INUVIL



THE STORY

OF THE

MCLEOD HOSPITAL



Presenter to Dy T. Saltizamoorthy Dirutor Teaching Hospital

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INUVIL:

THE STORY

OF THE

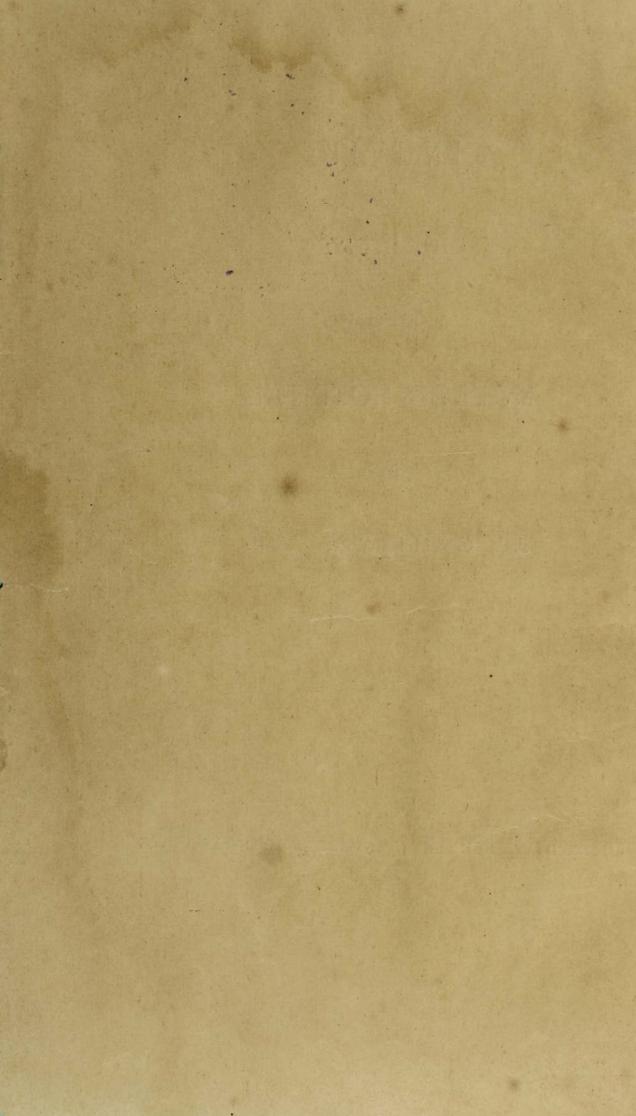
MCLEOD HOSPITAL

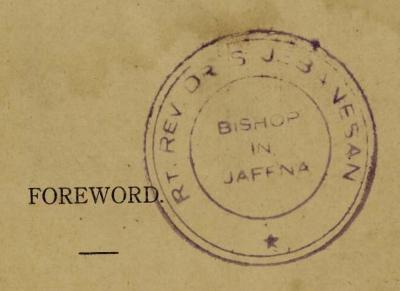
BY

J. V. CHELLIAH, M. A., J. P.

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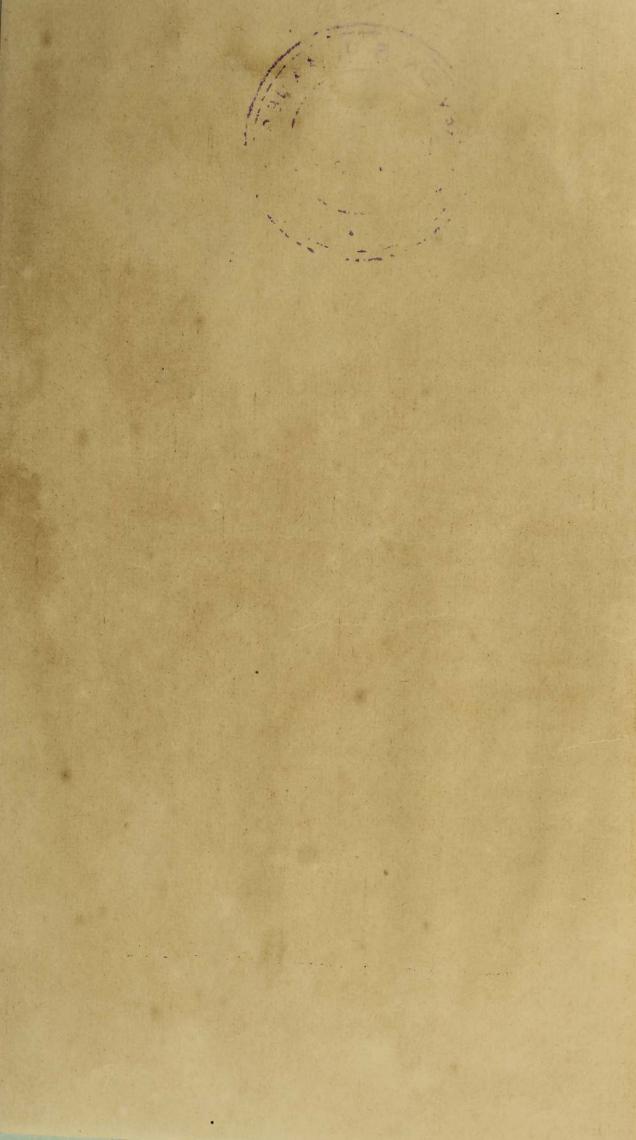
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The writer owes an apology to the authorities of the Hospital for the delay in the publication of this book. In ordinary circumstances, the book would have appeared some months ago. But owing to the illness of the writer, it had to be postponed till now. The public should be grateful to Dr. Packiam Solomon for collecting the material for this book from various sources.

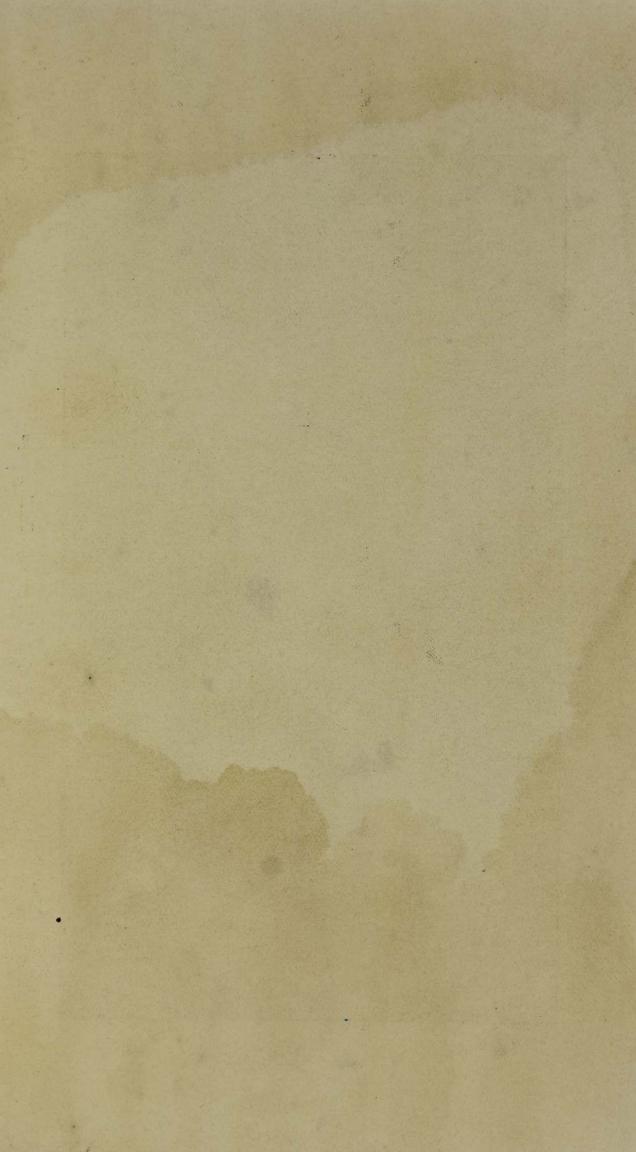
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First Medical Wission, Pandaterrupu

CHAPTER I.

LEST WE FORGET.

Bishop Heber in his well-known hymn has sung of Ceylon's Isle as a place "where every prospect pleases", but we in Jaffna cannot claim that this phrase is particularly applicable to our Peninsula. True, here Nature has not showered her choicest blessings, but by way of compensation Providence ordained that this small sandy tract should be favoured above the rest of Ceylon in one respect. Although Jaffna was not the objective of the earliest missionaries of the American Board, yet it seemed best to God that their footsteps should be directed to this remote part of the Island by force of circumstances. Thanks to the work of this Mission, Jaffna became the pioneer of two of the most important of nation-building efforts: Education and Medical work. In establishing the Batticotta Seminary the American Mission became the pioneer of higher Western education in all Asia. Mission has an even greater claim to pioneer work, in that the first medical missionary ever sent out from the West came to Jaffna. Before Dr. Scudder came out to Ceylon, missionary societies did not think that the healing ministry was a part of their missionary task. It was

after considerable hesitation that Dr. Scudder was accepted as a member of the Mission. opened the first missionary dispensary in the mission field at Pandeterrippu in 1832, and the small thatched building where he worked still stands as a monument to the beginnings of missionary medical work throughout the world. Among those who succeeded this pioneer emulating the example of the Master who went about healing the sick, Dr. S. F. Green's name requires special mention. It was he that, apart from his skill as a wonderful physician and surgeon, trained a host of medical men not only for Jaffna. but for the whole of Ceylon. the Medical College was not then in existence, and the Government looked to Dr. Green for the training of doctors for the Medical Department. Dr. Green did more. He created a medical literature in Tamil which is even now admired by all. We will not pause here to give the due meed of praise to his eminent successors, Dr. T. B. Scott and Dr. W. Jameson. Our theme is the McLeod Hospital, Inuvil, a unique women's hospital; for it was established by women, for women, and entirely administered by women.

CHAPTER II.

A DREAM COME TRUE.

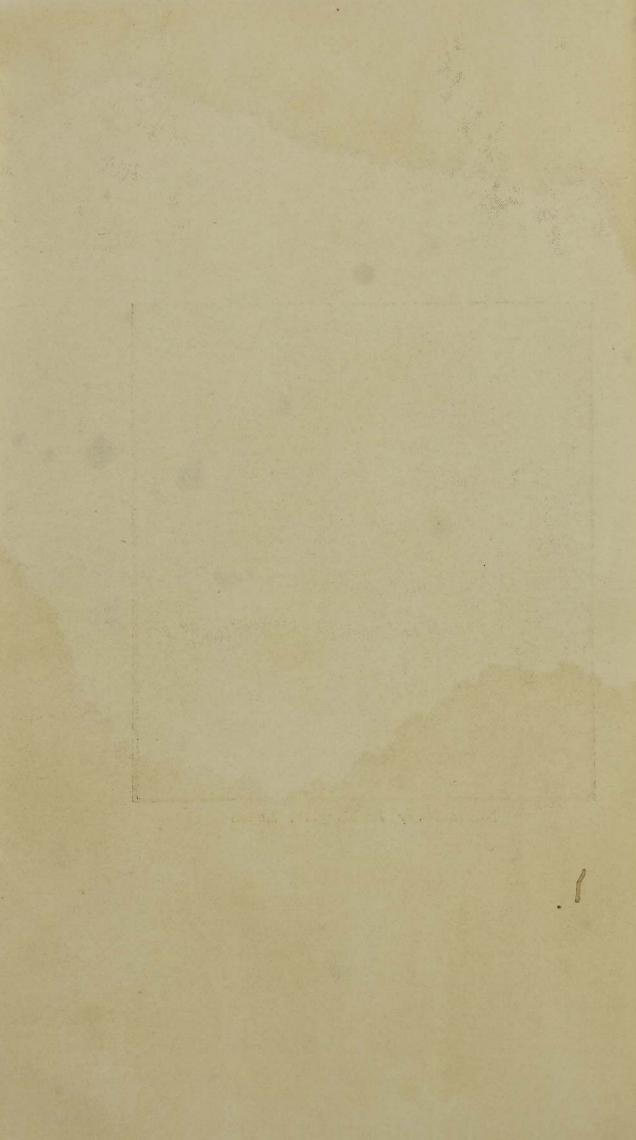
That the dream of a women's hospital for Jaffna was dreamt by two women was in the fitness of things. When two Vermont sisters, Misses Mary and Margaret Leitch, came to Jaffna with their lay brother in 1880 to join the Mission, a new and progressive element was introduced into the Mission work in Jaffna. They were missionaries with the glow of evangelistic zeal, and withal persons with a wide and statesmanlike vision. They began to view missionary problems from a new and wider standpoint. Perhaps their unorthodox ways might have jarred on some of their staid colleagues, but the people of Jaffna took them to their hearts almost from the beginning. Among the various things to which they turned their attention, Jaffna College and the Medical Mission loomed large. They felt that the College established by the people of the land was not growing as it should, and that the great medical work started by Drs. Scudder and Green had languished for want of support and interest. And they set about collecting the necessary funds for fanning into greater activity those feeble flames. They collected

Rs. 44,000 for Jaffna College to serve as Bursary funds for helping poor students, and nearly Rs. 63,000 for the Medical Mission.

One thing made even a stronger appeal to their sympathy. Their hearts bled when they saw the sufferings of their Tamil sisters in times of illness, and especially during confinement. Although the Tamils had possessed a great system of medicine in times of yore, Tamil culture was at that time at its lowest ecb. People believed that diseases were due to supernatural agencies. and resorted to superstitious ceremonies to placate evil spirits. Another thing that added to the miserable plight in which Jaffna women were, was their prejudice against receiving medical treatment from male doctors. The havoc that ignorant, filthy midwives were playing horrified these ladies. After the experience of this miserable state of affairs for eleven years, they thought it was time that their dream about a women's hospital was translated into reality. They, therefore, resigned their connection with the American Mission in July 1890, and offered their services as honorary missionaries to the Zenana Bible and Medical Mission of London, which was doing a great work in India. They proposed to the Mission that a branch should be established in Jaffna, and undertook to take charge of it, and to collect funds for building a hospital and to equip and endow it. The offer was accepted, and the two sisters began to collect funds in England and Scotland. Their mission was entirely successful, and they collected Rs. 90,000.



Misses Mary & Margaret Leitch



The Misses Leitch returned to Jaffna from their collection tour in 1893, and explored the Peninsula to find out a suitable place for the location of the hospital. With the help of prominent men in Jaffna, notably Rev. S. Eliatamby, the Pastor of the neighbouring Uduvil Church, and Proctor T. C. Changarapillay, they decided upon Inuvil, a village about five miles from Jaffna. They acquired a plot of ten acres adjoining an open space possessing excellent water. They made Chavakachcheri their headquarters, and began to make the necessary preparations for the work of building. A contractor of great experience was found, who worked under the supervision of the Provincial Engineer.

About the middle of 1895 a crisis occurred. The question whether the Women's Hospital should not be handed over to the American Mission was mooted, and both the Misses Leitch and the Zenana Mission came to the conclusion that it was "desirable in the interests of the Women's Medical Mission in Ceylon that the Mission should be transferred to the care and control of the A. B. C. F. M. in order that the two departments of Medical Mission work in North Ceylon might be carried on in future under one society." The Zenana Mission was especially anxious that this should be done, as it felt the burden of its "large and growing work in India." Accordingly, the Misses Leitch wrote letter to the Secretary of the American Mission in Jaffna offering to transfer the whole work to the Mission. This offer was approved and recommended to Boston for acceptance.

The Misses Leitch then left Jatfna for England to personally arrange the transfer, and on October 3, 1895 tendered their resignation to the Zenana Mission. The resignation was accepted, and on the same date that Mission wrote to the A. B. C. F. M. making the offer. How much the Leitches and their work were appreciated in England may be seen from the testimony of a prominent Minister in London. Dr. E. F. Pentecost wrote, "I have known these two sisters well for a number of years, and I am free to say I do not know such another pair of missionaries. For Christ-like spirit, for ability and cleverness in all matters of business, they are almost peerless."

