June, 1927

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

Lavina C. Coombs

Orissa Mission Press, Cuttack.
BENGAL-ORISSA FIELD DIRECTORY

Bhimapore, via Midnapore, Bengal.
Rev. H. C. Long.
Mrs. Long.
Rev. A. A. Berg.
Mrs. Berg.
Miss Naomi Knapp.

Midnapore, Bengal.
Miss Ruth Daniels.
Dr. Mary W. Bacheler.

Khargpur, B. N. Ry.
Rev. E. C. Brush.
Mrs. E. C. Brush.
Dr. J. H. Oxrieder.
Mrs. Oxrieder.

Jamshedpur, B. N. Ry.
Rev. C. A. Roadarmel.
Mrs. Roadarmel.

Contai, Bengal.
Rev. J. A. Howard.
Mrs. Howard.

Hatigarh, via Jessore.
Mr. George Ager.
Mrs. Ager.

Balasore, Orissa, B. N. Ry.
Rev. H. I. Frost.
Mrs. Frost.
Miss Sarah B. Gowen.
Miss M. I. Laughlin.
Miss Gladys Garnett.
Mr. J. G. Gilson.
Mrs. Gilson.

Subscriptions to "Tidings" may be secured from—
W. H. Lipphard, 276, Fifth Ave., N. Y.
Single subscription $0.30.
Four subscriptions $1.00.
LAVINA C. COOMBS.

Lavina C. Coombs, daughter of Capt. David and Sarah Coombs, was born in West Bowdoin, Maine, November 28, 1849, the youngest of nine children. She received her education at Litchfields Academy and Farmington Normal School and taught in the schools of Maine until she went to India in 1882.

From the time she joined the West Bowdoin church she was active in Christian work, teaching in Sunday-School, organizing the first Children's Missionary Band in the church and acting as Secretary of the Women's Missionary Auxiliary when it was organized in the church. In a heart-to-heart talk with a friend about the things of the Kingdom Miss Coombs exclaimed, "Why don't more people want to be missionaries?" "Why don't you?" was the rejoinder, and the answer promptly came, "Why I want to go if I were only fitted. If the Women's Board would send me, I will go." And in less than a year Miss Coombs was on her way to India, sailing alone, November 11, 1882.

At Miss Coombs' farewell meeting this is a little of what she said in response to a desire on the part of the audience to hear something from her own lips.

"The Lord showed me a very, very vivid picture. There was a wide field with a brook running through it. On one side it was delightful to look upon. It was richly cultivated, There were many beautiful gardens where much labor and taste and wealth had long been lavished. There were orchards of all delicious fruits, cool and lovely groves. There were multitudes of laborers. A good many were hard at work. A great many more were standing still, looking on and enjoying what had been done. On the other side of the brook the scene was very different.
It was a tangled wilderness. Here and there a few people were to be seen hard at work trying to clear and cultivate a few little spots. But there was still much rubbish. So many great old stumps, so many ugly clinging vines. It was slow work for their implements were not of the best. They often called to those on the other side to send over some of theirs, but the answer came, “We want all we have ourselves.” It was strange how few responded to any call for help. All the more strange because the owner of the field, when he went away had told them all that he wanted the whole field to be cultivated. He cared no more for one side of the brook than the other. He wanted it all to be equally beautiful.

After the Lord showed me this picture, you do not doubt that I wanted to go to the neglected side.”

In those days a journey half way around the world was an event in the life of the one undertaking it, and it was characteristic of Miss Coombs that she started fearlessly though knowing not one on the steamer nor anyone among her future colleagues. Her letters give us glimpses of the beautiful spirit that kept up her courage all the way.

Her steamer sailed on the 11th of November 1882. She tells of being sea-sick the first of the voyage across the Atlantic. Later she is enthusiastic over the wonders of the ocean. “It has cleared off. A fresh breeze from the South, and the waves are rolling, tumbling and piling over each other. It is grand. Delightful.”

