June 1924

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

Lower Primary Department.
Bhimalore (Boy's) High School.

CUTTACK:
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## BENGAL-ORISSA FIELD DIRECTORY

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WHAT VICTORY MEANS TO BHIMPORE

More than five years ago the Bhimpore school received its first instalment on the appropriations for the new High School plant—School, Hostels, Masters' Quarters, etc. That Rs. 14,000 odd has been in hand all this time and at last, just when we were beginning to fear the New World Movement was going to end without providing the evidences of victory for Bhimpore, we received the joyful news of another appropriation, bringing our resources up to more than Rs. 36,000.

Hardly a quarter of what the original plans called for, it has necessitated tremendous reductions in estimates, sweeping changes in plans for future development, and the more or less permanent occupancy of buildings that were built for a couple of years only. But it is going to mean the solution for the time being at least, of many urgent problems, and it is surprising how satisfactory adjustments can be made under the pressure of necessity.

In the days when the Bhimpore school consisted only of Lower and Upper Primary Departments, a four-roomed brick building was built, which could reasonably hold four classes with a total of one hundred pupils. Since those days one room has been added to the brick building, but the school has grown to a High School and Guru (Village Teacher) Training School with an enrollment of nearly 325, and a staff of sixteen.

And how have these developments been taken care of? The pictures reveal some of the answers to our problems. The old tin-roof shed for housing unburnt brick for a long time accommodated the Lower Primary Department until the high winds ruined the roof and the exigencies
of building repairs took away the bricks and lo! our Primary Department was again homeless. But the Headmaster who had been living in the Hospital building was encouraged to build his own home and soon the Hospital was available, and there the Lower Primary Department holds sway,—while people die—but if the Hospital were opened who would run it?

Two Infant Classes. (First and Second years).
Bhimpore School.

And the Upper Primary Department has for two years held possession of a temporary building, (besides the original brick building) which houses four classes, two Third and two Fourth Standards, while still a third section of the Third Standard has had to find a place in the Christian Hostel. The original brick-building houses the Middle and High School classes while the Teacher Training Class has a room in the Santal Hostel.

The Hostel requirements have kept pace with the school requirements, but they have been more adequately taken care of. You can teach.
boys for five hours a day under any kind of a roof or under no roof at all for most of the year in Bengal, but boys must have a decent place to live and sleep. But even with a brick hostel for Christian boys, housing about 35; a two-story brick hostel for Santal boys, accommodating about 50 boys, in addition to a Master, and the Training Class; a temporary mud Hostel with a straw roof (shown in the picture); and two houses in the village, used chiefly by Hindu boys and a Hindu Master; still the accommodation has fallen so far short of requirements, that a most unsatisfactory arrangement, namely, that as many as 75 boys have been scattered through the village living in conditions that it has been extremely difficult to check up until some glaring immoral consequences have laid them bare.

First Standard in their "Rooms."
Bhimapore School.

But soon we hope to have our problems solved. Our funds in hand are to go in to a new school building. Our plans call for class-rooms for the Upper Primary, Middle and High School classes, a library and teachers' room, an office and last but most important of all an auditorium.
We are hoping, perhaps against hope, to get all this for Rs. 36,000. The last estimates called for about Rs. 75,000 for the school building, but they have been revised. If we get this according to the rough plans drawn, we can face the future serenely. The old brick building will nicely house the Training Classes and the Primary Department, which later will become a Model or Practising School, and both of which according to Government requirements must be separate from the High School proper, by which designation the rest of the school will be known. The Hospital will be available for the great demands that are surely to be made upon it.


—if!! if only there is a Doctor and a Nurse to run it, which reminds us that the next urgent need for Bhimpore according to the Mission records is a Doctor. The temporary building housing the Upper Primary Classes now will be available for additional hostel space, which with another more permanent type of "kutcha" or unburned brick-hostel just completed next the other mud hostel and with the rooms in the hostels
now used by the Third Standard and the Training Classes will enable us to get all the boys out of village homes and under our supervision and discipline with the exception of day scholars living at home or with relatives. We don’t expect that that will solve all our problems of discipline, but it will relieve us of anxiety on one score which the events of recent years have made not inconsiderable, because Christian parents failed to realize their own moral obligations.

A Temporary Hostel. 4 Rooms with about 30 boys.
Bhimpore School.

It is easy to see some of the educational advantages that one may expect from carefully planned, well-lighted and ventilated, and fairly well-equipped class rooms, after such makeshift arrangements of the past five years. It ought to add not a little to the efficiency of pupils and teachers, not to mention the principal, who must patiently listen to the tales of woe and try to obviate all the difficulties of a staff working under such tremendous handicaps!