In December 1895 we find the Leitches in Boston putting forward the details of this transfer. At a meeting of the Prudential Committee of the A. B. C. F. M. held on January 14 1896 the offer was accepted, and the work of Women's Medical Mission passed into the hands of the A. B. C. F. M. Now the ladies set about finding two fully qualified lady doctors for the Hospital.

A few important points as regards the transfer of the Women's Hospital by the Zenana Mission to the American Board will be interesting to the public. in view of the changes that are being contemplated in the running of this institution. Conditions were laid down by the parties concerned when the transfer was effected. We will not go into all those conditions here, but will note only a few that seem to us fundamental. We may say that

the property and funds transferred was valued at nearly \$20, 486, and there were promises to the value of \$30,000, excluding probable income from fees, profits, and Government grants.

It was agreed that the money of the Hospital "should be kept as a separate fund by the Treasurer on the books of the American Board." As to the relation of the Women's Medical Mission to other departments of the work of the American Board in Ceylon, we find the following conditions laid down: "The medical ladies in charge of the Women's Medical Mission to have as much freedom and responsibility in the conducting of their work." Further, these missionaries should have the privilege to be present at the business meetings of the Mission whenever matters relating to their work was discussed, and should have "an equal voice and vote with the other missionaries in the field." Another condition laid down required that annual reports should be submitted to the Misses Leitch as regards funds, property, and the various activities of the Hospital.

The A. B. C. F. M., on the other hand, stipulated: "The Board is in no event held responsible for the investment of money that may be received for the permanent funds or for the safe keeping of the securities" beyond the care used for the investment of its own money. Further, it was laid down that the Board was not pledged to spend money in excess of the income of the institution. Another condition is interesting. If at any time the Board should

discontinue this Trust, it should "Turn over all the funds and property in this Trust to the Trustees of Jaffna College Funds, if they were willing to accept them."

It is clear from the above that it was agreed that the institution should not lose its individuality and be merged in any other department of the Mission. Secondly, as the Board did not undertake the financial responsibility of the institution, it expected it to be entirely self-supporting. In a few words, the institution was to be a distinct entity.

The tireless energy of the two sisters were then directed to a new channel. We quote their own words: "Learning that the American Board was at that time hampered in all its operations by a debt of \$ 115,000, and by a deficit in its receipts of \$50,000, which necessitated its ordering a very serious reduction in its work, we were led to feel that we could do more for the interests of the foreign mission work, as a whole, by working for some time for the American Board as collectors, and securing funds to aid them in carrying on their general work, than we could do at this time by returning to Ceylon." They worked at their own expense, and the debt was completely wiped out in two months. Then they turned their attention to the collection of funds for a Forward Movement needed to prevent future reduction in Foreign Mission work. In this they had encouraging response. It is also worthy of note that the Leitches collected the necessary funds for the support of Mr. Louis Hieb, the first General Secretary of the Y. M. C. A. in Ceylon.

The Misses Leitch retired from active work subsequently in 1901 and found a home in California. Miss Margaret Leitch entered into eternal rest some years ago, and Miss Mary Leitch is still in the land of the living, taking an interest even in her advanced years—she is now 88 years old—not only in Mission work, but also in the larger problems of the world, as many who have received letters from her know. Jaffna will always cherish the memory of these two sisters with love and gratitude.

CHAPTER III.

CHOICE OF DOCTORS.

One of the duties that the Misses Leitch had to perform after the transfer was the selection of two lady doctors. Of the twenty applicants the two chosen were, Dr. Mary H. Irwin M. D. C. M., a Canadian, a graduate of Ontario Medical College for Women; and Dr. Isabella H. Curr, L. R. C. P. & S., a Scot, a graduate of the School of Medicine for Women, Edinburgh. These ladies were chosen not only for their professional qualifications, but also for their high Christian character and missionary spirit.

Isabella H. Curr was born in Fifeshire, Scotland, in a town with the impressive name of Auchtermuchty. Even as a little child, her pastor tells us, she was an exemplary Christian girl. On her conversion she devoted herself unreservedly to the Lord's service. She became a Sunday school teacher, and took an active part in evangelistic work. Later, she made up her mind to become a medical missionary, and began the study of medicine with this in viewin the Edinburgh School of Medicine for Women.

Her career at the Medical School was brilliant. She was uniformly successful in all her professional examinations, taking a high place in



Dr. (Miss) Isabel H. Curr, L. R. C. P. & S. 1899



the pass-list, and won several prizes and medals in Chemistry, Anatomy, Materia, Medica, and Surgery. She received the degree of L. R. C. P. & s. at the Edinburgh University, and later that of L. E. F. S. at Glasgow. The following are extracts from testimonials sent to the Misses Leitch by her Pastor and Mrs. W. Somerville, one of her teachers:—

"Miss Carr is no 'pious blockhead,' but is possessed of a large share of good sense..... While I think her possessed of sufficient firmness where firmness is necessary, she is very gentle and ladylike. I do not think she would be 'cornery' or opinionative, and I firmly believe she would co-operate pleasantly and reasonably with fellow Christians in the Master's work."

"Miss Curr is of a modest, loving nature, and she has endeared herself to me and all interested in her. She is of a firm, self reliant character, but at the same time has been most pleasant to work with, and willing to yield to what she considers better judgment than her own."

The Pilgrim's News gave a description of her under the impressive title, SMALL, BUT SCOT AND MIGHTY, and called her "just a slip of a girl who had several achievements behind her."

Dr. Curr received her appointment as medical missionary to Ceylon on March 31, 1896. After her appointment she did post-graduate work in Midwifery in Glasgow and in Gynaecology in Birmingham.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM AUCHTERMUCHTY TO INUVIL.

We will now follow the two lady doctors in their journey from their native land to the land of their adoption. Dr. Irwin, we must explain, had gone from Canada to Scotland to join her colleague. On November 15, 1895 a valedictory service was held in Dr. Curr's church in which, besides her pastor, representatives from other churches took part. The next day Dr. Curr bade farewell to her parents, brothers and sisters. They went first to Edinburgh, and then proceeded to London where they visited places of interest. On December 3rd they embarked on the "Valetta". During the voyage they began the study of Tamil. After a pleasant voyage they saw the lights of Colombo at nightfall on the 29th. They were cheered to receive telegrams of welcome from missionary colleagues, and landed in Colombo the next morning. Although they might not have scented "spicy breezes", "every prospect" did please the new-comers. The bullock-cart in which they were transported to Mt. Lavinia, and the strange rickshaws drawn by men in which they travelled about in Colombo must have been novel experiences to them. They spent their New Year Day in their new country, and stayed in Colombo

till the 12th. They spent their time visiting Mission stations, speaking to congregations, and sight seeing. Among those whom they visited was Dr. Leslie, who for a time had been doing medical work in Jaffna in connection with the Women's Mission and had then accepted a position as Physician in the newly started Havelock Hospital for Women in Colombo. Another person they visited was Dr. Kynsey, the Principal Civil Medical Officer, with whom they spoke of their various problems, and especially of the paucity of nurses in Ceylon.

On January 12th began the last lap of their journey. Then there were two modes of travel to Jaffna: by sea in the "Lady Gordon", or by train to Matale and then by coach. The ladies preferred the latter, presumably for seeing the country. The Colombo-Jaffna line was not then finished, only portions having been laid. If they had waited for a few days, they could have finished the journey travelling by train in the Pallai - Jaffna section which was to be opened a few days after their arrival by Sir West Ridgeway. But the ladies seemed to have enjoyed their slow transportation by coach, as they were able to see the country at leisure. Mostly they had to go without their accustomed meals, even bread being not available at rest-houses, and were initiated into the mysteries of rice and curry. The following description of their journey found in Dr. Curr's diary shows what good "sports" the ladies were. The journey which might have been regarded as a purgatory of tedium by others less enthusiastic, was to the two young doctors one great and novel adventure.

"Every five miles our horses were changed, and fresh ones - the most derelict specimens you ever saw-were harnessed in place of the old. The going was naturally slow. The coach which left Matale early in the morning arrived at Anuradhapura somewhere around midnight. The rainy season was at its height. and floods added to the excitement of the journey. All the luggage had to be piled carefully on top of the coach, which proceeded at a snail's pace with one of the men walking before it, prodding tentatively at the road ahead. Then again, at another stage, the coach fell into a ditch, and turned turtle. We took a photograph of that, grouping ourselves beside the Royal Mail Coach, which lay helplessly on its back."

At last the two Doctors awoke in Jaffna in the small hours of the morning on the 17th January 1896. Dr. Scott received them and took them to Manipay at 4 A. M. on Sunday. Thus ended a long and interesting journey. Then there was a round of visits and welcome in all the Mission stations. We need not say that the ladies were supremely happy in their new surroundings.

Here we must state that Dr. Irwin had to sever her connection with the Mission for family reasons. She came with the highest professional qualifications and with a true missionary zeal. She settled down in Colombo, and what was

Jaffna's loss was Colombo's gain. She built up an extensive practice there, and carried on evangelistic and social work. She is still carrying on her useful services, and was till lately a Member of the Municipal Council of Colombo. Thus the whole burden of the Women's Medical Mission, now fell upon Dr. Curr's shoulders.

The Hospital buildings were not ready, and for a year after her arrival, Dr. Curr devoted her time to studying Tamil, preaching the Gospel, and helping Dr. Scott at the Manipay Hospital. Her diary records an interesting experience she had with an unruly crowd at the New Year Car festival at Manipay.

CHAPTER V.

PIONEER DAYS.

When Dr. Curr arrived, the Hospital buildings were nearing completion, but were not ready for occupation. The foundation stone of the building was laid by Mrs. Strong of Pt. Pedro on March 6, 1895. It was formally opened on September 24, 1898. The Hospital was named McLeod Hospital after the Rev. and Mrs. McLeod who initiated the movement by a gift of ten thousand dollars. Besides these, Mrs. Alexander Mackie gave \$2,500, Mrs. Anson Philips Stokes, \$2,000. Lord and Lady Overtoun, \$1,000, and others smaller sums. Rev. G. J. Trimmer, Chairman of the Wesleyan Mission, presided at the opening, and the different Missions were represented on the occasion. Pastor Hunt, Proctor Changarapillai, Pastor Elyatamby, Rev. J. Carter of the C. M. S., Dr. Rajasingham of the Medical Department, and Advocate Tirunavukarasu, besides some of the American Missionaries, spoke on the occasion. Miss Susan Howland then declared the Hospital open.

The only buildings at the time were the Mission House, the Dispensary, the Medical and Surgical Wards, the Nurses' Home, and a small



Mrs. McLeod



ward with a thatched roof for maternity work. Dr. Curr began her work single-handed, as there were no trained nurses, and only two girls to help her, besides a compounder and a clerk. Dr. Curr served not only as a doctor, but as a nurse too.

Well did a Scottish newspaper, The Pilgrim's News, sum up the task that lay before Dr. Curr: "In Ceylon she found herself contronted by an opportunity rather than a hospital". It was not merely a case of attending single-handed on the patients that came to the Hospital; it was also persuading people to come to it. To use an expressive phrase, it was a case of Mahomet going to the mountain, when the mountain would not go to him.

As noted before, people generally thought that diseases were caused by evil spirits, and tried to placate them, or made offerings to their tutelary deities when they suffered from illness, or called in ignorant quacks to dose them. They had very little belief in the efficacy of Western medicine. Then there was the objection of women leaving their homes to reside in the premises of people of an alien religion. What was most appalling was that in confinement cases women were at the mercy of filthy, low caste women who acted as midwives, although such people were not allowed even to enter their homes at other times.

The following humorous incident from the pen of Dr. de Livera, one of her Assistants, will

show what conditions she had to struggle with at the outset:

"It was Dr. Curr's professional skill, tact, perseverance, and accommodating amiability that had implanted a faith in Western medicine among a most conservative Eastern people. Dr. Curr once told me that when she first came out to Inuvil in 1898 there was nothing but the bare buildings to receive her. The first patient brought to her was a cow needing obstetric attention. She attended to the cow. A few days later another cow was brought to her with a similar ailment. Dr. Curr having attended to the cow, thought it expedient to tell the people she had come to treat women and not cows. They seemed to appreciate her skill, and before long she was kept fully occupied with professional work".

It took some time to break down superstitious prejudices, and it was no easy matter to get the patients to enter the Hospital or send for the doctor at the proper time. It was hours or days after all other methods had failed that they would think of sending for the Doctor — often too late. Nothing succeeds like success, and gradually people seeing and hearing of the work and success of the "Doctor Amma" began to have confidence in her. Work began to increase steadily in the hospital, and there were calls in private houses in the villages. The doctor with a nurse had to go to distant villages in a bullock bandy or in a conveyance drawn by men, and later in a horse carriage.

Besides taking up all medical and surgical cases, doing many major as well as minor operations, Dr. Curr made gynaecology and maternity work her chief subjects, and worked hard to encourage patients to come in for ante-natal examination, and later enter hospital for confinement. In one of her reports Dr. Curr says:

"One great prejudice is being broken down in that many women are ready to stay in the Hospital, and even come here for the confinements, while others are brought here soon after confinement, either ordered by a doctor or, as is often the case, suffering from puerperal fever, generally the result of the interference of ignorant and dirty midwives. The Tamil custom used to be that women could not leave the house at such times, and not until a whole month after the confinement could they leave the small dirty hut put up at a little distance from the ordinary dwelling place of the family. While many of the people resort to native treatment at first, they bring the patient to us after she is in an almost hopeless condition, and in some cases too iate for any help to be given. Yet there are many who come to the Mission Hospital at the beginning of the disease and thus give us a better chance to afford relief and healing to the patient."

· .The following story illustrates the up-hill work Dr. Curr had to do in those pioneer days. Near the Uduvil Mission house a woman was in labour and suffered unspeakable agony for two days. Although Inuvil was only a mile distant

the relations would not send for the lady Doctor, but resorted to charms, and invoked their tutelary deities. The wretched mid-wife pronounced the case hopeless. When the Pastor of the Church heard about it, he went to Dr. Curr and invited her to take up the case. When she arrived, she saw the relations frantic with sorrow. The Doctor quieted them and proceeded to do her work. The father was raving mad and began to abuse the Doctor, and he would have prevented the Doctor from helping the poor woman, had not some people taken him away forcibly. Dr. Curr worked for three hours, and a beautiful boy was born without any harm either to the mother or the baby. The mad father ceased to rave and fell at the feet of Dr. Curr calling her Siva himself. Instances like this increased the confidence of the people in Dr. Curr.

Dr. Curr records in her diary another interesting case. She was invited to see a Mahommedan woman who had been in labour for three days.

"On arriving, there were 15 women in the small room. It was a dirty-looking, small, dark room, more like a den. No light except what peeped in at the cracks in roof and walls with a small doorway. Delivered her and advised her to bring patient to the hospital for after treatment. In the evening I was delighted to see that they brought the woman about 10 P. M. This is the first Mohammedan woman to come into the Hospital to stay." This instance shows how

The Old Maternity Ward (Early days)



even the prejudices of Mohammedan women, who kept strict purdah, began to be broken down.

The following account written by Dr. de Livera will give the reader an idea of Dr. Curr's daily life:—

"Punctuality was the keynote in the life of Dr. Curr. Early breakfast was served in our rooms. Ward rounds commenced at 7 o'clock; out-patients at 10 o'clock; lunch at 12 noon. Then we rested and read or studied. Tea at 3 P. M.; ward rounds immediately afterwards. Calls to patients' houses from 5 to 7; dinner at 7. Then prayers for the staff, and we read and studied until 9 or later in our rooms. Eut in between the regular routine were the emergency calls to Hospital or out to the villages. Village calls were made in the pony trap drawn by a Delft and driven by the charioteer, Iayakutty. The trap would go rattling down the road at full gallop until the road ended. Then a slow march through a palmyrah grove until the pathway closed. Here, if the way was short, one walked, or else a bullock cart was provided to complete the journey. Just as in district work in England, a staff nurse always accompanied the Doctor. All the nurses had been trained by Dr. Curr and I found the staff nurses invaluable. One must bend low to enter the village homes. The patient usually occupies the smallest outhouse, so that having bent in two to enter the doorway, one finds it necessary to keep bending. Once Muttupillai, the staff nurse, had a patient carried into a moveable cattle shelter which she screened around with cloths improvising an operating theatre in the wilderness. Scarcely a night passed without an emergency call to a difficult labour case.

