dead for several hours. I went to her, but she took no notice as I tried to speak, so I began to sing. She stopped crying and listened. After two hymns, I drew close to her side, announcing to the crowd of women who had gathered that I wished to talk to this woman, and if they wished to keep quiet and listen they might do so. Then I told her of Him who stilled the storm on the sea, and how even now He stilled sad and troubled hearts. Her face became so different as she accepted the message, and all listened with astonishment. The words of healing reached another woman also that day. A few days later as we were leaving that place, a woman came to me and said, "I too, have lost my only son. What you said was wonderful, that God can give peace, for who else can?" I asked her where she had heard, and she replied, "At the Pundit's house where you talked to the sad widow."

Our last week was wonderful. Our camp was in a grove of big mangoe trees. There was a big Hindu festival in the adjoining village which lasted three days. If at no other time a Hindu woman goes out she does have the privilege of going to see the idol on special days. So they came from miles around, and we got the crowds. Some did not even go on to the idol house. "Why should we go, now you are here. We can see them any time." We "carried on" in three different places, Bible women at their tent, preachers by the roadside and we from the cart. A large number of Mark's gospels were sold that week. The stereopticon drew large crowds.

I want to repeat a fact taken from last year's report,—"If either the missionary at Contai or Midnapore were to visit three villages a day in their fields continuously for 365 days each year, one generation would have passed away before they could get around to visit all the villages in their respective fields—

Well then, we should get busy!
District Touring.

By John A. Howard.

On November tenth we paid eight annas to an ox-cart driver. He said, “I will take your goods to Kaligatchia, a village 22 miles to the north-east of Contai.” He started off happily that night with our boxes of tracts, stereopticon outfit, cooking apparatus and camp bed, while I went on my bicycle the next morning. Having gone ten miles to the river, the cart-man refused to go a foot further saying, “I’ll go back home without pay but I will not go on.” So one of our men crossed the river and bargained for a cart on the other side. It took so long to do this that we had to take refuge in a traveller’s bungalow for the night. It was a blessing however, for that night we showed the stereopticon pictures of Christ to a very large and attentive crowd. We have a wonderful message to present, and it was a great joy to spread the good news among those hungry hearts.

The next morning before daybreak the cart was on its way for the last twelve miles of the trip. We went on a little later on the bike only to find the cart stuck in front of a little ditch, and the driver saying “We can’t cross, we must go back.” He was informed that we were going to get there. “Go back” was not in our vocabulary. It did not take fifteen minutes of digging to fill in the ditch sufficiently for the wheels to cross. A friendly shove by four men, with four others on the side to keep the cart from turning turtle, got us across. The road could not have been more crooked. It was literally a bank and the wheels straddled the bank. The cart creaked. The bullocks tugged, and the driver groaned, thus merrily moved the caravan. Bumpy? Well you could have asked, “Was there a stretch of ten smooth feet in the twelve miles”, and honestly we could answer, “No”.

We must confess that from six a.m. to two p.m. was a record-breaking speed for travel. However the friendly villagers when we arrived had some fine rice, fish curry and greens for filling that cavity within. We can assure you it tasted extra well.

The bungalow where we stayed was one of the prettiest we ever
saw. It had three little rooms with two bathrooms. The thatch was
neatly trimmed. The walls had been freshly white-washed. The yard
was as pretty as a picture. It was filled with variously shaped flower-
beds. Dark red velvet cocks-combs, bright yellow marigolds, a fine
variety of foliage plants, and verbenas in all the rainbow shades were in
abundance. Bright green grassy paths separated the flower-beds. The
final touch of beauty was the blue-flowering hedge neatly trimmed with
arched gateways higher than one's head.

We felt disheartened when we saw the large temple in the very
center of the village. In front of the shrine was a large tile-covered
assembly room about 50 x 50 feet in size. Pillars and arches formed the
four sides. When we asked the land-lord, "May we use this assembly-
room for showing pictures" he answered to our surprise and joy, "I have
no objection."

Here for three nights the Victrola was played, hundreds of colored
tracts were distributed and the pictures of the Man of Galilee were
shown. We never saw a place so jam-packed. The attention was
excellent. The Spirit of God was present and the good old-fashioned
gospel was preached clearly, fearlessly and from the depths of our hearts.