Miss Coombs got acquainted with a Miss Hodge on the steamer and when she found she would be detained in Glasgow a week beyond the expected time, this lady took her to her own home where she met many others interested in mission and other philanthropic work. “I am so unused to the ways of travel that I was quite appalled, but I remembered the ‘Ishi’ and was quieted. Will I ever be disquieted again? Doubtless many times, but ‘He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust.’”

On the longer voyage from Glasgow to Calcutta, she writes, “Is it not a beautiful morning? See how level the sea is! Just enough breeze to make the ripples sparkle, with occasionally a white cap. As I sit here,
the officers pass and repass, and they all have a cheery word. I have been somewhat troubled that I could not adapt myself better to those around me on the steamer. However, it all goes as part of my experience and I only hope I will be willing to speak or be silent as He desires. I will like to be of some use to those about me, but the prospect is not cheerful. Yet if I am close at His hand, He may use me.

"I do enjoy Miss Havergal here on board. It seems like another atmosphere to read her rich words and remember her life and her hymns."

Arrived in Calcutta, she writes, '"We had to moor out in the river, When the pilot came on board, he brought some Calcutta papers, in one of which I saw that a missionary conference had been held, and that Dr. Phillips was among the speakers. I hoped he might be still there, and concluded to stay on the boat that night hoping some one might come to meet me. Only the stewardess, chief officer and myself were left. I could not help wondering what was to become of me, but was kept from being anxious.

"In the morning the Captain took me in his carriage to the house of Mr. Stone, whose address was given me by Mr. Page of New York, and whose wife is a niece of Mr. Page. They are in charge of a seamans' reading and coffee-room. They were expecting me some time and received me cordially."

Mr. Stone helped Miss Coombs to get her baggage from the steamer and put her on the river steamer that was to take her the first stage of her journey to Midnapore.

"The steamer goes down the Hoogly some twenty or thirty miles, then we leave this boat and go up over the bank of the river to a canal and take a smaller steamer. It is between fifty and sixty miles to Midnapore, all the way by canal. We passed ten locks on the way."

Dr. Phillips went down the canal a short way to meet her, and they reached Midnapore about midnight.

"Everybody welcomed me cordially and I do not feel like a stranger in a strange land, but now and then it comes over me that I must be dreaming and I wonder where I will be when I wake up."
Of her first impressions, she says in a later letter, "No one has seemed like a stranger. On Sunday morning the children and I went to church. Dr. Bacheler preached. I could not understand it, but I liked to watch the countenances of the natives and could sing some of the tunes. Dr. Phillips asked me to give the principal heads of the discourse. I replied that I heard Peter, Jerusalem, Roman Catholic, England, Christian and Musselman. Dr. Bacheler was preaching of Peter's vision on the house-top. I have fallen in love with the native children.

"I am glad I am here every day and find no reason for being home-sick. I can do a little in the way of helping and have been glad many times for the gift of song. It was in this I could first join my efforts with others. At first I could only keep along with the tune, but now I can sing the words though I don't know what they mean. I am getting experience."

"In a private letter she writes, "I am well contented and happy, and many times I am constrained to say, "I'm so glad I'm here." In another private letter she tells, "Very many times I am forced to think how like our own people the natives are. I find myself getting interested in them, and liking to talk to them as I do to new acquaintances at home.