"One scarcely realised how late Dr. Curr sat up with her correspondence. All the buildings and equipment of the Hospital depended on subscriptions and donations. Hence Dr. Curr was always busy writing letters, thanking people for donations, answering enquiries, and in general keeping things going."

CHAPTER VI.

EARLY DEVELOPMENT

One of the conditions laid down when the A. B. C. F. M. accepted the Hospital was that it should be self-supporting. Accordingly, from the beginning Dr. Curr tried to make the Hospital stand on its own legs. Poor patients had everything free, but those who could afford to pay were charged small amounts, Dispensary patients paying 25 cts. as entrance fee, as well as a moderate charge for medicines. Those staying in the Hospital had to pay a small rent up to 50 cts., if they could afford it. A fee was also charged for operations according to their nature, except in the case of the poor. As to visits, Rs. 5 was charged for first visits, and Rs. 2.50 for subsequent ones.

Seeing and hearing of the valuable and noble services rendered by Dr. Curr, friends in Ceylon and abroad began to help with small donations, supporting beds, endowing them, etc. The four maternity rooms, which had only cadjan roofs, were tiled by a kind gentleman in Jaffna. A characteristic feature of the McLeod Hospital is the provision of kitchens for the use of private patients; for the Jaffna people prefer to do their cooking themselves. The provision made for pa-

tients to have their cooking done by their own people is a great attraction to many even from distant parts of Ceylon. A friend in England offered £ 100 for the building of kitchens if a like sum was raised in Jaffna. Accordingly, Rs. 1,500 was raised in Jaffna.

Although Dr. Curr had to begin her work under very unfavourable circumstances, once the work was set agoing the progress was rapid. One lady who was interested in the progress of the Hospital from the first said: "It is marvellous to see the difference made in the use of it during the years since it was opened. Its influence is far reaching and it is used by all classes of women from almost every part of Ceylon".

The following testimonies from Hindus and Christians will show how rapidly the Hospital gained the confidence of the people during the first years of its development.

The "Christian Patriot" in its issue of 17th September 1904 wrote among other things:

"The Lady Doctor in charge is Miss Isabella H. Curr, L. R. C. P. & S. Ed., who is a valuable acquisition to the Hospital. She takes a deep interest in the patients and her kind words and sympathy make a favourable impression on them. Her courteous conduct towards all alike, her readiness at all times to respond to calls for medical aid and her skill in the art of healing, all combine to render her admirably suited to the position she occupies. Her name has become a household word in Jaffna, so much so that many

people go to the Hospital as to a home to meet their mother.

A correspondent sent the following letter to the *Ceylon Observer* of 22, Nov. 1907 in which he spoke appreciatively of the Hospital, and appealed to the Government and the public for help in building a Maternity Ward:—

"The McLeod Hospital which is situated at Inuvil, on the Jaffna-Kankesanturai road, about midway between the two places, supplies a very great need in Jaffna, being the only one in the Peninsula that is intended exclusively for the treatment of females. It is under the charge of a qualified lady Doctor assisted by a staff of female nurses. The customs and manners of the women of Jaffna endow them with a great aversion to take treatment from male doctors. The starting of a Hospital, therefore, solely for females about 12 years ago was welcomed. The Hospital has been availed of to a very large extent. The building itself stands on an excellent site and is furnished with all that is requisite to make the Hospital complete and to render it comfortable and attractive to patients. The Doctor in charge, Miss Isbella H. Curr, L. R. C. P. & S., is amiable and obliging to the public, kind, sympathetic and attentive to the patients, and is withal a clever Physician and a skilful Surgeon. She is assisted by a staff of competent nurses (one of whom is a European) and a good Dispenser, All these circumstances have combined to inspire the people with confidence. It is, therefore, highly gratifying to find that the usefulness of the

Hospital, large as it already is, is still fur-ther to be increased, and that steps are being taken to enlarge the Maternity Ward by the addition of a number of rooms to it. It is estimated that a sum of Rs. 10,000 will be required to put up these rooms, and Dr. Curr is now soliciting subscriptions towards this good object. The ready response already given by many bears eloquent testimony to the usefulness of the Hospital and the popularity of the good Doctor and her staff. A good portion of the required sum, however, has yet to be collected. It is my humble opinion that the Government should help and encourage the Hospital and recognise the highly useful service it is rendering to the public by making an annual grant to it. Or at least, by voting a sum to meet the whole or a portion of the cost of erection of the new rooms proposed. It is a case deserving of the consideration of the Government."

The following are extracts from the "Occasional Letter" of the Misses Leitch published in 1904:—

"The following testimony has been given by a Tamil gentleman, Mr. R. Mylvaganam, Proctor of the Supreme Court, himself a Hindu:—

'As one representing the Hindu community in Jaffna, I have no hesitation in testifying to the fact that the two Hospitals are doing their work wonderfully well, and the Medical Mission in Jaffna is a great success. We, the Jaffnese, are indeed under great obligation, and we owe a deep debt of gratitude to the people of America, for their liberality and generosity and the good



Group of an early Staff 1908 Mr. Lyman is seen standing-right



feelings they have toward us, in spending so much money, time, and labour to relieve the bodily sufferings of the Jaffna population. Then the question naturally arises. Do the people of Jaffna really appreciate the labours of the Medical Mission in Jaffna, and do they avail themselves of the services of the lady Doctor now in charge of the hospitals at Inuvil and Manipay? Every one in Jaffna, whether old or young, man or woman, boy or girl, ignorant or intelligent, with one voice, will answer the question in the affirmative. I have had indeed ample opportunities of personally observing the nature of the medical work carried on in Inuvil Hospital, and am very bold to say that every morning on my way to the Jaffna District Court, on professional duties, it is a source of great pleasure and satisfaction for me to see the number of horse carriages in which the ladies in the higher walks of life resort to the Hospital, and the number of bullock carts in which the people in the ordinary walks of life go to the Hospital to secure the very valuable services of Dr. Isabella H. Curr."

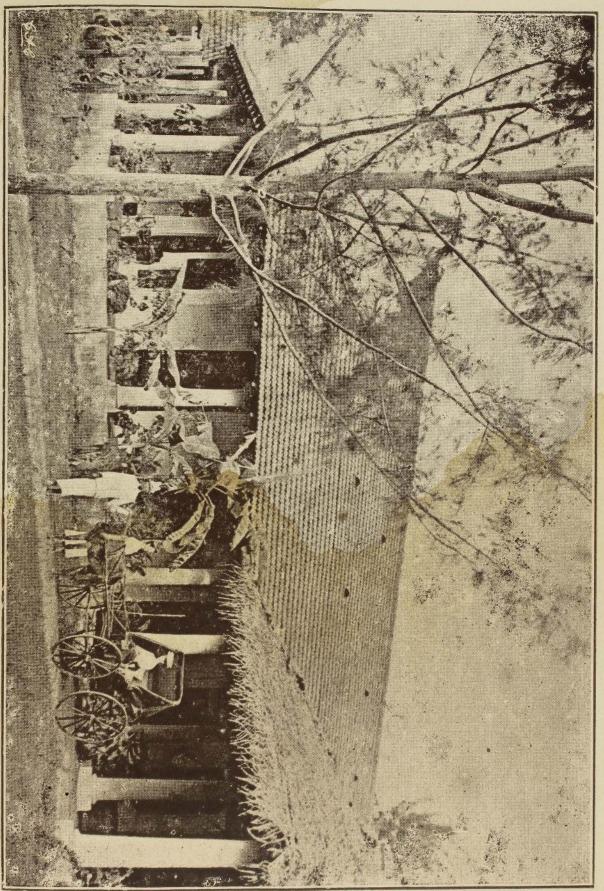
The following is from Mr. (now Dr.) Isaac Tambyah, Advocate:—

"The American Mission is doing a deal of good to the people of Jaffna, but its ministry of healing appeals to the people most effectually. They have learned to associate the good work done at the Inuvil and Manipay Hospitals with the progress of Christianity in the country, and the large measure of non-Christian sympathy with the two Hospitals, especially the one at

Inuvil, is telling testimony to the practical inability of Hinduism to deal with human suffering. "What strikes Christian and non-Christian alike, more than any other things about Inuvil, is the intensely Christian atmosphere pervading it. Hindus of all grades of faith and feeling, including Brahmin women, are compelled to admit that Inuvil is essentially a Christian place. Less than this it is not. From the purely secular point of view, the Medical Mission in Jaffna is a success. The Friend-in-need Society Hospital in Town is under Government patronage, but the American Medical Mission Hospitals are under public patronage. People from remote corners of Jaffna resort to Inuvil with their sick ones and go back thence praising God. The work is so well and successfully done at Inuvil that, with the Hospital's increasing importance and indispensa. bleness, increased accommodation is needed. May God bless the Medical Mission'."

Mr. T. C. Changarapillai. J. P. and Crown Proctor, wrote:—

"I believe that the Hospital for Women, and Children at Inuvil is a great blessing to the people of Jaffna. I have had frequent occasions to resort to this Hospital for the medical treatment of my friends, relations, and myself, and I have pleasure in testifying that the patients received kind attention, skilful doctoring, good nursing and speedy cure. The charges were very light. Women and children, and in some cases men, of all classes and creeds without any distinction, received prompt





attention. The religious addresses given to them were very edifying. From my own observation and experience, ever since the Hospital was opened, I have no hesitation in declaring that it is a source of very great usefulness in relieving suffering humanity.

"The institution is rendering so great a good to the people of Jaffna, and occasionally of other parts of Ceylon, as to be a sine qua non for the welfare of the people of Jaffna. Likewise, the Hospital and Dispensary for men at Manipay is doing eminent work. For establishing and conducting both these Hospitals, the thanks of the general public of Jaffna are due, in the first place, to the Lord and Master of the Missions, and, in the second place, to Misses Leitch - Missionaries who felt the need of these two institutions and founded and supported them at a great expense, trouble, and personal sacrifice. The Hospitals are now under the management of the American Mission in Ceylon. It is to be greatly desired that the management of them should be in the hands of a committee composed of the missionaries and some leading native Christian gentlemen.

"The Government of Ceylon should be solicited to give a subsidy to the establishment. During the time of the late Dr. S. F. Green in Jaffna, the Government, being thoroughly convinced of the great usefulness of the Mission Medical Department, granted to the Mission an annual subsidy of Rs. 2,000, but it ceased from about the year of 1875, as no successor to Dr.

Green was sent from America to Ceylon. I am sure that the Government will not be backward to grant a subsidy, if proper representation be made."

CHAPTER VII.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS: 1898-1924

In this chapter we record a few events and facts gleaned from the Reports issued yearly to show the development of the Hospital till the Silver Jubilee celebrations in 1924:—

1898. Miss Hettie Keyt, who was Resident Physician in the Women's Hospital in Colombo, came in December to assist Dr. Curr who had been working single-handed.

1899, Dr. Annie Young, a graduate of the Women's Medical College, Philadelphia, came from America in December as Dr. Curr's colleague, and received a hearty welcome. Miss Keyt left after a year's useful service to be married.

1900. In September a Branch Dispensary was opened at Chavakachcheri.

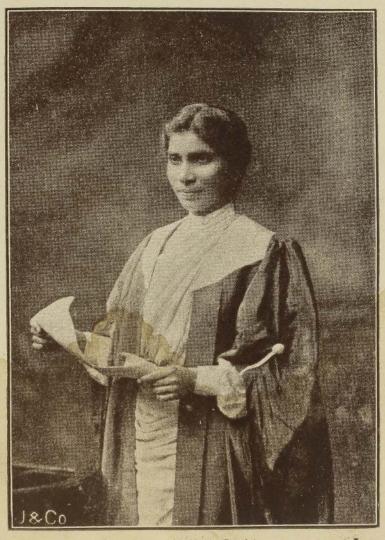
1901. A Deputation from the American Board visited the Hospital. It was noteworthy that there were 10 European in-patients in the Hospital.

1902. In December Dr. and Mrs. Scott went to America on furlough, and Dr. Curr had the supervision of the General Medical Mission and visited the Manipay Hospital two or three times a week. Dr. Young was away in India till about the close of the year, and so Dr. Curr had to work single-handed with the additional burden of Manipay. Dr. Young left soon after owing to ill health.

1909. The increase of patients necessitated a request for a larger maternity ward, and permission was granted by the Mission to build one. Mrs. Rockwood, a Tamil lady of Colombo, gave a generous donation of Rs. 1,500 to build two rooms to be named "Mrs. Rockwood" and "Mrs. Homer" Wards. Mrs. McLeod of England sent £50, which was utilised for another room. Another room was promised by Mr. Wm. Mather to be named "Mrs. Mather Ward". Mr. C. Gnanasegaram of Colombo gave Rs. 500 for a ward to be named after his father. Besides these, three other friends promised each a room.

1911. The Maternity Block was opened on November 9th, 1911 by Miss Lawson, Secretary of the Women's Board, who along with Miss Day was paying a visit to the Mission at the time. Sir William Twynam, K. C. M. G., the veteran "Rajah of the North," presided on the occasion and gave his reminiscences contrasting conditions then with those of fifty years before. The cost of this new Block of eight rooms and kitchens was over Rs. 16,000.

A very encouraging event of the year was the addition to the staff in June of another lady Doctor, Dr. Nallamma Murugasan. The appointment was especially gratifying as Dr. Murugasan was a Tamil



Dr. Nallamma Murugesan Sathiawageswara Iyer, L. R. C. P. & S.



lady—the first one to receive a medical degree. She had qualified herself by a study at Edinburgh and Dublin, receiving the degrees, L. R. C. P. & S. and L. Midwifery.

Another of the visitors during the year was Dr. Patton, Secretary of the American Board, who called the Hospital "a great and beautiful work."

Still another visitor was H. E. Sir, Hugh Clifford, the Acting Governor of Ceylon. He went over the Hospital very carefully and seemed interested in all he saw.

The following was the testimony of Miss Lawson and Miss Day: "We have inspected the Hospital buildings under Dr. Curr's guidance with great interest and satisfaction, The efficient care, the kindly spirit, and the strong Christian influence have led us to much rejoicing in the help that is here extended to suffering women in this Island."

1913. At a public meeting held in the Ridgeway Hall, Jaffna, for the purpose of discussing what form the "Freeman Memorial" should take, it was unanimously decided that the Memorial should be a ward for the poor to be attached the McLeod Hospital, Inuvil. It may be explained that Mr. Freeman had been the Government Agent of Jaffna. He is hailed as the friend of the poor, and is still going strong as a Member of the State Council.

1916. After five years of faithful service Dr. Nallamma Murugasan left to become Mrs. Sati-

yavagisvarar. She is carrying on still her medical work in Colombo, and is connected with a number of movements organised for the welfare of women. She was succeeded by Miss Mary de Livera as Assistant Physician for three years.

During this year the first Nursing Superintendent, Miss Elizabeth I. Hansen of Lowell Mass, U. S. A. arrived.

American Ceylon Mission, and a new building called the "Centennial Cottage" was opened. The Rev. J. H. Dickson who presided on the occasion pointed out the striking progress made by the Hospital during these years. The growth had been over 300% and the original 10 acres had been enlarged into 15 acres. The pressing problem was to find room for the patients who sought admission to the Hospital in constantly growing numbers. Mrs. F. H. Warner, one of the visitors from America, declared the Cottage open. It contained four large rooms with two bath rooms, and four large kitchens.

Dr. Curr named the Medical and Surgical Wards the "Mary Leitch and Margaret Leitch Wards" in memory of the founders of the Hospital.