This village was the center of a great anti-government movement.
Now the atmosphere is somewhat changed for last year 97 per cent of the
government taxes were paid in. One of the leading landlords of the
village had spent six months in jail as a political prisoner. He treated
us very cordially, and in fact it was he who gave us the use of the temple
hall for our work.

In this village was a National High School with 150 pupils. The
teachers allowed us to distribute our tracts and gospels among their
pupils. We also enjoyed preaching to these boys who are India's future
leaders.

One afternoon we biked over to a large Government High School.
It also had 150 pupils. Every pupil was given several tracts. After this
the principal said, "Would you not like to talk to the boys?" We
answered, “We certainly would.” So those fine lads gathered in their central hall. What an opportunity! The Master Himself was certainly near, and we enjoyed giving them the blessed gospel of hope as it is found in Christ. At the close, the principal said, “We’d be glad to have you show your pictures in our school.”

We were deeply impressed with the fact that they will all listen with the whole heart to the gospel when spoken in the spirit of love. A number of neighboring high schools have invited us. What a magnificent opportunity! God help us to live up to it. There are a goodly number of young men who are seriously considering accepting Christ.

On our return from Kalagatchia we met an old Mohammedan friend. I never had a Moslem plead so much for me to come to his village. We hope to go there soon, however that day we had promised to get coolies to help our cart across a broken bridge so could not go. As we waited for the cart to come, the farmer on whose veranda we were resting said, “Our village has had lots of trouble for in and about our village sixty people died of cholera during the past year.” He brought me a green cocoanut. Its milk was cool, refreshing and almost as sweet as syrup. He said there are many varieties of cocoanuts, but this was one of the sweetest.

After a long weary jog through long stretches of sandy road bordered with dense jungle, we arrived at our next stop. In this place we now have two Christian families. Their house however, is surrounded by a thickly settled Mohammedan village. These followers of the Prophet were some of our best listeners. When we preached our message from the shoulder out, Christ and Him crucified, these people were very attentive. They treated us cordially in their homes. In showing the pictures they were exceptionally good hearers for Moslems. North of us a number of Mohammedans have accepted Christ. God can give us the same victory here. We would be so glad if He sees fit to do so for a Moslem has a stability of character which helps him to become an exceptionally strong Christian.

We have lately returned from about eleven weeks in camp in the
west end of our field. We hope to tell you some other time some of our interesting experiences there. Does your child lack appetite? Let us suggest shooting monkeys with bow and arrows. That was the favourite pastime of our youngsters and I'm sure that the monkeys as well as themselves had excellent appetites as a result. The wedding bee stung a number. I married three couples one afternoon, and two other couples on other occasions.

Quite a number of inquirers are praying to Jesus. We must insist on a change of heart before accepting anyone for baptism. We were very happy to lead into the baptismal waters seven people during the season.

"The prospects are as bright as the promises of God."

A MESSAGE

From Rev. E. C. and Mrs. Helen H. Brush.

The steamer was slowly riding into the harbour at Bombay. On the shore was a young American, alert with eagerness, to greet his wife and two and a half year old son whom he had not seen since the boy was six months old. At last the boat lay beside the pier and yet the American stood for twenty minutes while fifty coolies tugged and chattered and perspired as they placed the gang-plank, the link which would join that happy family. The American, restraining his impatience with difficulty, made a megaphone with his hands and called up, "Waiting is the best thing we do in India."

How well that phrase describes everyday existence in India. We began to realize that day, and ever since that day we have been trying to learn to wait. The Westerner who comes to the East, imbued with the desire to get things done in a hurry has to realize that the East takes her time. As it is in business, so it is in Christian Work. Changes come slowly.
However, the meaning of the change when it does come into an Indian's heart is a constant inspiration to some of us who have been accustomed to looking at the Missionary Enterprise from the home shore. Our experiences in the churches at home, in denominational schools, and finally in a seven years' pastorate have served to give us an appreciation of problems which are involved in Christian work in America. Of the general work of the Bengal-Orissa Mission, our impression, after five months of residence on the field, is much the same as that of a "globe trotter." We have seen the native work in schools, industrial education, and mofussil preaching. But to really understand the daily task of each mission station one must settle down long enough to learn its problems. Our impression is that remarkable success has followed the efforts of those who in the past and the present are introducing Jesus and His life to India. When we get a glimpse of the native heathen village and home, and see the heathen man, woman and child, and then contrast the condition with the effect when Jesus comes to live in the home and heart, we recognize the same hand which has always lifted men from the miry clay and placed their feet on the solid rock. Just last Sunday we saw seven Hindus walk into the water with the native pastor to bear witness to the transforming power we have seen manifested in America. Human nature is much the same the world over, and the bond created among those who love Him is so strong that differences in color of skin, language, and customs are not of great importance. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he" acquires a new meaning when we are among those whom we know chiefly by the spirit they manifest as we become better acquainted in Christian work. Christ's power is a great unifying force.