But one of the greatest values we hope for from the new building
is the prospect of a wider influence and a greater service to the local community. Within the last two months, on at least three occasions the school has entertained the people of the village. On two occasions the Senior boys have presented most enjoyable dramas, witnessed by audiences of five or six hundred people. One was “The Prodigal Son” and the other, an adaptation of Shakespeare’s “A Winter’s Tale” which the Senior class was reading in English. But the only available space for such programs was under the trees behind the Mission Bungalow. With an auditorium large enough to accommodate several hundred people, it will be possible to have such entertainments, and others of more obviously educational or religious nature, lantern lectures of any kind for example, and to make these a regular feature of the school life; and being held in the school auditorium it will be obvious to the village people that the school means something more in their lives than a place to send their children to keep them out of mischief until they reach the age when they can contribute to the family income by their labors. Since there is broadcasting now in Calcutta regularly, with a special Indian program, it is not too much to hope for a receiving set and a loud speaker, and the auditorium will never hold the crowds if we get it successfully working.

One other feature of the new building will be its service ability for a Sunday School. Until recently the Sunday School was held under insuperable handicap, being conducted in the auditorium of the Church. Not long since, after considerable agitation, we succeeded in having it transferred to the school buildings. These buildings being scattered all over the compound, the arrangement is not much better, but it does give one advantage in that the classes don’t disturb one another, as they used to in the Church, which is a matter of supreme importance.

But until we make adequate arrangements for the conduct of our religious education we cannot hope to achieve our best results in evangelism among the students. Here we must look for our biggest returns on our Mission investments. And they are warranting the utmost attention and the most satisfactory arrangements that we can make. This Easter Sunday was one of the greatest days in the short missionary career of those now stationed in Bhimpore. Fifteen young people, five girls and
ten boys, acknowledged Christ as Saviour and were buried with Him by baptism, to rise with Him to live the resurrection life. Just over two years previously 22 had been baptized at the conclusion of the Indian Annual Convention, and in between these two great days, from time to time, in twos and threes, others have been led out into His most marvellous Light, some from the darkness of heathenism. These days are but the culmination of months and years of religious education, and but mark the greater need now of further instruction in the things of Christ. May the new building, dedicated to the cause of Christ, in the education of young life especially, but also in a wider service to all of any age, be the place where young souls find themselves and the Christ of God.

L. C. KITCHEN.

EASTER AT BALASORE.

Most of the members of the Balasore church recognize that the week ending with Easter Sunday should be regarded as a "Holy Week" and they enter quite willingly into any plans for making it a time of spiritual uplift. This year was no exception. Cottage prayer meetings were held at various homes for a couple of weeks or so beforehand. Prayer-meetings were held on Good Friday and Saturday mornings and were well attended. A preaching service was arranged for both afternoons of these two days.

Some of us were much burdened for some time before Easter because a number of our people in the village of Niliabag had fallen out with each other and there was a most deplorable spirit of ill-will, and frequently open quarrelling. It seemed all the worse because the village has always been noted for the spirit of unity among the Christians who comprise it. Realizing that they could get no benefit from Easter services while in such a state of mind a number had been praying very earnestly that reconciliation might be brought about. In this instance it seemed to be the unkind talk of the women which was fanning the flame, so finally Mrs Frost decided to call all the women of the village to our bungalow. She had talked with most and every one said, "Of course we want peace." But they seemed to need the help of a mediator. Well, they
all came. The situation was frankly faced, the misunderstandings
smoothed out and those who were at odds mutually forgave with tears
and loving embrace. With joined hands they closed by singing the
Doxology in Oriya.

For a number of years it has been the custom for all the Christian
people of that Niliabag village to have a “Love feast” on the Monday
evening following Easter. It had been feared that it could not be held,
but after the reconciliation had been brought about as described above,
and some work had been done among the men, it was possible. In
America you have church suppers and everybody pays for his meal.
Think of twenty, or more, families each contributing according to an
agreed rate for a common meal. I assure you it was a thrilling experience
to join with that company of one hundred and fifty or so Christian men,
women and children in a preliminary brief period of worship and praise,
and then in the joy of a “love feast sitting on mats under the open sky.”
It made the occasion all the more meaningful since we knew that only by
prayer had it come to pass.

On Easter morning the church was packed. It was the regular
Sunday School hour and our two main schools, Primary and Junior-
Senior, together with the children from two Hindu schools, joined in the
exercises. The feature of the exercises was that the chief part was taken
by a little group of girls from one of our Hindu Primary Schools. A
simple and appropriate little Easter drama had been put into Oriya by
our Supervisor of Religious Education. Those Hindu girls, with bright
eyes and brighter saries, went through the drama without a hitch—no one
had to be prompted-speaking so distinctly that everyone could hear with
ease. And when they closed in unison with the shout, “Jisu joya,” “Jesu
Joy’’ (Victory to Jesus) our hearts were thrilled and some of us saw as it
were a vision of the day when such as these and many more of India’s
brightest souls shall from the heart cry “victory to Jesus” and He shall
have won India for Himself.