1918. The salient feature of the year was the opening on Christmas Day of a new ward called the "Somerville Ward" after Mr. and Mrs. Robert Somerville of Dalkeith, Scotland, who had been staunch friends of the Hospital ever since its inception. It contained 8 large rooms, kitchens,

and a sanitary block The Ceylon Government gave a grant of Rs. 8,250, half the amount required for these buildings.

The year 1918 will be remembered as the great influenza year, and the Hospital rendered yeoman service during the epidemic. There was an abnornal increase of patients, and the daily calls were numerous.

1919 proved to be a strenuous year, as Dr. Livera resigned on account of her health, and Dr. Curr had to work with the help of the Nursing Superintendent only. After 9 months, however, the Hospital received an addition in the person of Dr. Hannah Williams, a Jaffna Tamil lady, who had been trained in Madras and also had a year's experience in Singapore, working in the Church of England Mission Hospital there. She is still on the staff doing excellent work.

The Freeman Memorial Ward consisting of 12 rooms was opened during this year.

1922. Another cottage, built on the samemodel as the Centennial Cottage was opened during this year in June. Miss Twynam allowed the Cottage to be called "Twynam Cottage" in memory of her father, Sir William Twynam, who had been so generous a friend of the Hospital. During a part of this year and 1923 Dr. Curr was on furlough in her homeland. During this year Dr. Rider and Dr. Williams carried on the work of the Hospital satisfactorily.

1923. Dr. Curr returned to her "loved work," and a hearty welcome was accorded to Miss Louisa Stenborn who arrived from England to join the staff on the 7th November as Nursing Superintendent.

The Silver Jubilee celebrations of the Hospital should have been held during the year, but it was decided to wait until the new building was finished, when both events could be celebrated at the same time.

1924. During this year the 25th Anniversary of the Hospital and the opening of the Nurses' Home extension took place on the 24th September. Rev. J. H. Dickson who presided on the occasion, in his review of the work during the quarter century of the Hospital's existence, pointed out how originally there had been only 40 Beds, whereas during that time there was provision for 100 and more. Mr. Dickson related some interesting facts and figures:

"Much more than 75,000 women have been treated in the Dispensary. There were nearly 150,000 dispensary treatments. More than 37,000 women have been in-patients in this Hospital. More than 8,000 children have been brought into the world through the instrumentality of this Hospital. In 20 years dispensary patients have increased by 434 per cent. In 20 years hospital patients have increased by 487 per cent. In 20 years maternity cases have increased by 1,080 per cent, In 20 years Nurses in training increased by 325 per cent. Well

The New Maternity Ward



over one lakh of rupees (Rs. 1,00,000) has been raised in Ceylon and at Home by the Doctor in charge for new buildings and land."

The Nurses' Home extension with a new box room and sanitary block cost nearly Rs. 30, 000, towards which Government very generously contributed Rs. 12, 500. The new building was a substantial two storeyed structure with accommodation for 36 nurses having a large dormitory, matron's room, and a class room down stairs, and small rooms upstairs for senior nurses, one bed room for night nurses, a sitting room, and a spacious verandah. The new building was opened by Lady Bertram, the wife of the Chief Justice of Ceylon.

During this year Dr. Mary Kurien, a Syrian Christian from Travancore, was added to the Hospital staff. She was a graduate of Vellore Medical College, She is still an efficient member of the staff.

The series of talks on child and maternal welfare given by Miss Stenborn to large audiences at Chavagachcheri and Nunavil was evidence that the work of the Hospital overflowed beyond its walls.

CHAPTER VIII.

EVENTS: 1925 — 1938.

In January 1925 the Hospital was favoured with a visit from Mr, and Mrs. Frank Gaylord Cook who came to Jaffna as representatives from the American Board to attend the Centenary celebrations of the Uduvil Girls' School. During their visit the William Mather Memorial Chapel in the Hospital premises was opened. This beautiful chapel was entirely built by Mr. Alfred Mather who gave both money and energy for its construction in memory of his saintly father.

In June the Hospital was visited by H. E. the Hon. Cecil Clementi, the Acting Governor, and Mrs. Clementi, who were very much interested in the work of the institution and wrote their appreciation in the Visitors' Book.

The Medical Department recognised the Nurses' Training Home as a centre for training maternity nurses.

Dr. Williams left for Calcutta during the year to take up special study in the Tropical School of Medicine there, and Miss Selvam Peters was lent by Dr. Scudder of Vellore to help the Hospital for a few months.

The Assistant Doctors' new bungalow was completed in October. In December the Hospital

was visited by the famous American preacher and author, Dr. Jefferson, and Mrs. Jefferson.

It was during this year that Dr. Curr and Miss Stenborn were able to fulfil the long standing invitations to visit Malaya. Their visit in March was more like a triumphal tour, and they were welcomed with open arms everywhere by the Tamil community resident there. Some of the places visited by them were: Singapore, Penang, Malacca, Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh, Klang, Port-Swettenham, Kuala Selangor, Kajang, Kuala-Kangsar, Padang, Rengas, Kuala Pilah, Tampin, and Port Dickson. The visitors were given generous subscriptions, paid and promised.

Early in 1926 the Hospital had the privilege of a visit from a Deputation of the American Board consisting of Dr. Potter, Dr. and Mrs. Strong, Miss Welcher, and Mrs. Decatur. In June the Hospital was honoured with a visit from H. E. Sir Hugh Clifford, Governor of Ceylon. He showed much interest in everything.

Dr. Williams returned from her studies in Calcutta. The staff of the Hospital received an addition in the person of Dr. Kanagam Curtis, who joined the staff in December. She is a daughter of the late Dr. Curtis of the Manipay Hospital, and now the wife of Dr. Buell of the same Hospital.

The chief event of the Hospital during the year was the installation of an Electric plant. The Hospital was indebted much to Rev. J. H.

Dickson (formerly of Jaffna) who made the plans, and came to Jaffna a number of times to supervise the installation of both Electric lighting and a water system for the Hospital. The Electric plant cost over Rs. 30,000 of which Rs. 12,500 was given by the Ceylon Government, and the rest was met by Jaffnese and other friends in the F. M. S.

Among other gifts were Rs. 1,000 by Mr. G. Philipiah, and Rs. 750 from Mrs. Ramalingam. Several Colombo friends raised Rs. 568 by organising a concert.

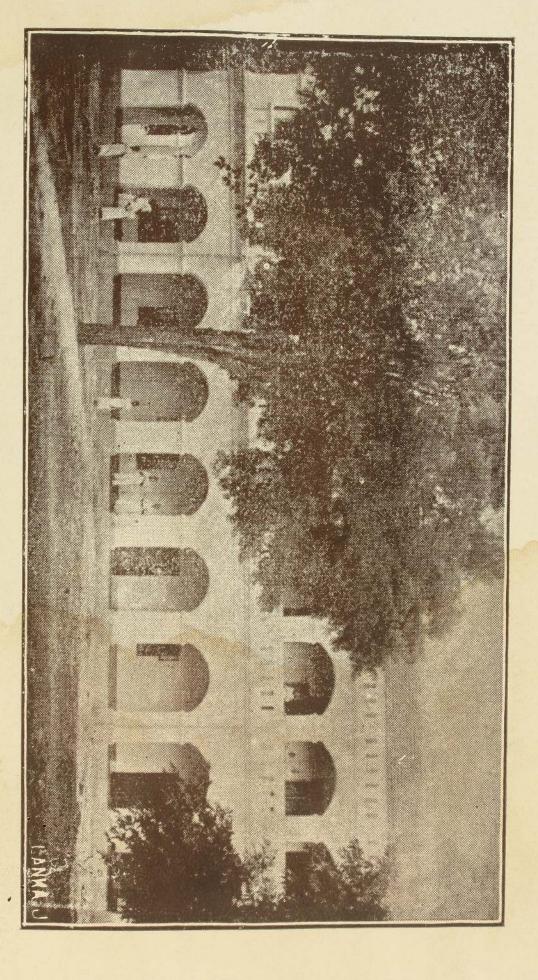
In 1927 Miss P. I. Reid, s. R. A. took the place of Miss L. M. Stenborn as Nursing Super-intendent.

In December the Hospital was honoured with the visit of Sir Herbert Stanley, Governor of Ceylon, and Lady Stanley, who spent over an hour in going round and were keenly interested in everything, especially in the patients, with several of whom they conversed. H. E. very kindly laid the corner-stone of the new operating and surgical block then under construction.

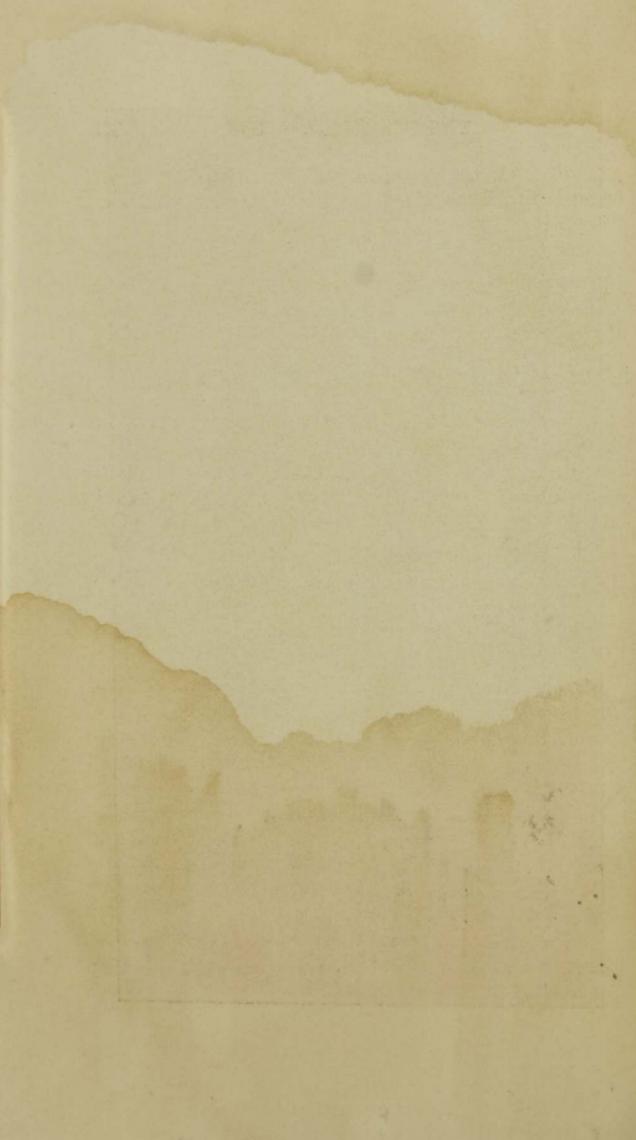
Mrs. Somasundram, a member of the Ceylon Tamil Women's Union, endowed a bed.

There were many distinguished visitors during the year, among whom were Sir James and Lady Lochore, Mr. Justice and Mrs. Lyall Grant, and Mrs. Gandhi, wife of Mahatma Gandhi.

A new cottage named 'Malaya Cottage' for private patients was opened in June.



The Maud and Alice Nurses' Training Home



In 1928 an extension of the Freeman Ward was finished, and a Telephone service was installed.

Besides other smaller gifts, a donation of Rs. 5,000 was given by Dr. W. A. Rogers for a cottage to be built in memory of his mother.

In February 1929 Miss Emerson and Miss Seabury, Secretaries of the American Board, visited the Hospital and were pleased with the work.

In March Miss Reid, the Nursing Superintendent, left the Hospital to be married to Mr. Hieb of Jaffna College, and joined the Maratha Mission. Miss Stenborn, who had served three and a half years as Nursing Superintendent previously, rejoined the staff.

Dr. Pakkiam Solomon, a graduate of the Vellore Medical College, and daughter of the late Rev. Solomon of the Wesleyan Mission, joined the staff.

The chief interest of the year was a visit in July of H. E. Sir Herbert Stanley, Governor of Ceylon, and Lady Stanley. The Governor declared open the new Surgical Ward of which he had laid the corner stone at the end of 1927. The building is a two-storeyed one with operating theatre, anaesthetising and sterilizing rooms on the upper floor. The patients' rooms are on the first floor from which the patients are conveyed to the theatre by a lift.

Later in the year Hon. Dr. Bridger, the Director of Medical and Sanitary Services, visited the Hospital.

Another interesting event worthy of notice was the establishment of a Home for orphans.

Perhaps the most interesting event of the year was the conferring on Dr. Curr by His Majesty the King the Membership of the Order of the British Empire in recognition of her services to Ceylon.

In 1930 Miss Susan R. Howland, who had after retirement from the Uduvil Boarding School served the Hospital as Supervisor of the Bible Women for 15 years, left to live with her brother in U. S. A.

Distinguished visitors during the year were, the Hon. Dr. Briercliffe, the Director of Medical and Sanitary Services, Bishop Abraham of Mar Thoma Syrian Church, and Dr. and Mrs. Irving Wood, former Missionaries in Ceylon.

Dr. Curr was on furlough during 1931 and part of 1932, and Mrs. Dr. Nallamma Satiavagisvarar, who had served the Hospital before, took charge of the Hospital from January to October 1932.

In January 1932 Dr. Briercliffe again visited the Hospital, and the Hon. T. B. Panabokke, Minister of Health, visited it in April. Dr. H. M. Leembruggen, the Acting D. M. and S. S., visited the Hospital in July. Hon. Mr. Peri Sundram, Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce, visited the Hospital in August. H. E. the Governor, Sir Graeme and Lady Thompson visited the Hospital, went round all the buildings, and showed much interest

in the work especially in the new Operating Theatre and Surgical Block.

During 1933 the Hospital had several distinguished visitors, among whom were Bishop Pakenham-Walsh of Calcutta, and Hon. Sir. Graeme Tyrrell, Acting Governor.

In 1934 a new Delivery Room for private patients was completed and equipped. The building was made possible by a kind and generous gift from Dr. Subramaniam, the popular retired Provincial Surgeon, who helped the Hospital from time to time professionally.

In January 1935 Dr. Jayawardene, a Sinhalese lady, left the Hospital after a few months service.

Governor and Lady Stubbs visited the Hospital after an interval of 22 years.

Another visitor was Dr. F. F. Goodsell, Executive Vice-President of the A. B. C. F. M.

In January 1933, Mr. A. Lyman, the Dispenser, retired after a long and faithful service of 38 years. He joined the staff at the very inception of the Hospital. To him Dr. Curr pays the following tribute:

"Mr. Lyman, the Dispenser, retired at the end of Jan. 1936 owing to health reasons after a long and faithful service of 38 years rendered to the Hospital. He joined the staff in 1898 soon after the Hospital was opened and has spent his life in loving devotion to the Hospital

and to the Mission helping us through days of struggle and difficulty in making the Hospital what it is today. We thank God for such a faithful fellow-labourer all these years, and pray that he may be spared for many more years to enjoy a well earned rest and happiness with his family at home."

Dr. White and Dr. Clark, Secretaries of the American Board, with their wives visited the Hospital. Dr. Clark opened a bed for poor patients endowed by Mrs. Tirunavukarasu in memory of her parents, Dr. and Mrs Rockwood.

Another visitor was Hon. W. A. de Silva, Minister of Health.

An important event of the year was the starting of a Clinic for Moslem women and children in Moor Street in July, in co-operation with the Jaffna Women's Health League. Every Friday evening a Doctor and two nurses took part in the work.

The Hostel for the accommodation of the male relatives of patients coming from long distances, with three rooms and a large hall was opened in January 1937. We do not know of any other hospital in Ceylon where such accommodation is provided.

A new electrical engine (36 H. P.) was erected, and extension to the Power house was completed at a cost of Rs. 10, 500. The old engine and generators were sold, and with the help of a donation from the Sri Chandrasekara fund the large bill for the electric plant was settled.

The year 1938 was the 40th anniversary of the Mc Leod Hospital. Miss Stenborn who had been the Nursing Superintendent for a number of years left for England in August, and was succeeded by Miss T. Daniel. This is a noteworthy event, as Miss Daniel is the first Jaffna Tamil lady who has taken her C. M. B. Diploma in England.