Some of these habits of living and age-old customs we see in India give the setting of Christ's work in illumination it has never had before. Even the Old Testament is better understood. The crowds of beggars and the diseased and those crippled in hands and feet and the blind who sought help are still present—many are ill "with fever"—the picture of the paralytic who took up his bed and walked becomes more vivid when one threads his way among hundreds of coolies, sleeping on a station
platform of an evening or noontime, some with mats, some without. The performance of religious duties to be seen of men which Christ criticized in the Pharisees, one notes here among the Hindus and Mohammedans in the methods of prayer and alms-giving, and in the crowds of "Holy men," painted and garbed in a startling fashion on their way to some shrine. Men still anoint their hair, and remove shoes as a mark of respect before entering a house. The parables in which servants give an account to their masters are very easily understood when the institution of servants in Eastern life is recognized.

The missionary is sometimes pictured as standing in the midst of thousands of people who are eagerly waiting to accept Jesus Christ. It is true that he stands among these people, and that they are anxious for a power strong enough and great enough to make them become the men and women they ought to be. But they are not except in a few isolated fields, turning in large numbers to the white man's religion. Here and there we find one with an open mind, or one who is brave enough to break away from friends, family, and thousands of years of the past to openly accept Jesus. It seems to be the general feeling among those with whom we have talked that there are thousands of men who in their hearts recognize Jesus as the Saviour of men, but do not feel the need as yet to break with their own religion. India is coming to know about Jesus. We dare not give up the work until this knowledge of His leads them to cry out, "My Lord and my God!" We find that throughout the mission there is the same earnestness of conviction and self-sacrificing spirit which prevails at home. After all the missionaries are men and women of like passions as yourselves. They are cheered by the success of patient effort, encouraged when the work prospers, and discouraged when things go wrong.

We are both happy at Khargpur. We are happy to enter into the fine Christian fellowship which has been made possible by such faithful men as Rev. J. H. Oxrieder, and Rev. Z. D. Browne, and their devoted wives. We have our dreams of an enlarged work in the future which we trust may come true under the guidance of our common Master.
NEWS ITEMS.

Several members and friends of the Khargpur Union Church gathered at the Parsonage and gave a farewell reception to Rev. and Mrs. M. R. Hartley on the eve of their departure for America on furlough. A social time was enjoyed and during the evening a leather suit-case and a purse of money were presented to the honour guests as a token of the esteem of the people among whom they have worked for the past eighteen months. The Hartley family embarked on the Steamship “Delta” from Bombay on February 2nd for England, and have no doubt reached America by this time.

Seven converts from Hinduism were baptized by Pastor K. C. Mahapatra of the Ward Memorial Church on Sunday, March 2nd. Interest among the Telugus in Khargpur is increasing, and several more are awaiting baptism. This interest is due chiefly to the efforts of the Telegu Christians here.

Rev. L. C. Kitchen returned on March 8 from Moga, Punjab, where he completed an inspiring course in the “project method” as applied to Indian education in a school conducted by Rev. W. J. McKee of that place.

Rev. J. H. Oxreider has assumed the direction of the Indian work at Khargpur and Jamshedpur after having spent a month at Bhimpore in charge of the Santal School in the absence of Mr. Kitchen.

A son, Harold Alfred, was born to Rev. and Mrs. L. C. Kitchen in Kharagpur on February 6th.

We announce with pleasure another missionary arrival in the small person of Eloise Elizabeth, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Eller at Jamshedpur on February 10th.

HELEN H. BRUSH.