"I have been reminded of you in so many little ways as I have got my things unpacked and I have lived over and over again those days of preparation and packing and thanked the Lord for the dear good friends who worked so hard and cheerfully to get me off. Well, I have been wonderfully blest all the way, and am getting on unusually well with the language, though I covet the gift of tongues. I hope that my friends will keep on praying that my tongue may be more rapidly loosed to speak in this strange language. I am getting much interested in the zenana work, and shall be delighted when I can talk with the women a little better. I am helped of the Lord to live an hour at a time. Were it not for this I would be swamped in fears and misgivings. You can imagine how eagerly we look for intimations of coming help. Sometimes I get indignant at the apathy of our people as a whole, and wonder that so much is accomplished."
"Well, if you could only see me now, I am not sure which feeling would be uppermost with you, joy, sorrow, or admiration. I am sure some kind of an exclamation would spread over your face. After days of preparation, packing, hurry and bustle, at last the house is empty and quiet reigns. Dr. and Mrs. Bacheler and Mary have gone and I am alone in this big house. Now for the work here. It seems simply presuming and absurd, that I with only six months' opportunity for acquiring the language and the manners and customs of the people, should attempt to stand in the place occupied by these veterans. I shall doubtless get some hard knocks to pay for it, but there seemed no other way. I am afraid the work cannot advance much, but if I can only keep it from slipping back something will be gained.

"I have the zenana work made over to me, and a school which is called the Christian village school, but in which the majority of the children are Hindus, and the accounts of the church are left in my hands. I was elected Treasurer, but the native preacher does most of the work. Then as I am keeping house, of course there is the care of the establishment. In all this I have been kept within that "little fence of trust." This week's mail brings the glad news that Mr. and Mrs. Griffin are really coming to help us before many months."

Later she writes to the Mission Society, "Since my last we have gone through the trial of change and separation with only Dr. Phillips in charge and such help as the women can give him. I think if some of our dear sisters were as nearly exhausted as these are they would consider themselves excused from labor. I am glad I am here with a body not yet weakened by this pitiless climate. I now have the care of the women's department in the Bible-School, which is now held in the school-house nearby. By bringing this part of the school over here, my zenana teachers have the benefit as they can go in with the different classes and have good Bengali teachers. Most of the students sit on straw-mats on the floor. Some are obliged to bring their babies, and their time is divided between keeping them quiet and desperate efforts to snatch a few moments with book and slate."

When Miss Coombs had been in the country less than a year, Mrs.
Bacheler wrote of her, Miss Coombs is really wonderful. She takes hold of work like an old hand, and her progress in the language seems almost marvellous. She is also possessed of an uncommon share of common sense."

"I have bought a large white pony which is considerably old and more than considerably lazy, but I prefer that to the uncertainties under which one necessarily labors with most of these ponies as to what their next move will be. Now I'm quite sure of Kantaka under any circumstances, if no external power compelled the opposite. She would stand still. I enjoy the work more and more. Mrs. Phillips is going home at the end of the cold season. I don't like to think of it any more than I can help for she has been such a wise advisor for me. She is woven in with all the work that it will leave a ragged place not easily mended. Yet it seems the only thing to be done to save her life, and our Lord knows all about it. By that time the Griffins will be here, and I have not given up hope that some one may come with them. Sometimes I can't help thinking the people at home don't care. A few months on the field would wake some of them up. I never half realized what a treasure Christ is! Treasure! That does not half express is. A mine of wealth. Let one see the ignorance, superstition, immorality and filth, and then realize "what maketh thee to differ." And if he did not want to make these people understand how they could be blessed in the same way, I think he might put it down as a fact that he needed conversion."

She was ever interested in starting new work. About this time she writes, "We have a children's meeting every Tuesday afternoon. The Christian children come and often some of the others. They can nearly all sing, and like to sing "There is a happy land," "Sweet by and by," and lots of others. The Christian children pray and are not ashamed to do so before their schoolmates. Then we have something that has been hunted up in the Bible, for example, everything about Peter; how many big storms are mentioned, and how many prayers in the New Testament. And to-morrow they are going to tell a story from the Bible without names and see if we can tell whom it is about."