During the year a Bed in memory of Miss Susan Howland for poor patients was completed. The friends of Miss Howland in Ceylon contributed towards it Rs. 3, 000, and the balance was given by her brother, Dr. John Howland of California.

The most noteworthy event of the year was the retirement at the beginning of December of the one who was practically the creator of the Hospital, and its life and soul. In recognition of her services to Ceylon His Majesty the King conferred on Dr. Curr the title of Officer of the Order of the British Empire, a step higher than the M. B. E. she had received earlier.

A new bungalow for the Assistant Doctors, a new kitchen and store room, and an extension of the dining room of the nurses were finished during the year.

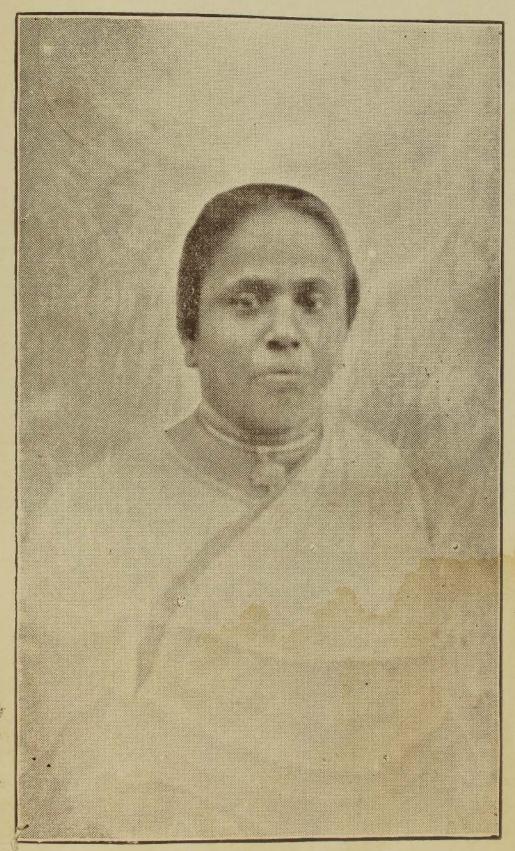
The Hospital was visited during the year by distinguished persons, notably by His Excellency the Governor, Sir Andrew Caldecott, and Lady Caldecott.

CHAPTER IX.

SISTERS OF MERCY.

We have seen that Dr. Curr, when she began her work was Doctor, Nurse, and Director. She performed still another function: she was a Teacher. The training of nurses presented an initial difficulty: nurses had to be "caught". The work of a nurse was then thought to be a menial and repugnant task, and in cases of confinement one that was relegated to members of the lowest castes. This idea was not peculiar to this country. Time was when in the West too this work was looked at askance, till Florence Nightingale by her noble example put it on a high pedestal. Now ladies of lordly families, even of royal families, take to it with pleasure. Dr. Curr gradually overcame this prejudice, and made people realise the usefulness and nobility of the profession.

Special mention must be made of the pioneer in this line of work. Miss Muttupillai Karthigesu of Uduvil, who set at defiance traditional prejudices and objections by relatives, and boldly offered her services to Dr. Curr. The ice was broken. The second to join in this work was Miss Susan Thankammah Howland. A third one was a widow, the daughter of a revered Pastor



Nurse Muthupillai



of the American Mission, who acted as a matron and nurse. Thus was laid the foundation of the present flourishing Nurses' Training Home. Later in 1898 one other girl joined the class, and in 1899 the number increased to seven. Dr. Curr took regular classes with these, giving lectures on Midwifery and Nursing, besides giving practical training by making them attend on patients. The first girl to graduate was Miss Muttupillai. About the middle of 1900 three more girls graduated, thus relieving the Doctor of a great deal of strain. It must be noted that the training given included preparation for evangelical work.

The work of the nurses was not confined to the Hospital. People began to appreciate their services and numerous calls came from well-to-do families, and their services were lent to them. Reports were sent, both by Europeans and Ceylonese, extolling the efficient service rendered by the nurses. Nor did they confine their help to the rich only; they cheerfully helped the poor and people of the lower castes.

In 1903 the Head Nurse, Miss Muttupillay, went to the Maternity Home in Colombo and obtained the Government Diploma in Midwifery. Two others went to Colombo the next year and obtained the same qualification.

It was a great handicap that there was not available in the pioneer days a well-qualified Nursing Superintendent. In 1907 the Hospital rejoiced in welcoming Miss Scott Patten who was

trained in a London Hospital. But she remained only two years, and the Hospital had to go on for some more years without a Nursing Superintendent.

The numbers in the Nurses' class began to steadily increase, and girls from the various Missions, and of different races: Tamils, Sinhalese, and Burghers, came for training. In 1914 there were 17 girls in the Nurses' class besides Senior Nurses and five Probationers. In 1916 there were £24 in the Nurses' Home.

During that year Miss Hansen arrived to serve as Nursing Superintendent to the great relief of Dr. Curr.

Dr. Curr's nurses were sought after even outside the Peninsula. In 1919 one was called to the Ladies' College, Colombo, and another to Hillwood School, Kandy.

In 1922 the Hospital suffered a very severe loss. The pioneer nurse, Miss Muttupillay, passed away after being bed-ridden for nearly a year. She had been the right hand of Dr. Curr, and did splendid work as Nurse, Dispenser and Evangelist for about quarter of a century. This was what Dr. Curr wrote about her:

"One familiar face we miss is that of dear Muttupillai, one of our senior nurses, and the first who joined the class at the beginning of the Hospital in 1898. She was a faithful and devoted worker all these years and had won the





confidence of the Tamil ladies so that many would ask for the services of Miss Muttupillay during their confinements, if the Doctor was unable to attend. She has also done much to raise the nursing profession in Jaffna to what it is today, and has really given her life for her country women. So keen was she on her work, and so loyal to the Hospital that she refused several offers of marriage and other easier and more lucrative positions, and devoted her life, often by night as well as by day, to the cause of her Master whom she loved and served. 'Well done' is surely hers."

The home in which the nurses were housed was called the "Maud and Alice Home" in memory of two nieces of the McLeods, the founders of the Hospital. With the great increase in the number of the nurses it was found necessary to enlarge the Home. So Dr. Curr planned to build an upper storey, the estimate for which was Rs. 24,000. Dr. Curr was greatly encouraged in this project by the public, and the work was begun in 1922. During the time the upper storey was being built the nurses had to occupy one of the Hospital wards. The extension was finished in September 1924, and it was opened by Lady Bertram, wife of Sir Anton Bertram, Chief Justice of Ceylon. Her address was as follows:—

[&]quot;It is a great pleasure to me to be here today on this happy occasion. Though, it is true, it is a long way from Colombo to Jaffna, I felt I could not refuse, when Dr.

Curr asked me to come and open the Nurses' Home, I know how this scheme has been cherished by Dr. Curr, how she has longed that her nurses should be comfortably housed. Ever since I visited Jaffna and made the acquaintance of the Hospital staff it has subject of earnest discussion. I have been greatly interested in McLeod Hospital and especially interested in the training of these young Tamil women as hospital nurses. They seem to me wonderfully adapted for this womanly profession. They possess two qualities which I think we all appreciate in a sick nurse: gentleness and quietness. In addition to this, their charming costume, which, though it may not be quite business-like as the costume of their Western sisters, is certainly much more picturesque. And nowadays we all know what a help it is to a good recovery to have pretty things around us. I have often heard what a keen interest Tamil girls take in their training touching story of Nurse Muttupillay, who was one of the original nurses, joining the Training class in 1898, proves how true this is. There are many here present today who know how she loved and adorned her profession, how she raised the whole standard of nursing in Jaffna, and especially showed to those Tamil ladies who sought her services, that the nursing profession is a very high and womanly one. We should pause for a moment in memory her, one of the Senior Sisters of this Hospital, who, in devotion to this profession she loved; refused not only lucrative positions, but severa

offers of marriage. Indeed, as one gets to know the inner life of the McLeod Hospital, the training of its nurses, the work of the Bible Women in the villages, not to speak of the actual work in the wards, one feels that a charming book might be written of the life stories of those who organise and carry on these things. The lives of women like Dr. Curr and Miss Howland fill us with reverence and wonder. I know that the opening of the Nurses' quarters is a great joy to them. Nothing can give them such real happiness as to see the fulfilment of a cherished dream. They know that these young women in training need homely, cheerful surroundings, and properly equipped rooms for their rest and recreation, and we believe that they will be all the better nurses for these charming quarters which the energy, faith, and love of Dr. Curr, and her associates have caused to be completed. I am indeed proud to declare the Nurses' Home open."

In 1932 a further extension to the Nurses' Home intended for staff nurses was finished, and was formally opened by Mrs. Dyson, the wife of the Government Agent. This is a very beautiful bungalow with an inner courtyard.

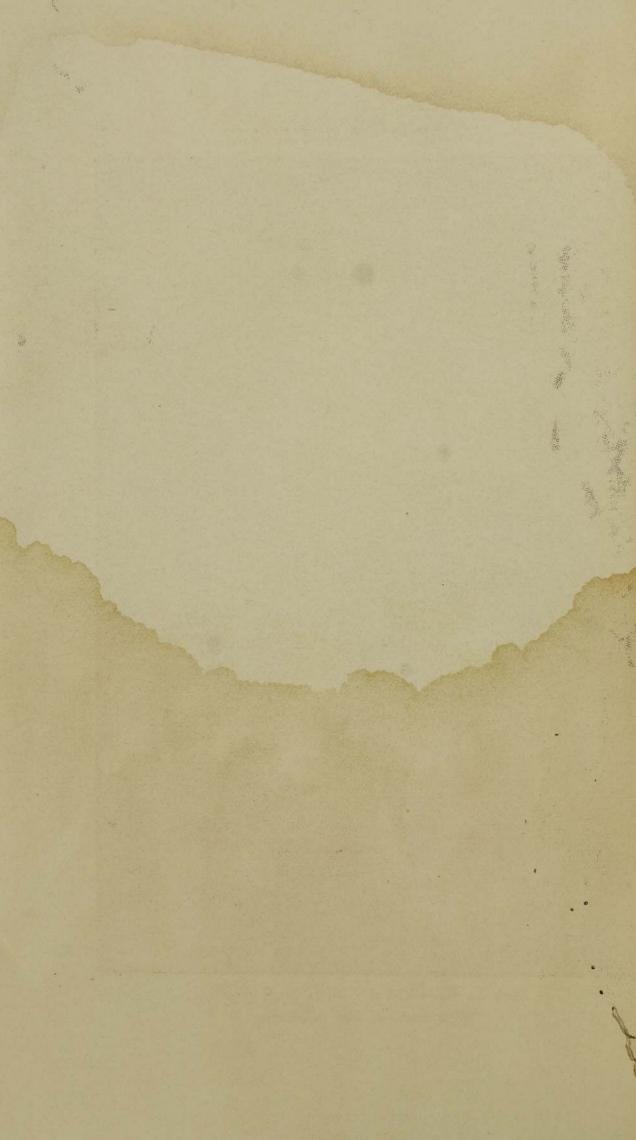
As Miss Hansen, the Nursing Superintendent returned to America in 1921, after an attack of enteric, the Hospital was without a Nursing Superintendent till November 1923, when Miss Louisa Stenbern came from England to take charge of the work. She did splendid work especially

in the training of nurses. The training she gave the nurses was so thorough that the Ceylon Government recognised the institution as a Training School for Maternity Nurses. Up to this time girls had to be sent to Colombo for six months' training in the Maternity Home there, before they were allowed to sit for the Government examination, During Miss Stenborn's first term of service 28 obtained the Diploma, only one out of those sent up having failed. She had to return to England for family reasons and left at the end of March 1927. Miss Stenborn's place was taken by Miss B. I. Reid of Edinburgh, who efficiently kept up the work done by her predecessor. She left in 1929 to be married to Mr. Hieb, an American teacher in Jaffna College.

In 1927 another of the pioneer nurses, Miss Susan Thankamma Howland, left owing to illhealth after serving the Hospital for 30 years. In spite of her suffering for years she did very faithful work, and deserves to be placed in the roll of honour of the Hospital. In 1929 another Senior Nurse who did excellent work, Miss Margaret, who had served 16 years, left to be married. She came back after marriage when the call for help came to her, and worked for a few months till Miss Stenborn returned in 1929. Miss Stenborn was given the assistance of two trained nurses from India: Miss Daniel and Miss Gnanamuttu. In 1930 a sale of work was conducted for establishing a bed for poor patients in memory of the late Pastor Elyatamby, and Rs. 1,360 was realised. It may be said that Pastor



Miss L. M. Stenborn, S. R. N., S. C. M. With two of our Children



Elyatamby was always a tower of strength to Dr. Curr from the very beginning.

An important event during 1932 was the inauguration of a Ranger Company among the nurses with Dr. Solomon as Captain. The object of this movement is to train the members in social service. This company fills the place of the Student "Nurses' Association", which it intends to join later. The Company has taken part in camps, rallies, concerts, and exhibitions in Jaffna and Colombo.

Since Government recognised the Hospital as a Training School for Midwives the work has continued to keep a high level. This may be seen from the fact that as many as 128 have obtained the Diploma for Midwifery, only two having failed out of those presented for the examination. Quite a good number of these passed in the first division. After achieving these splendid results and rendering excellent service to the Hospital in the Nursing Department for 12 years, Miss Stenborn left Ceylon in August 1937 on account of home calls.

A forward step has been taken by the starting in 1938 of a class for the training of young women as children's nurses, and these are gaining experience under the supervision of a Staff Nurse in the ward for Hospital orphans where there are infants from birth up to children under school-going age. This is serving the purpose of replacing ignorant ayahs by intelligent nurses.

The Hospital started with but one untrained nurse. Today there are four Sisters, ten Staff Nurses, seventeen Senior Nurses, fifteen in the Nurses' class, and six in the Nursery Nurses' class. Whereas Dr. Curr had to go out to persuade girls to join as nurses at the outset, there is not room enough now for all those who apply, and a number of them have to be on the "waiting list." Whereas only those who had little education and belonged to poor families joined the rank of nurses, now well educated girls from well-to-do families think it a privilege to join the profession.

Dr. Curr's girls have served not in the Hospital only. Those who can afford it are able to get them in their homes in times of illness. They have gone out to serve in other hospitals, dispensaries, schools, colleges, nursing homes, estates, etc. Equally important is the service of some of them in their own homes. Undoubtedly the nurses that have gone out of the Inuvil Hospital have helped to spread ideas of sanitation and health throughout the Island.

CHAPTER X.

"SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN ... "

One of the most interesting departments at the Inuvil Hospital is the Orphanage. Dr. Curr was a "mother" not only to hundreds of babies that she helped to bring into this world, but was a real mother to a number of them whom she brought up under her immediate supervision. She started having a family of her own when in 1915 she adopted a baby that was left to the care of the Hospital. This little girl was entirely supported by Dr. Curr, and was subsequently sent to the Uduvil Girls' English School, where she was a boarder for a number of years. Then she was trained for social service at the Puttur Training Home. She is now in the Hospital staff as a nurse.

In 1925 two of the babies born in the Hospital were left in the hands of the nurses. They must have assumed this responsibility for humane considerations, but they saw in it a good opportunity to learn practically the proper care of infants. Gradually more babies were entrusted to their care: some who had lost their mothers, and others that were not wanted. Most of them

were looked after till they were able to eat ordinary food, but there were a number of them that could find no home and were left entirely to the care and support of the Hospital. People began to realise the value of such care, and in 1934 there were nine babies entirely belonging to the Hospital, and seventeen motherless little ones to be looked after and returned to their family when they were old enough. Miss Stenborn took a special interest in these babies, looked after their diet, and provided them amusements.

Every year the little ones have had their Christmas Tree. Outsiders too have taken an interest in these littles ones. The Jaffna Ladies' Club organised in 1934 a X'mas party for orphans to which some of the older ones were invited. Mrs. Dyson, the wife of the Government Agent, was particularly interested in the Hospital orphans. She got up a Garden fete in the Old Park for their benefit which was a great success, and a sum of Rs. 600 was realised. This was handed over to the Hospital for a Children's Cot Endowment.