But we praised God most for the baptisms. Two Sundays before,
too, a youth and a man of mature years, had been baptized. Our two
boys, Robert, aged 11, and Kenneth, aged 10, were also baptized shortly before, and on the day preceding their departure to the "hills" to enter their school again. Then after the exercises on Easter morning fourteen more were baptized in the tank at the back of the church. Several were boys and girls from our schools, three were from the village of Bampada near Balasore, the home of one of our faithful evangelists,—one being his own daughter, the other two converts from Hinduism. Not less than five of the whole number were born in Hinduism. Needless to say we thank God for this Easter season.

H. I. FROST.

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Balasore, April 6, 1924

DEAR FRIENDS,—

I think you will be interested in a little visit which I made this cold season in a small village not far from Chandbali. The first time Bachine, the Bible-woman, and I called at Dehani's house, his wife was serving his tea. We waited in a large room near the entrance. The whole house quickly filled with neighbours and relatives, women and children, who had come to see what we were going to do with Dehani's wife.

Only a year before there had been great excitement in this family because Mr. Frost and some of our preachers had arrived, thinking to baptize Dehani who had confessed his belief, and readiness for this ordinance. His Hindu relatives, also his wife and daughter, clung to him and objected so strongly that this was not accomplished. So I say it was with curiosity that these people had gathered.

It was our purpose to have a heart-to-heart talk with the wife, but the most we could do now was to show ourselves as friends. After finding out who was in the circle of relatives, we showed a picture of the Good Samaritan and Bachine told the story. This was only matched by a story from the Hindu wife in which a Hindu had acted the Good Samaritan and not the Christian who was standing by.
These stories had been interrupted by such remarks as, "Your friends have come today." "No, they are Christians. You've got your ears full, now go with them." "Come, I'm going to the tank," (as if for baptism). Thinking we could make no progress in such an atmosphere we went back to our tent.

In the afternoon we went again. This time we were conducted to the backyard where the wife and servants were cleaning rice. We were seated on a mat some distance away. This was not at all pleasing, for a crowd of children gathered full in front and the neighbor women came as before. The children were crowding and pushing. However Bachine sang a hymn and attempted to explain it. The wife was ready to talk but because of the distance and the disturbance of the children, it was all so loud and in such an argumentative manner that I felt there was no advance. We wanted to get near to the woman herself, and as we could not we went away.

The next morning we hesitated whether to go a third time or not. But my task was not yet accomplished, so we went. This time we were given a mat right near where she was working so I ventured a little nearer where nothing or no one could come between us. Two sisters-in-law of her husband's were sitting near, but she didn't seem to mind them and began to open her heart to us.

She began, "Some Christians lie and steal." I replied, "I don't know. We shouldn't judge other folks, but are responsible for ourselves." She said, "If I become a Christian and then lie and steal, I will give a bad name to your religion."

Then she said, "I'll tell you something." I said, "Yes do, that is what we came for, to hear what is in your mind and to help you if we can." She said, "My three sons died. If God had taken property I shouldn't have minded, but he has taken life, that which he gave to me. My husband and I were reading the Bible, and he did not take the sons of other Hindus."

A sympathetic cord was touched. I had to shed a few tears for her as I told her that one of my little ones had also died and I went on to
explain that disease is impartial and that God does many things that we do not understand.

I said, "If you and your friends, your husband, son and daughter will all become Christians, one day you will all be together in Heaven where there is no Death. Perhaps your oldest son who used to read the Bible and pray before he went to the fields is longing for you to be baptized and accept Christ."

She said, "Suppose I am baptized and then steal your umbrella, will I be saved?" I replied, "If you are sorry and ask forgiveness." Then she said, "I am not baptized. You leave your umbrella and I'll send it to the tent. Will I be saved then?" I smiled and answered "Not by good works." Her final words were, "We are reading the Bible. We are teaching our friends. They are slowly leaving off their old sins. Some day we will all come together."

Since this visit a preacher and his family have been located in a formerly abandoned mission house in Kandgaria, a nearby village. We have just received news that six people in a neighboring village of the same caste as Dehani have been baptized. We are greatly rejoiced and we hope and pray that Dehani and his family will soon follow.

Sincerely,
MABEL FROST.

NEWS FOR MIDNAPORE.

RUTH DANIELS.