In later years the evangelistic work in the out-of-the-way places made a most profound appeal to Miss Coombs. She writes of her first
trip, "We, that is, Dr. Phillips, Miss Millar and myself, just started on 
what is my first trip for outside work. We propose going to Garbeta, a 
place about thirty miles from Midnapore, and are taking tents along for 
a stay of two or three weeks. We have stopped here at Salboni, about half-
way, where there is a good bungalow with excellent accommodation. This 
morning after a little prayer-meeting with the workers, Dr. Phillips and 
the men went to some Santal village in one direction and Miss Millar and 
I went another way in the streets close by. Can you imagine trying to 
talk to women and children who don't know what "heaven" means, 
ever heard of God or Jesus, and look utterly stupid when you speak of 
prayer? How I do thank God for the power to sing! Though they have a 
little idea what the words mean the sound pleases them and it gives them 
a willingness to listen to what we want to say. It is when we start out 
like this seeing the villages scattered everywhere, and know that, go 
where we will, we would find just the same, that we realize something of 
the work that the Free-Baptist denomination has undertaken. O, the 
tangle on this side of the brook. I feel as if I could sit down on my 
stump and cry if it would do any good. But no, I must dig away at the 
roots of superstition and rake away the old leaves and brush of rites and 
ceremonies, and let the "Husbandman" look out for the rest."

The campaign at Garbeta gave the ladies many opportunities to 
meet the women of all classes and they were well received. They had 
often to listen to the cry, "When will you come again," and "what will 
we do when you go away." "At all the meetings the people listened with 
strict attention and evident interest though I must confess the ludicrous 
side was apparent to me when they clapped their hands at the close of 
prayer in one of the Sunday services. However, they meant all right, for 
they supposed that was the proper way to show respect."

"I could write of several interesting incidents such as the passing of 
a crowd of Santals carrying parts of the skull bones of their relatives who 
had died during the year to be thrown in their sacred river; or of the 
native queen and her train making a pilgrimage to the shrine of 
Juggernaut; or our ride one morning on an elephant. But it all seems 
like gossip when my heart is full of the thought of souls not reached and 
hearts untouched in all this great world of ours. One begins to get some
idea of this field when riding along the highway he looks off for miles and miles and miles on either side across the plain away to the horizon and sees villages thickly scattered here and there, all about, encompassed with their bamboo plumes, and knows that in hundreds and hundreds of these villages no Christian has ever entered. And we profess to be cultivating this field. Why, this great pilgrim road which runs through it is one threadline, and our stations are but fingermarks along it, and only three at that. What can seven persons at one end and nine at the other, do in all this surrounding tangle of uncultivation? O, if I could make our great family of 80,913 hear, I would send one long loud shout, "Come over and help us! Bring your axes, hoes, shovels, plows, rakes and a will to buckle down to hard work." But I'm afraid I should get the answer back, "No, we can't come. We've too much to do over here." Eighty-thousand on one side and only sixteen on the other. Is it fair?

"The Bible School here will close the last of July. Four more young men will go out to work in different ways. One of them is Sachi, of whom we often speak, and who seems fitted to take an independent stand."

"It is such a comfort that we are not accountable for what we cannot do. Cries for help come from every side and one wishes he had powers multiplied again and again. Yet we have only one voice and one self for the sufferers next to us. He knows the rest."

This last paragraph is the first note of discouragement. Those were indeed dark days, when possibilities for good work were opening up on every hand and there was no one to "go in and possess the land."

"Commencement is over," she writes a little later. "The women have read their essays, the men delivered their speeches, Miss Millars' wedding is past, Dr. Phillips packed up and gone, and the Bible students scattered here and there to carry the Word of Life by their testimony and the scriptures they might sell. Mr. and Mrs. George and myself are left to look about us and wonder how much can be done by three inexperienced hands.———Our daily cry is Lord, send us help! Don't, don't fail to pray for this people and for us. I doubt if you can at all realize how much of a comfort it is to know that in some families we are not forgotten when they pray........I have never doubted since I came here that this was my place." Perhaps these meagre extracts from Miss
Coombs’ early letters are sufficient to give a vivid picture of her many-sided personality. Her interest in the work was all absorbing, and all her life seems bent toward the accomplishment of that for which she left home and friends and came to this distant country not knowing what might be before her, but feeling ever the close companionship of the Father and the ‘Ishi’ who had led her from the first.