In 1937 the children numbered 30, and 12 of whom entirely belonged to the Hospital. A very notable event took place on Easter Sunday. Ten of these children were baptised in the Hospital Chapel. At present three girls are in the Pt. Pedro Boarding School, one boy is at the Jaffna Central College, and two are attending the Mission Vernacular school. In organising and carrying on this

department at the Hospital, the doctors and nurses are acting in the spirit of the Master who has said, "Suffer little children to come unto me".

CHAPTER XI.

SPREADING THE GOOD NEWS

As noted at the beginning of this book, Dr. Scudder, the first Medical Missionary in the Mission field, was sent with some reluctance, as the prevailing opinion among Mission Boards was that the healing ministry was not within the scope of Christian Missions. Today this ministry holds a conspicuous place in the work of Missions. It is sometimes thought that educational and medical work is undertaken by them with the sole purpose of converting people to the Christian faith, and not with any humanitarian consideration. This is far from the truth. To take the matter of education as an illustration, when the pioneer missionaries established the famous Batticotta Seminary, they enumerated in their prospectus the benefits that were contemplated in the establishment of the Seminary thus:

"Agriculture and mechanic arts will be improved, learning will rise in estimation and gradually obtain a dominion over wealth and caste, the native character will be raised -- "

No doubt they must have realised that the byproduct of evangelisation would result, but their main object was to spread the light of learning in this land. Similarly when medical work was

The Old Preaching Bungalow



undertaken, it was to relieve the pain and misery of suffering humanity. In this work Christians are only following in the footsteps of their Master who went about healing the sick. In His first sermon, which was a sort of manifesto of His ministry. He said in the words of the Prophet:

"He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, the recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised".

In other words, Christ came to emancipate humanity from physical, intellectual, and moral ills.

The charge of proselytism is often flung against Christian institutions. If by proselytism is meant the luring away of a person to an alien religion by improper means, this charge is entirely unfounded. Our Master Himself denounced in scathing terms those Pharisees who "compass sea and land to make one proselyte." But the spreading of 'Good News' is part and parcel of the Christian religion. It is obligatory on Christians to proclaim the truth they have found. Like Archimedes, they cannot but run out shouting, "Eureka: I have found!"

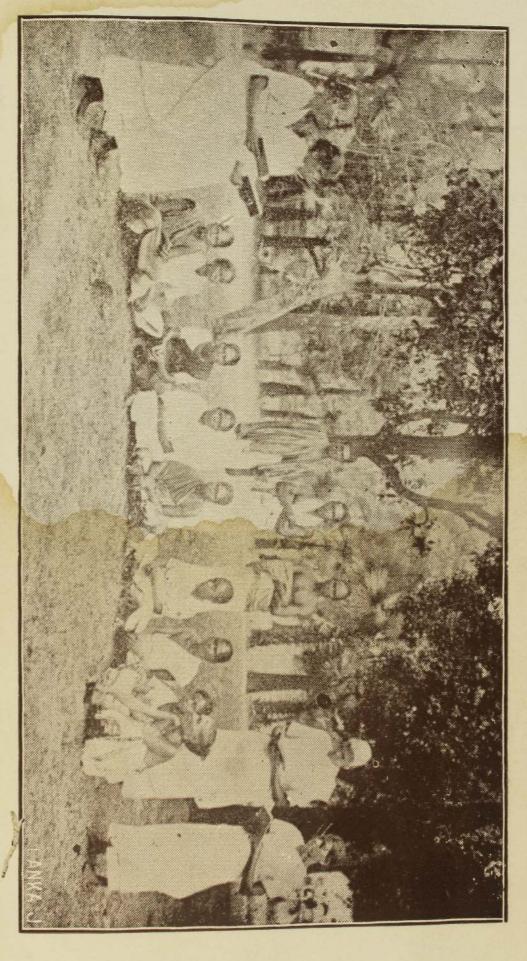
This apologia is necessary in speaking of the evangelistic work of the Inuvil Hospital. To speak of One who had compassion on the poor. the suffering, and the oppressed, and to make people realise that in the midst of the miseries

of mankind there is Supreme Love at the heart of the Universe-could there be any work nobler than this?

When Dr. Curr arrived, she set her mind not only to cure the bodies of her sisters, but also to tell them of the Master's love and compassion that inspired her to come down from the hills of Scotland to this sandy plain. Our impression is that the people who flock to the Hospital hear the message gladly, and many a patient's pain is soothed by the knowledge of the Lord of Compassion.

When Dr. Curr began her pioneer work in Ceylon over 40 years ago, uncivilised and superstitious people persecuted Missionaries and Christians. Dr. Curr held her first open air meeting sitting in a cart drawn by men, outside the Inuvil Hospital compound. This was before the Hospital was opened. Since her school days Dr. Curr had had always the missionary spirit, and from the beginning she worked to heal both the souls and bodies of patients and others with whom she came in contact. It seemed impossible and difficult at first, but gradually some of the men and a number of children began to attend the Sunday meetings in the Preaching Bungalow of the Hospital and listen carefully to the story of salvation which was simply and earnestly related to them.

Mrs. Chelliahpillai, an honorary Bible Wonan, was a great help to Dr. Curr almost from the beginning in this branch of her work. After the





short Gospel meetings in the Dispensary, when the patient's temporal needs were being attended to, and as they took their turns to be seen, Mrs. Chelliapillai would converse with them individually, either before or after they had been treated, about their spiritual need and the spiritual remedy which is free to all.

Regular Sunday services were conducted by the Uduvil Pastor, and Dr. Curr took the Sunday School with an average attendance of 30 or 40. Regular meetings were held in the wards besides individual talks with patients. Those who stayed at the Hospital came under the influence of the Gospel, and it was not a few who received spiritual as well as temporal blessings. Cases are recorded again and again of many declaring their faith in Jesus Christ, while others enquired earnestly after the way of salvation.

Dr. Curr gave such a training to the nurses in the work of preaching the Gospel that they not only ministered to the bodily needs of the patients, but spoke constantly of the love of Jesus. As we go over the reports that have been published yearly, we gather that there has been a Christian atmosphere pervading the Hospital. One is struck by the statement, that all, including the most orthodox, went to religious meetings voluntarily and gladly. There are instances even of Brahmins attending the services. One great service that the Hospital has done is to open up inaccessible homes to the proclamation of the Gospel. Says Dr. Curr:—

"It was encouraging to hear from a missionary lady of another denomination in Jaffna that when she and her associates visited the houses of a very strictly Saivite district they were better received and their words about Christ and his salvation were much more eagerly listened to by those who had been to our Hospital than by those who had not. They were also allowed to visit and have meetings in a Brahmin's house which stood in the midst of a temple compound, because one of the members of the family had been treated in our Hospital." The Reports are full of such instances.

It is not non-Christians only that have been benefited by the religious work done. The religious experience of professing Christians has been quickened and their evangelistic zeal promoted by their coming in contact with the inspiring work done by the doctors, nurses, and evangelists.

Many interesting accounts are given in the Hospital Reports about a number of patients who, having spent large sums of money in pilgrimage, sacrifices, etc., and getting no cure, went to the Hospital as a last resort, where they were not only cured of their bodily ailments, but also healed spiritually.

We extract the following from the annual Reports and other documents to illustrate our general remarks:—

"By coming to the Hospital many, who had never been out of their homes before and who

never even had heard that they had a soul which will never die, were made conscious of their ignorance.

"One girl of about 12 years had been in a Mission Boarding school, and was brought to us after having been ill at home for several weeks. For some days she seemed to rally, and we hoped she might go on improving, but the little frame began again to waste away, and her friends took her home when they found no hope of recovery. However, Thankatchiamma had been taught about the Saviour while in school and while with us, and she desired to confess her Saviour's name by baptisim."

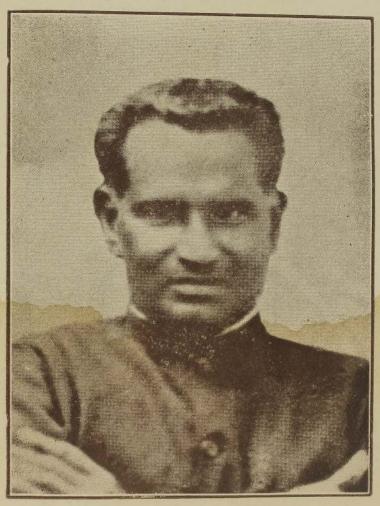
The following is from the Report of Pastor Elyatamby who acted as the Pastor of the Hospital:—

"If we look at the work carried on, we would find that it is an undeniable fact that this institution will lead many souls in our land to find salvation in Christ. Even hard-hearted persons cannot but have a fear of their own condition when they are ill. That would be the most suitable opportunity to speak of the loving kindness of Christ. We know of many whose hearts were touched at the Inuvil Hospital. A short time ago a very old woman from Achchelu received Christ on her sick-bed, and was much comforted by being baptized. Two years ago another woman from Nainativu came to the Hospital, accepted Christ as her Saviour on her sick-bed, was

baptized, and entered into heavenly rest. Last year when we went to a village called Mallagam for evangelical work we heard a story told there. Three years ago a young woman had-been brought to the Hospital with some horrible disease. The husband, parents, and relations came in large numbers there to see her dying, as they thought. They were staunch Sivites. When they were asked if they would like that we should pray to Christ, they consented at once, and, as we prayed, they all wept. Their minds all melted. The patient recovered wonderfully. The father of the woman himself told us the story and brought many persons to the meeting.

"Two months ago a woman from Mathagal came to the Inuvil Hospital. She had cancer in her breast for a year and suffered much, spending about Rs. 180. She and her husband had made a pilgrimage to Benares and bathed in the Ganges. But the disease became more severe than ever. Dr. Curr operated at the Hospital, and she recovered and went home. Although they have not received Christ, yet the heart of the woman, her husband, and relations were really touched by the words told them of Christ.

"Three months ago a woman had a miscarriage and was seriously ill. Her parents were Christians at first. She also was a Christian. But as she was given in marriage, to a Hindu, all of them went the wrong way for many years. At this miserable time when they were asked if they would desire us to pray to Christ they said that they wished it very much.



Rev. Eliathamby



At that time they were also spoken to about their back-sliding. Now they are all sorry for what they have done.

"Services were held regularly in the Preaching Bungalow every Sunday afternoon from 4 to 5 P. M. Hymns were sung; Dr. Curr presided at the organ, and the nurses helped with the singing. The people are from different parts of Jaffna. We are surprised to see some of the women who were shut up in their houses and who never got out of them present at these meetings. There were present also some learned Saivites who came willingly and listened to the Word of God. Some seemed touched in their hearts."

The following is from a report of Mrs. Chell-iahpillai, an honorary evangelist:—

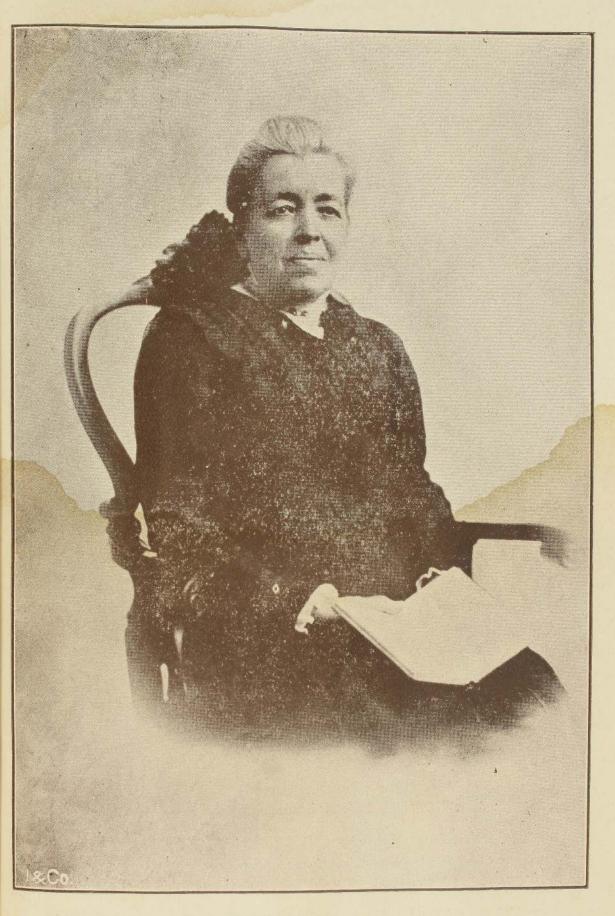
"Some time ago, when we went to a Moor woman who was seriously ill, we found the house crowded with Moor men and women. Those obstinate men, when they saw us pray before commencing the operation, remained there quiet and with amazement, with the hope that she would recover from her illness. After her recovery the inmates of the house requested us, if we even chanced to go that way, to call on them. A few days ago a Brahmin woman was brought to the Hospital. Another Brahmin woman also came to attend on her. When we spoke to them about the Saviour, they shut their ears saying that they hated to hear even the name itself. But God used us wonderfully to say to them plainly

by the help of the Spirit that no other name was given under the sun but the name of Christ for the redemption of sin. Then we knelt down in prayer, and when we rose up we found their countenance quite changed and their eyes filled with tears. When we were going to leave the room they detained us and said, 'You had better go after giving cure.' They waited for us daily in their room and requested us to speak to them about Christ, to sing, and to pray for them,

"A woman belonging to a family which gave up their faith in Christ was brought to the Hospital in a critical state. The Doctor before examining the patient prayed with her. The spirit of the Lord helped us to convince her of her fall from the faith in Christ and to touch the border of His garment for cure, and then we prayed with her. They felt sorry for their fall, and she shed tears. She is now getting better."

The names of three evangelists stand out prominently among those who have laboured to bring people to Christ. The first is Pastor Elyatamby of blessed memory. Let Dr. Curr give her testimony about him:—

"Our Hospital as well as the whole Jaffna community has lost not only a valued friend and helper in the passing away of Rev. S. Elyatamby of Uduvil, but a twentieth century Elijah; for he never ceased to warn people of their sins and need of salvation. His name has been associated with McLeod Hospital even before it was built, and the Misses Leitch have often



Miss Howland



expressed their gratitude to him for having helped them to choose and buy the land for the Hospital; and since then he has assisted us also in acquiring more land from time to time. His spiritual work in the Hospital has been invaluable, and he never missed a Sunday afternoon in proclaiming the Gospel to the patients and others in the Preaching Bungalow unless detained by illness or call to some special service elsewhere. Besides the Sunday afternoon services, where he continually held up Jesus as the Saviour of sinners he would visit the patients and pray with them often on week days as well as Sundays, and he did not spare himself at any hour of the day or night... In memory of his devoted and faithful service to the Hospital, there is a bed endowed bearing his name."