Some people think there is no hope for Midnapore and there really are some obstacles to progress here, but even Midnapore has done something. We wanted and talked and dreamed about a Girls' High School and a bigger school and a better school and we have it, or at least we have a beginning. It seemed to those of us who were really interested heart and soul in the school two years ago that the first thing we needed
was the sympathetic co-operation of the parents and community and town. If they could not think it was their school there was no use in having a school. If it were just a "Mission School" for people to look at and criticize, there was no use in trying. No amount of money or new building could make a success. In these two years the sympathy and co-operation of the parents has become an actuality and it is our greatest asset. During the past year the local subscriptions and donations have amounted to over Rs. 350/. Our School Committee consists of four Indian Christian men, one Hindu man, Miss Kanto Bala Rai and myself. This brings me to the most important event of all.

In September Kanto Bala Rai came back to her home town Midnapore. Imagine her joy and her mother's joy and the joy of all the rest of us. She is interested in the Church and Sunday School and community and in every individual in it and has made herself at home again in her own town. She dreamed and longed for and believed in a Girls' High School in Midnapore as some of the rest of us did. She said, "we'll have a Girls' High School in Midnapore or my name isn't Kanto Bala Rai," and she has set about to do it. Our Conference appointed her Secretary of our Middle English School in my place from November 1st. Since then we have worked together to get ready to start at least two years of High School the coming year—building mostly on faith as there is no hope of increased Mission funds. In executive ability, tact with teachers, pupils and patrons, and keen insight into the needs and weaknesses of the school, Miss Rai has in two months shown her real worth and has already greatly strengthened the school.

We began the year using a hired carriage to bring girls to school but this soon became entirely inadequate and in October with the help of some special gifts, we bought a School Bus and one horse of our own. This holds ten girls and we thought that by having the garry make several trips this might do for one year, but in three months we have found it is already far too small. A year ago we started a Boarding for school girls—just giving them room in the building we had for our teachers. There were five girls and some of the time six. This was an
experiment but as during the year some had do be refused for lack of room, it seemed we must have a Boarding. At first we thought of building a mud structure, but a better plan has developed. We are moving our School over to a large unused Mission Bungalow and the present school house which was far too small is to be our Girls' Boarding. This does not mean a reduction of expense however, for we are putting up a corrugated iron wall around so as to properly protect the girls and making some alterations in the building. For the present we are doing this on Rs. 500/- of Mission money and Rs. 200/- local subscriptions, but there will be about Rs. 300/- more needed.

Our five Lower Primary Schools are doing their work in other parts of the town among Hindu girls. During the past few years they have improved because of more trained teachers. The Hindu parents do not object to Bible teaching when once they see what it is. The Teacher told one little girl who was afraid to take home her Bible Catechism lest her brother tear it to show it to her father and have him see if there was anything bad in it. She came back and said, "My father says I may study that book, there is nothing wrong with that." A Hindu woman who is paid a small sum to call the children to one school was offered a larger sum in another School which is all Hindu, but she refused saying "I can't leave this school. I love to hear the religious teaching they give. When I hear it, it thrills me and I can't be happy without it."

As for our church and community, I am thankful for a number of things. After Christmas we had special evangelistic meetings for a week and the people truly responded. The only trouble was that we need more. The pastor resigned November 1st and the church is working together to keep up the services and do at least a few of the pastoral duties. There is a growing sense of responsibility for the evangelistic needs of the town and if rightly directed there is no question but our church will act with the Evangelistic Board and various Mission agencies from which it has been somewhat separate in the past. It is when we do not pray that we get discouraged and I have both observed that in some earnest but discouraged Christians here and found it true in myself. The uplook is always good.
VACATION NEWS.

The first of May found most of our missionaries starting on their annual vacations. Chandipore, our little seaside resort nine miles from Balasore, is quite popular this year. The Murphys, Brushes and the Misses Daniels, Gowen, Knapp and Hill are occupying the bungalows and enjoying the sand and sea.

Others have chosen different Hill stations. The Brownes are in Darjeeling, the Krauses and Ellers in Shillong, Mr. Dunn in Kodaikanal, and the Kitchens, Howards and Frosts are in Naini Tal where the latter two families have children attending the recently established school for American Missionaries' Children. Mr. Howard has been undergoing treatment at the Naini Hospital having a new top grafted on the ear which was cut in a recent motor accident.

Misses Doe and Cronkite are enjoying the quiet of Contai after living in Balasore at Sinclair Orphanage.

The following bits of news have come from members of our missionary family in America. Mr. and Mrs. Raymond who returned for health reasons are now living in Detroit. Mrs. Raymond recently underwent a serious and successful operation in the Mayo Bros. Hospital at Rochester, Minn.


Mrs. M. R. Hartley reached her home at Niagara Falls, Canada only three days before her father's sudden and unexpected passing away. We extend to her our sympathy. Miss Ruth Daniels also suffered the loss of her dearly beloved father in January of pneumonia.