Her keen sense of humor often came to her aid in trying circumstances. She was scrupulously honest and conscientious in all her dealings with the mission. I remember one time when her figures, (after the manner of figures) would not conform to her ideas of accuracy, and I laughingly said, “You will have to alter them,” and she said, “You cannot alter discrepancies.” We quoted that many times afterwards. One of promising young men in college was having a good deal of trouble with his higher mathematics, and happened to mention it to Miss Coombs, though not with any idea that she could help him. She asked him about it and not only worked out the whole process, but made it plain to him.

She was always most kind and forgiving. At one time she had a girl on her hands, a waif picked up off the street. Vina cared for her and educated her, and when Molina grew up and rather went to the bad, the rest of us lost all patience with her. Vina still befriended her. The girl was a bad lot, and even went so far once as to strike Miss Coombs a blow that troubled her for a long time.

She was so intent in the later years of putting all herself into mission work, that we lost sight of her bright mind till some special occasion when she was off duty as it were, and then we were surprised at the bright repartee, the insight into current events, and the thoughtful well-considered opinions on sometimes abstruse subjects. Her love of nature and the enjoyment of the beautiful were so often subordinate to her intentness to spend every minute for the work, that we sometimes lost sight of that too, and because she did not talk and exclaim, we thought perhaps she did not care. But we might have known that she did thrill to the wonderful beauties of our September and October sunsets, the grandeur of the thunderstorms, and the beauties of the seasons as they came and went.

Another characteristic which I think appears somewhat in the letters
quoted from her is her remarkable adaptability. So when the Midnapore industrial school fell into her hands she fitted herself to care for it too to the best of her ability, and so of all the other work she undertook. At Bhimpore where she was for a time, she brought the same keen mind to bear on the work assigned to her.

In Balasore at the Orphanage, her patience with those naughty, careless girls was a wonder to me. Also I used to marvel at her doing so many little things all so willingly and so thoroughly, not slighting anything because it was beneath her ability. Her idea in the last days in India was to "chink in", and right faithfully did she apply herself to the many little tasks that made many burdens lighter.

Vina was good clear through, she it is not a bit strange that she made warm friends wherever she went, and that in her times of need there were those who were glad to help one whose life had been so selfless.

The last days at West Bowdoin were quiet and peaceful. There too, she made warm friends who are missing her as we do out here. It was a privilege to live with her, and I always counted caring for her when she was sick, one of my most valuable bits of missionary work. Her piety and her strong faith were always a help to me.

Her singing was an asset and was greatly appreciated by all who heard her.

Vina was always sympathetic, not in any useless sentimental way, her first thought being, "What can I do about it?"

With all her piety and definitely artistic side she was still most practical, and she always had the uses of her good judgment that sometimes fails some of us in emergency, even though we have the very best intentions to the contrary.

Vina never gossiped, never said an unkind thing about anyone. "In her lips was the law of kindness." She was a staunch friend, true, faithful, loving, forgiving and forgetting.

M. W. Bacheler.
MISSIONARY CHILDREN

In Bengal—Orissa. Rather we should say a Sample, for they were not all present, about ten of them having urgent business elsewhere. The snap was taken in front of the bungalow where Dr. Bachelor came to live with her parents when she was only a child of eight. Mr. Frost’s father was a missionary in Balasore for a short time, and surely we hope that one or more of those five fine grandchildren will come back to Bengal-Orissa as a missionary. The four Longs are seated in the front row. Mr. Frost is holding Helen Dunn, with his arm about his little daughter Eleanor; back of his father is Kenneth Frost holding Roger Berg, and back of Dr. Bachelor is Robert Frost with Ruth Gilson. Dr. Bachelor is holding Arthur Eller, next to Arthur is John Brush and at the left, John Howard with Stanley Brush. Let the children pray for these little folks that they also may be messengers of goodwill and peace.
RACHEL DAS BOSE