Another that did a great work among the women who came to the Hospital was Miss Susan Howland, the sainted mother of "a thousand daughters." After her splendid and unique services to the womanhood of Jaffna as the Principal of the Uduvil Boarding School, in her retirement she lived at the Inuvil Hospital and did voluntary evangelical work. Of her Dr. Curr says:--

"So many of the patients are her Old Girls, who so eagerly look for her as she goes in and out among them with her words of comfort and cheer and her booklets of the Gospel stories, and often a little prayer with them which they greatly appreciate. Especially with those

who had been near their end, her services are most invaluable both to the dying one and to the sorrowing friends. Not only in evangelistic work, but wherever there was need she was ready to help. Now that Miss Howland goes round with the Bible women visiting the different villages, we are able to follow up more than ever before the work done in our Hospital ... We had the pleasure of celebrating Miss Howland's 80th birthday in 1929 by an At Home in the Mission Bungalow at Inuvil where many of her Old Girls and other friends came to offer their birthday greetings and to wish her many happy returns of the day. Miss Howland was specially interested in the depressed classes. The bed which was lately endowed in remembrance of her faith. ful service in the Hospital has a brass plate at its head bearing the following words:

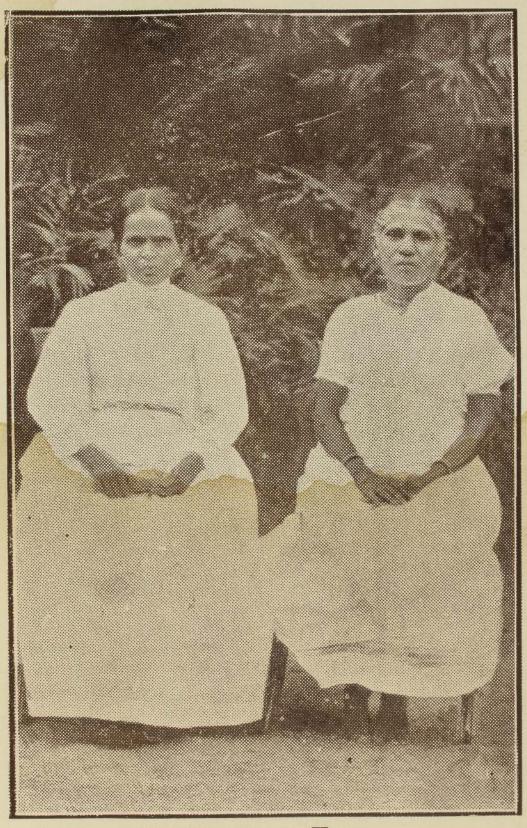
SUSAN R. HOWLAND

ALL ONE IN CHRIST JESUS.

Miss Howland left Ceylon in 1930 to live in California with Dr. John Howland, her brother, and passed to her eternal rest in 1933.

Miss Chinnatangam Wyman was another saintly worker. Of her Dr. Curr has given the following testimony:—

"We deeply lament the loss of our dear friend and fellow worker, Miss Chinnathankam Wyman, (Chinnakka), who has given many years of service as an honorary worker in our Hospital. She was the daughter of the late Judge Kathirvelu



Miss Chinnathangam Wyman Chinnakka (left) Mrs. Paulpillai (right)



Wyman, and sister of Mr. K. Balasingham, an ex-member of the Legislative Council of Ceylon. She has been a faithful and devoted follower of her Master, Jesus Christ, and has laboured for both the bodies and souls of all classes of people, not sparing herself, but ministering to the wants of all who were in need. Though often weak and fragile physically, she was strong in spirit and spent long hours in prayer. Her prayers will be greatly missed by those on their sick beds, and especially by those drawing near their end. We thank God for her beauiful and saintly life, and pray that others may be raised up to follow in her steps."

It is a profound truth that what one is leaves a more lasting impression than what one says or even what one does. More than any preaching or social work done at the Hospital-great as they are—is what the Hospital a witness to the love of been as Christ. It is a standing monument to the ly spirits of those who have carried on the work inspired by the Great Physician. People who flock to the Hospital are treated not merely as cases, but as human beings that possess not only bodies but eternal souls. May the Inuvil Hospital continue to irradiate the Eternal Love of Him who came to the World "that the World may not perish, but have Eternal life."

CHAPTER XII.

"AS ITHERS SEE US"

"O wad some Power the giftie gie us To see oursels as ithers see us!"

So sang Robert Burns, the national poet of Dr. Curr's "ain countrie". It is a trait of human nature that we love to know what other people think about our work, and are dependent more or less on the opinion of others for encouragement in our tasks. The Visitors' Book kept at the Hospital is full of glowing testimonies to the work of Dr. Curr and her associates. We cannot for want of space quote them all, but will confine ourselves to a few representative ones.

Governors of Ceylon have never failed to visit this great institution, even when they were on a flying visit to Jaffna. One Governor. Sir Robert Chalmers (late Lord Chalmers), told the writer at Cambridge that all he could distinctly remember of Jaffna was Dr. Curr and her Hospital. The following are tributes of the Governors of Ceylon:— (italics ours)

June 6, 1908—"Visited this institution and am very pleased with it. It meets a great want, is well managed, made practically self-supporting, and reflects credit upon all concerned. Dr. Curr

is devoted to the work and has everthing in excellent order."

SIR HENRY Mc CALLUM.

March 2, 1915—"I have to thank Drs. Curr and Nallamma for their pleasant explanations of the interesting institution under their charge, which they have just shown me. I have seen many special features in their work to which I wish all success."

SIR ROBERT CHALMERS.

June 3, 1916—"I have been very much pleased with everything I have seen. The Hospital is admirably managed and a great credit to the Principal and her staff. It fulfils a very useful function which it is impossible for the Government to undertake".

SIR JOHN ANDERSON.

Jan. 18, 1819. "I am delighted with all I have seen in this most excellent institution and I congratulate all those in connection with it on their good work."

Feb. 21, 1920.—"On my second visit I canonly reiterate what I have said before that this institution is a very great blessing to the people and the greatest possible credit to those who are responsible for its upkeep and management."

Sir W. A. Manning.

June 1926 (second visit)—"I venture to congratulate Dr. Curr and all who are associated with her upon the splendid work which they are doing and have done in Ceylon for the women and

children of the Island, and upon the way in which the confidence of the people has been won."

SIR HUGH CLIFFORD.

Dec. 7, 1927.—"My wife and I visited the McLeod Hospital this morning and had the pleasure of making a fairly thorough inspection. I cannot speak too highly in praise of the wonderful work which Dr. Curr and her assistants are doing for the women and children who come under her care. The whole atmosphere of the institution impressed me as exceptionally pleasant."

SIR HERBERT STANLEY.

Feb. 10, 1933.—"I was very pleased to see all the excellent new buildings which had been added since I was here 13 years ago. The lay out of the Hospital is most attractive, and the patients look happy and contented. A great deal of excellent maternity work is being done."

SIR GRAEME THOMSON.

Feb. 6, 1935.—"Visited after an interval of some 22 years. Much interested and pleased with everything that we saw. A most attractive institution."

SIR R. E. STUBBS.

Nov. 2, 1938.—"Jaffna is very much to be congratulated on having this Hospital in its midst. Nothing could have impressed me more than the work that is being done here and the excellence of the accommodation and equipment for doing it. Ceylon owes a great debt to Dr. Curr and to all who have donated wards or endowed beds".

SIR A. CALDECOTT.

The following are testimonies from high of-ficials:—

1912. "Dr. Curr has kindly taken me over all the Hospital buildings. I am delighted with all that I have seen, an institution thoroughly well-managed, patients obviously comfortable and happy in their surroundings".

Chief Justice Wood-RENTON

Nov. 15, 1915 "Work of the greatest value to Jaffna is being done, which could be done by no other agency, and certainly not so well by any other official agency."

B. Horsburg, Government Agent, N. P.

Feb. 12, 1920. "The excellent work, which is being done here should appeal to all who are interested in the welfare of the womanhood of Ceylon --- It is a lesson to all who visit the institution to know what work has been done here.

E. B. DENHAM,
Director of Education.

Dec. 3, 1933. "I am delighted with all that I have seen. The people of Jaffna are indeed fortunate to have such a Hospital to come to."

F. G. TYRELL, Officer Administering Government. Aug. 6, 1932. "The rooms are well spread out, airy and neat. The wards were nearly full. I was very pleased with the general appearance of the institution as a whole".

Hon. Peri Sundram, Minister of Labour, etc.

It is very interesting to note what the Heads of the Ceylon Medical Department had to say:—

1909. "It is an institution that particularly suits the customs of the Jaffna inhabitants, and the amount of good work done is of the greatest value".

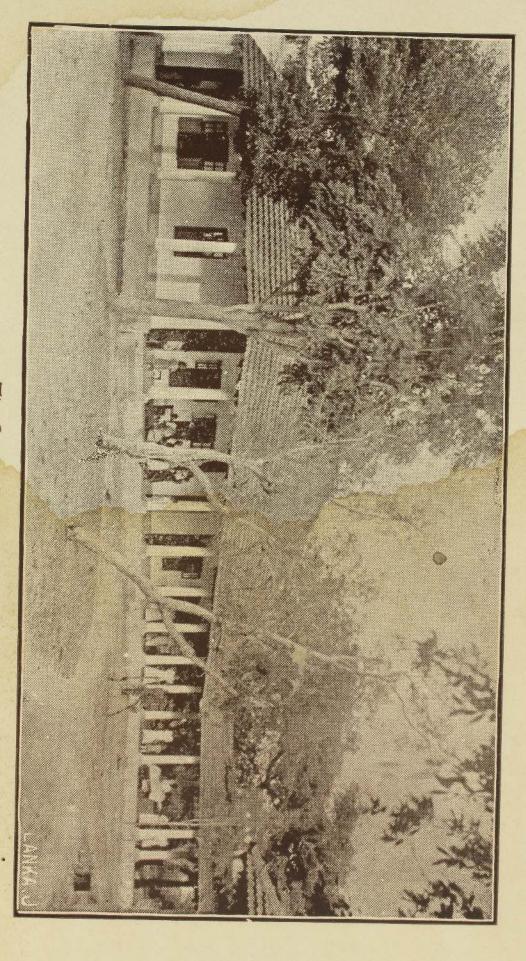
SIR ALLAN PERRY,
Principal Civil Medical
Officer.

Oct. 29, 1916. "This well-administered Hospital -- fills a very great need in providing accommodation for maternity cases among the Jaffna women and should do much to decrease infant mortality."

Dr. G. J. RUTHERFORD, P. C. M. O.

Dec. 26, 1929. "The work that is being done in this institution is not only professionally of the highest order, but in addition there is the definite aim of training a competent staff of nurses and midwives".

DR. G. F. BRIDGER,
Director of Medical and
Sanitary Services.





Sept. 1, 1930. "I am much impressed by the excellent service the people are being given. All the patients appear happy and comfortable, and the staff are well trained and maintain a high standard of treatment; the Hospital buildings are good and well equipped, and the institution is rendering the District a great service."

Dr. R. Briercleffe, D. M. S. S.

April 22, 1932. "I was favourably impressed with what I saw. The operating theatre is excellent. The nursing staff adequate."

Hon. T. B. Panabokke, Minister of Health.

Aug. 8, 1936. "I was greatly interested in the work of the institution and the arrangements made for the convenience of the patients. Dr. Curr and her assistants have made the place an ideal one where service is seen at its best."

Hon. W. A. DE. SILVA, Minister of Health.

The following tributes have been paid to the work of the Hospital by other distinguished visitors:—

Dec. 1925. "A noble work beautifully carried on"

Dr. CHARLES E. JEFFERSON, (The noted American Divine.)

Sep. 5, 1930. "God has blessed this work greatly, and one is very thankful for the devoted labours

that are being put forward by Dr. Curr and her faithful band of co-workers".

BISHOP ABRAHAM, Malabar.

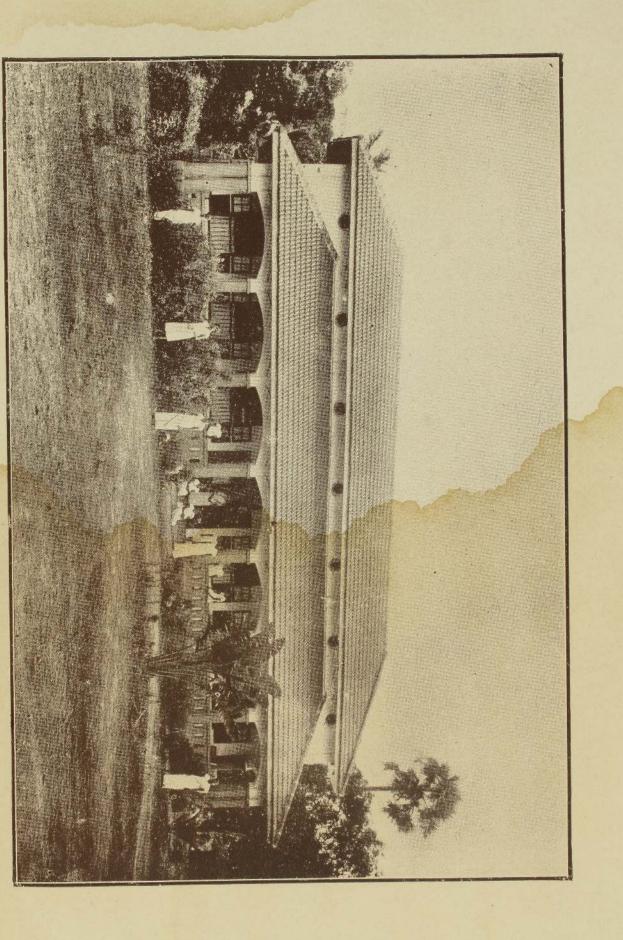
"I am deeply impressed with the spirit of Christ-like service pervading the place. This is a glorious place with a fine happy spirit pervading the whole. Devotion, service, cheer, the Christ touch — these are the things that touched me."

DR. STANLEY JONES, (The noted Evangelist)

"This is a long time since I visited here. We find it much grown in size and capacity for taking in the many patients who flock to it. It is so widely known what devotion and care are given by Dr. Curr and all her devoted staff that it seems necessary to be continuously adding to the accommodation."

Dr. E. A. Copleston, Bishop of Colombo.

"It was quite a surprise to me to see such a large number of cases from various classes of the Jaffna people seeking admission to the Hospital. That the work of Dr. Curr is being highly appreciated by the people is shown by the readiness with which the people, who in other circumstances did not seek admission into a hospital, not only come in large numbers but cheerfully pay for the advice and treatment they receive so as to make the Hospital more or less self-supporting. The wards are extremely clean and, tidy and the patients appear to be well cared for. The work in





this institution is too much for one person, and I would like to see in the near future a House Surgeon added to the staff. The arrangements in the Hospital are well adapted to the needs and requirements of the people of Jaffna. I have nothing but praise for the excellent work done in this Hospital."

Dr. S. C. PAUL, (Senior Surgeon, General Hospital, Colombo.)

Dec. 30, 1915. "Dr Curr has succeeded in attracting to her Hospital the ladies of the most exclusive class of the most conservative people in Ceylon; their appreciation is the first proof that she has succeeded in adapting Western scientific ideas to suit Eastern surroundings."

DR. PAUL PIERIS, District Judge.

The Hospital was visited from time to time by deputations from the A. B. C. F. M. We quote below the tributes paid by some of its officers and other visitors from America:—

Oct. 21. 1916. "No, better work is done 'In His Name' than this and such as this—you have won the hearts of the Deputation.

DR. E. L. SMITH, Secretary, A. B, C. F. M.

Oct. 21, 1916. "The pride of the Mission must be this fine Hospital so well managed by Dr. Curr, It is a joy to see it full of happy patients in surroundings beyond compare after one has seen the poor native homes. This work deserves the help of all."

Franklin H. Warner. (Member of Deputation).

Aug. 3, 1919. "It has been a perfect delight to me to see the Hospital. The cleanliness and charm of the place must take much of the pain out of sickness. I have seen a number of hospitals in India. None has more impressed me.

PROF. WM. J. HUTCHINS, Oberlin College, U. S. A.

March 2, 1935.—"I have been deeply impressed with what I have seen, and extend to Dr. Curr and her corps of associates and assistants my warmest congratulations and good wishes for the future."

Dr. F. F. GOODSELL, Vice-President, A. B. C. F. M.

Jan. 30, 1936. "We are greatly impressed by all that has been accomplished by Dr. Curr and those who have worked with her in building up from small beginnings this truly remarkable Hospital. It has demanded the talents of an expert administrator as well as those of an able doctor added to deeply devoted lives."

DR. ALDEN H. CLARK, Secretary, A. B. C. F. M.

CHAPTER XIII.