Rachel Das Bose was the daughter of high caste Bengalis from a village to the north of Midnapore. Her father was priest, teacher and headman in his village. Through the efforts of Dr. O. R. Bacheler and Dr. J. L. Phillips, he broke caste, became a Christian, and with his wife was baptised in the presence of his village folk. Persecution followed,—stones were thrown as they came out of the water, and their houses pulled down and burned. So with their two little girls they came to Midnapore and lived on the compound of Dr. J. L. Phillips. With Dr. Phillips, Rachel's father studied the Bible, became a preacher and pastor of the Midnapore church. While in Midnapore, four more daughters were born to them of whom Rachel was one, and two died. After a time the family moved to Santipore where lived Dr. and Mrs. Jeremiah Phillips. The father did evangelistic work among the neighboring villages. Returning from one of these tours, when about a year in Santipore, he was caught in a heavy cyclone and took shelter in a mud house. With his Christian servant he knelt in prayer, and while so engaged the mud walls fell in and buried him. The widow was thus left with her four little girls and a fifth born after the father's death.

Little Rachel was sent to the Orphanage at Jellasore then in charge of Miss Crawford. Here she was baptised. Mrs. Smith coming to the Orphanage in 1882, recognized in Rachel a girl of unusual ability and promise and became her foster-mother, giving her careful training and every advantage.

In 1884, Mrs. Smith and Dr. Coldren sharing expenses, Rachel was sent to an English school for Bengali girls in Calcutta. Here she studied the Bible, Bengali, drawing and painting and won several prizes and a medal for good conduct. At nineteen she passed the university entrance examination. She returned to Balasore and assisted Mrs. Smith with the school in connection with the Orphanage. Of this she says, "I seek by every means to develop and strengthen their Christian character; more and more I feel the need of impressing upon their hearts the necessity of being born again."

Upon Mrs. Smith's death in 1899, she keenly felt the loss of a mother
and was very lonely. Miss Hattie Phillips became her guardian and says of her, at this time, "Rachel had offers of marriage, but none that were suitable. Not a woman in our mission was her equal in education and refinement, and among our people not a helpmeet of equal qualifications was to be found for her." Then early in July, 1900, letters and a photograph came from a Bengali widower far away seeking a wife. A mutual friend had recommended her. The case was investigated, Rachel was consulted, a favourable answer was returned and the engagement made. That was followed soon by the wedding that Mr. Bose might get back for the opening of his school in September.

Mr. Bose was the head-master of a Scotch Mission School at Dinga in the Punjab, a man of choice Christian character, excellent English education and disposed to provide generously for Rachel. But while she was twenty-six years of age, he was fifty-three with a long gray beard! The wedding was in the Balasore church which was packed for the occasion. She wore a Sari of delicate rainbow tints, softly blended. This was gracefully draped over a white satin and lace blouse. White stockings, slippers and gloves, wreath and veil, with much gold jewelry to which Rachel was unused, completed the outfit.

After three days, Mr. and Mrs. Bose started for their new home, 1,200 miles away, close to the North West Frontier. Here everything was strange to Rachel,—race, language, customs and physical features. She picked up the Hindi and Urdu to be able to join in the Christian worship. The houses were so close together that, she says, "I sit at my window and sing Christian hymns to the Hindu and Mohammedan women gathered at their windows." At the end of three years, she and her husband visited Balasore with their three months' old daughter, Dorcas. Her joy was keen at being back, for although she was happy and content with her husband, she was lonely for the companions and friends of her youth. Two more daughters were born to Mr. and Mrs. Bose in the Punjab, and then came the death of the husband. Rachel returned with her three little girls to her friends in Balasore. A position was made for her as teacher in the Midnapore Girls' School.

As the Government raised its standards for teachers requiring them
to have Senior Normal Training, Rachel was obliged to give up her position, or go to Calcutta for training. This meant much sacrifice to her to break up the home, for she not only had her three children, but four of a sister whose death had placed them in her home. However, arrangements were made, and she was able to take her Senior Normal Training, and in due time, came back and resumed her position in the Midnapore School.

After some time she went to the Balasore Girls' School, to supervise the higher grades, and to help in the Christian community. For the past two years she has been in Midnapore again as visitor in the Christian community and has had charge of the group of zenana teachers, Bible-women and bazaar school teachers, having prayer with them each morning seeing that they get started off on time, and supervising their work. Also at present she is acting as matron for the school girls' dormitory, overseeing their meals, and trying in every way to be to them a real mother.

Her three daughters, well educated, are now grown to womanhood and are all happily settled in homes of their own. The eldest, Dorcas Emily, married a fine Christian Bengali from Calcutta. They now live in Cawnpore where he is employed in the Lalimli Woolen Mills. They have two lovely daughters the eldest of whom has taken first prize in two different baby shows thereby proving that her mother knows something about modern principles of baby care.

Mrs. Bose's second daughter, Emma Grace, was married last October to Mr. D. K. Biswas, for the past two years instructor in our Phillips Memorial Bible School here, a graduate of Serampore College. He has not only the intellectual qualifications for his work, but is deeply spiritual, and takes an active interest in all the general affairs of the community. He also is a fine musician. He is the only one of the sons by marriage who lives in Midnapore and it is a great comfort to the mother to have him near.

Just a short time ago we witnessed the marriage of the youngest daughter, Dorothy Patience to a fine looking Christian young man from Calcutta. He is the head-master of a Government Training College, and at the same time studying law hoping to make that his profession soon.
Many of our friends at home have known Mrs. Bose since she was a young girl. She also knows many by name and has always been pleased to meet those few who have come to visit us from time to time. She has been a tower of strength in the mission, one to whom the missionaries have turned for help and always found in her a loyal friend and co-worker. We trust that she may be spared to us for many more years of service. Remember her in your prayers that her life may be filled with the fragrance of the Lord and that that fragrance may be shed abroad to bless the women and little children in Bengal-Orissa.

Mrs. Rachel Bose seated at the left, with her three daughters and their husbands.
BENGAL-ORISSA GREETS YOU

This was taken during the last mission conference on the day that we celebrated Dr. Mary Bacheler's Jubilee. You see her down in front holding the flowers. Mrs. Huntington, our Treasurer's wife and our guest, is at Dr. Mary’s left. At the extreme right of the group is our dear friend and co-worker Pastor Natabar Singh, also a member of the Mission conference. Eight of these folks have just gone home on furlough.
The existence of *Tidings* is due in large if not entire measure to Miss Coombs’ efforts. In the days when this was the Free Baptist field, a close connection was kept with the home churches and officers through the excellent little paper the *Helper*. We have recently gone through the volumes beginning with 1878 and found such interesting and valuable materials and as practical for to-day as in that early day. When the *Helper* was merged with Missions, Miss Coombs saw that a little paper published on the field would help to keep up the old ties, and so *Tidings* came into being. She was its first editor, and after she went home for the last time, in her name, her niece, Miss Jeannette Coombs, has taken care of the subscription list each quarter, addressing and sending out and supplying the necessary postage as a labour of love.

Miss Coombs passed away peacefully at West Bowdoin, Maine, January 16, 1927 saw a few friends and relatives gathered in her tiny room where she had spent the greater part of her time for the past four years and eight months. Dr. Hamlen, a former fellow-missionary, told of her life and work, a cousin sang some of the songs she loved and all present felt as if it were just a family gathered together to give God-speed to a loved one going on a journey. Her dear body was carried to its resting place through a real New England blizzard, to await the resurrection morning.

We are glad that Dr. Bacheler could write this appreciation of Miss Coombs for this number. Surely no one here was better fitted to do it, but she said, “Vina was so good, I feel so inadequate to give this last tribute.” She makes us all want to be more earnest in our service.