GOOD-BYE

Dr. Curr was to have left Jaffna early in 1938, but as suitable arrangements had not been made for her work, she had to postpone her departure till the end of November. was fortunate, as she was able to receive in person her decoration of O. B. E. from His Excellency the Governor. The Investiture took place on the 26th November. On the 28th a public meeting was held in the Town Hall, Jaffna, to bid her farewell. The large hall was filled to overflowing by ladies and gentlemen from all parts of Jaffna. Sir Waitialingam Duraiswamy, the Speaker of State Council, presided. Words of appreciation were spoken by the Chairman; S. Kanagasabai, Esq., Crown Advocate, who represented the Hindu public; Kathi S. M. Aboobucker, Proctor, who represented the Mohammedans; Rev. E. M. Weaver, Chairman, Wesleyan Mission; A. R. Subramaniam, Esq., Retired Judge; and J. V. Chelliah Esq., M. A., J. P. Dr. Curr was presented with a silver tea-set and tray and a well-filled purse as tokens of the gratitude and goodwill of the people of Jaffna. The following is the text of the address read on the occasion:-

Dr. Isabella H. Curr, L. R. C. P. & S. (Ed.), O. B. E. Superintendent and Physician-in-charge of the McLeod Hospital, Inuvil, Jaffna.

Dear Madam,

We, the inhabitants of Jaffna, are assembled here together to bid you farewell on your retirement after a devoted service of over forty years amongst the people of this land.

When you came to Jaffna in 1897 to work under the Women's Medical Mission, you found not a hospital, but an opportunity. For it was a case of finding patients and inducing them to come to the Hospital. You had to overcome great prejudice and superstition. Further, there were no trained nurses, and you had to be at first both doctor and nurse. How you overcame these handicaps successfully is a matter of history. Later you made a great effort to train nurses in your Hospital for the work.

Your skill as a Physician and Surgeon is well-known throughout the land. Indeed such has been the confidence reposed on you that Jaffna women resident in Malaya have often crossed the seas to be in times of illness under you whom they affectionately call "Curr Amma."

Your act of charity in affording a home to destitute orphans is evidence of your large heart.

As a true Scot you showed your business genius in the administration of the

Hospital. The work has been organised and supervised efficiently, and the grounds and buildings have been carefully planned and erected in order to meet the growing needs of the Hospital.

Your winning personality along with the care and devotion to your Master has been an inspiration to all those who have come in contact with you.

We rejoice that the Government of this land has recognised your services by liberal grants, and conferment of the Imperial Orders successively of M. B. E. and O. B. E.

You require no monument to perpetuate your name. There stands the McLeod Hospital, a small world of women, established by women, administered by women, and run for women to keep your memory green in the hearts of the people. We are confident that the doctors and nurses who have derived their spirit of service from you will be true to your aims and ideals, and carry on the good work of which you have been a pioneer.

Although it pains us to part from a dear friend and benefactor, we are cheered by the thought that you are going to take a much-needed rest in your homeland after your arduous toil of over forty years. We know that your heart-strings are woven round Jaffna, and that it is painful for you to tear yourself from us. But we also know that your heart will ever "untravelled, turn" to your adopted home.

That the Almighty may bless you in your retirement, and grant you health and long life, is the prayer of your friends, the grateful people of Jaffna.

We remain, Dear Madam,
(On behalf of Jaffnese resident in Ceylon and
Malaya.)

SIR W. DURAISWAMY, Chairman, Farewell Committee,

T. C. RAJARATNAM, J. P., Secretary, Farewell Committee.

Jaffna, · Nov. 28, 1938.

The following is an account of a touching farewell given to Dr. Curr by the staff, and the children:—

"The Nurses' Dining room was the scene of a good-bye dinner given by Dr. Curr last night,

"All the Staff who could possibly be there were invited to the last communal meal with the beloved Amma.

"Three of Dr. Curr's children, cared for by her from babyhood were there, all smiles, and Dr. Curr with her kind smile embracing all of us, was entertained by her children and the student nurses, who were coached for the occasion by Dr. Solomon who is always anxious to help everybody, always.

"With the approval of Dr. Williams, Dr. Buell, Dr. Kurien and Dr. Solomon we asked Dr. Curr to light a Tamil Lamp that we hope to keep as a light always in her bright memory. It will be kept burning in the Nurses' Sick room where it will also serve as a night-light.

"When we asked Dr. Curr to light our Tamil Lamp, each of the Staff lighted a little white candle from the flame, repeating the Hospital motto, 'We scatter light,' while Dr. Curr presented the Hospital Badges on which are inscribed the same words, and the Tamil Lamp.

"It seemed appropriate to sing 'Eternal Light,' after which Miss Gnanamuttu read the Beatitudes and Dr. Curr closed in prayer, praying that we might scatter light by our lives; nearly everybody seemed to know every word of the hymn, 'Jesus bids us shine with a clear pure light' without looking at their hymn book.

"It was an unforgettable sight to see the Staff, starry-eyed, escorting their beloved Amma back to the Bungalow, with their lighted candles."

The members of the Ladies' Health League, met in the bungalow of their President, Mrs. Naish, the Government Agent's wife. After a grand tea party, the Secretary, Mrs. Philips, thanked Dr. Curr for all the help she had rendered to their League especially through the clinic for Muslim women in Jaffna.

The Jaffna Women's Mission met in the Inuvil Chapel with Mrs. A. R. Supramaniam in the chair.

Mrs. Raju and the Chairman paid grateful tributes to Dr. Curr who had been one of their chief members for 40 years, while farewell songs were sung by Udupiddy girls and a lovely address read and presented by the Secretary, Mrs. Aseervatham. A group photograph was also taken.

The members of the South India United Church from all over Jaffna, gathered in large crowds in the Uduvil School Hall, where glowing tributes were paid by prominent speakers, Mr. Amarasingam, Mrs. Raju, Rev. Thomas, and Rev. Welch. The Secretary, Mr. L. Kulathungam, read a suitable address and presented it in a sandal wood casket. References were made to Dr. Carr's spirit being found in every tree and corner of the Inuvil compound and a living monument in the Hospital itself. A group photograph was taken.

The 12th Jaffna Rangers and Brownies had a special little farewell of their own. They presented Dr. Curr with a Thanks Badge to show their gratitude for all the help she had given them.

The Staff of the McLeod Hospital had a fare-well function in which the nurses staged a play representing Dr. Curr's work. The staff presented Dr. Curr with an album containing many pictures connected with the Hospital, and a gold watch and chain.

There were other functions such as a fare-well picnic arranged by the Missionaries, and farewell meetings in various schools. On December 7th, 1938 Dr. Curr was taken in procession to the Chunnakam Station, where, and at the Jaffna Station, crowds of people bade her good-bye.

CHAPTER XIV.

MOTHER OF A THOUSAND DAUGHTERS

The estimate of a person's character and work may be formed not only by what the public thinks of him, but by how his family and immediate associates regard him. Indeed, the latter is the better test. A person may shine in the public eye, but it not infrequently happens that such a person may, in the estimation of those who watch him day by day and deal with him in the most intimate relations of life, fall below the high estimate formed of him by the public. It is this truth that is crystallised in the tag: 'A man is not a hero to his valet'. We will postpone to the next chapter an estimate of Dr. Curr by the public. We will first hear what Miss Pakkiam Solomon, one of her 'daughters', has to say about her 'mother':-

"Dr. Curr has been nothing less than a very loving mother, not only to every member of her Hospital staff, but to all those who have come in contact with her. A mother to whom any one big or small turned, not only with bodily aches and pains, but also with mental difficulties and problems to be solved. No one inside or outside the Hospital ever hesitated to approach her. However busy she might be, and how much they might be told not to worry Dr. Curr,

straight people would walk up to her with their problems, to be greeted with a loving smile and as prompt an attention as possible. One often wondered how it was possible for Dr. Curr with her pressing duties and heavy responsibilities to listen to each and every one's problems and solve them so patiently and adequately.

"The patients found in her a very clever Doctor and a patient, loving mother. They often remarked, 'Curr Amma's face and smile would cure half our disease'—they had such great faith in her. She always went about with a smile.

"Besides taking time to efficiently treat each and every patient, Dr. Curr always had a loving word, not only to the patients but to any friend or child that accompanied them. "Thankachie" (sister), "Salaam, Achie" (welcome, mother), were her favourite expressions. It was wonderful how she remembered each and everyone of her old patients, and took time for friendly enquiries.

"Visitors going round the Hospital would almost always remark to Dr. Curr, 'How do you manage to keep this vast place so spotlessly clean?' She would always answer, 'Well, we try to keep it clean'. She was always very particular not to take any credit for herself. It was always "we" with her much more than "l", and very often she gave the credit to any who had any small share in the matter. That Inuvil is so famous everywhere for being remarkably clean, is entirely due to her vigilant eyes. A little spot of dirt on the wall, any crack on the floor, any bits of paper on the floor, any rubbish on the back compound

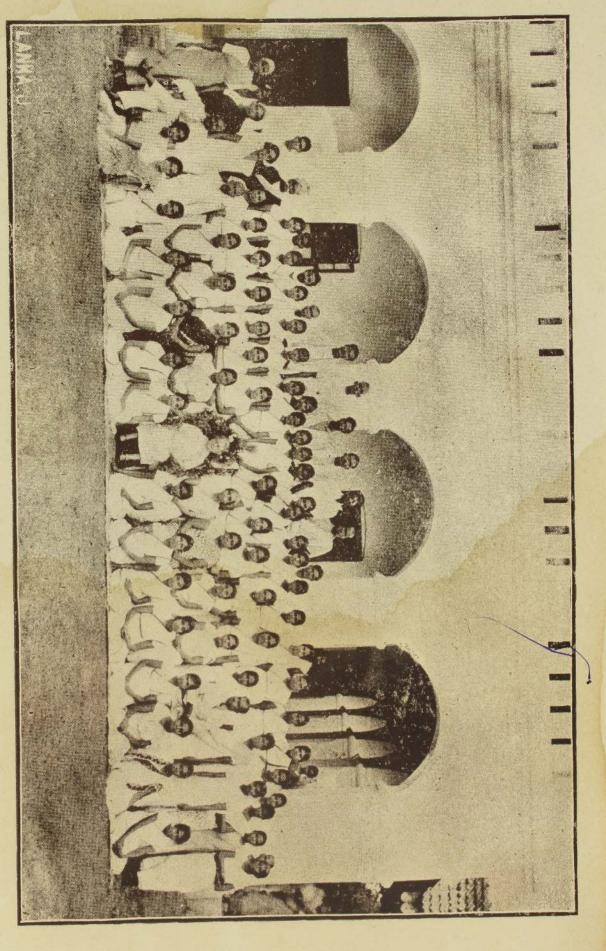
would claim her immediate attention. On the other hand, nothing beautiful could escape her ever watchful, keen eyes: a beauty spot, the song of birds, trees and flowers. She was an admirer of beauty, and everything that is good. She never stinted praise where praise was due; neither did she hesitate to chide and check where necessary. This she did gently but firmly. She always insisted on economy. For instance, she would not allow any water to be wasted. 'A waster of water is a waster of better,' she would say. She would not allow any light to burn in an unoccupied room.

"Dr. Curr was an ideal missionary. She was very sociable and treated people on terms of equality. All those who came in contact with her loved her, and her dynamic personality drew all to her. She adapted herself so much to the people of different circumstances that one always felt quite at home in her presence. The outcastes and ignorant villagers found in her a sympathetic friend. It was sometimes amusing to see village women come up and demand Dr. Curr's personal services and help, as though they owned her. She was a very cheerful giver. She gave generously and abundantly, not only her personal services, but also money to the poor at some sacrifice.

"Religion with Dr. Curr was an affair of everyday life. If something went wrong, we would hear Dr. Curr repeat a Bible verse, and say, 'This is my verse today. How suitable and comforting!' We were often struck by the amount of faith she had in prayer. 'You go on praying,' she would say; "I am praying, and I believe it would turn out well.' And so it did! We have no doubt that the remarkable growth of her work from small beginnings has been through her faith and prayer — faith that can remove mountains.

"To the Hospital staff Inuvil has been a happy home with Dr, Curr as a loving mother in the real sense of the word. Was there any trouble or difficulty about Hospital affairs or about one's own private problems? No one hesited to pour them out into the ears of Dr. Curr. She was so wise as well as loving in her dealings. 'We should be as wise as serpents, and harmless as doves', she would say. She was full of tact. She knew exactly how to tackle each individual, and it was wonderful how she managed to get round, satisfy, and please each and every one. It is this tact that drew around her a peaceful, happy band of workers. Thoroughness in every work was Dr. Curr's ideal, and she demanded it from her staff and set the example herself.

"Dr. Curr had the greatest respect for every member of the staff. One never heard her use peremptory language to her subordinates in getting things done. She was always considerate to every member of the staff and always mindful of their comforts and convenience. How lucky you are to work under Dr. Curr!, we often heard people from other institutions remark. Certainly we were. If some one who went out on duty or visit was



The Staff Farewell to Dr. Curr, Dec. 1938.



late at night, she would not go to bed till she saw the girl safe back home. She observed Tamil customs, and saw to it that whenever girls went out they had proper chaperons.

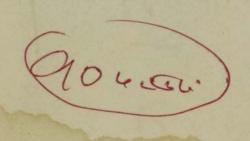
"One can hardly imagine Inuvil without Dr. Curr. She has been a centre of light that has radiated its beams far and wide. Her name is enshrined in the hearts of the people of Jaffna. We realise we should not grudge her well-earned rest. Still we are missing her very much. 'Well done, good and faithful servant,' will be her Master's verdict'.

The following testimony from Mrs. May Ratnayaka (formerly Miss de Livera) is worth quoting:

"When I joined the Staff in 1916, the McLeod Hospital was a well established and soundly organised institution. It was customary for ladies from the best families in Jaffna to come to the Hospital for their confinements. Many made the journey back to Jaffna to be under the care of Dr. Curr from all parts of the Island, and also from the Straits Settlements. . . . Dr. Curr is the "fons et origo" of the Inuvil Hospital. What she has achieved during her 20 years of service is a matter of history. That she could have stood alone and worked alone in a trying climate in a foreign land, is certainly missionary work of a very high order. There is no doubt that 'Curr Amma' will ever live in the memory of a grateful people. It will be a matter of grave concern to the people of Jaffna whether the void created

by Dr. Curr's departure will ever be adequately filled. Dr. Curr returns home and to a well earned rest, honoured by the King and loved by the people. It will be the sincere wish of the people of Jaffna and of all her friends that she may long be spared to enjoy her retirement in peace and happiness."

that (formerly Mes at Indian & wash)





Dr. (Miss) Isabella H. Curr, L. R. C. P. & S., M. B. E., O. B. E.

CHAPTER XV.

CURR AMMA.

Fifty years ago one who travelled along the Jaffna-Karkesanturai Road saw near the fifth mile post a "howling wilderness" which people would not cross after sunset for fear of evil spirits. Today one might well say that the "desert has blossomed like the rose." Now one sees as he goes along this section of the road a cluster of beautiful buildings, in the midst of giant trees, a veritable bee-hive full of bustle and animation. It is the McLeod Hospital founded by two women, and developed by the genius of a "small, but mighty" woman. Inuvil was then a small backward village, but today it is, so to speak, on the map. No distinguished visitor comes to Jaffna without being shown Dr. Curr's Hospital, an institution unique in every way.

When as a bonie lassie Miss Curr arrived in Jaffna, to repeat the words already quoted, she found herself confronted by an opportunity rather than a hospital. It must be clearly realised that she did not come to fill a cosy seat made warm by her predecessors. With a nucleus of buildings Dr. Curr created a Hospital We have already seen under what handicaps she had to work. Perhaps it is realised by only a

few that the financial burden of carrying on this large institution fell entirely on her shoulders, as according to the agreement made with the American Board, the Hospital had to be run on a selfsupporting basis. That was not all. The Hospital for a long time was only a foster-child of the Mission, and it cannot be said that it was always treated with the warmest love. The Mission had its own Hospital, and it was inevitable that similar interests should clash at times. The writer remembers a time when, Dr. Curr being away on furlough, it was suggested by some members of the Mission that a Union College, might be located in the Hospital premises! In the midst of these difficulties, and even annoyances, Dr. Curr not only carried on the work, but developed this institution to its present dimensions and efficiency.

When one goes over the beautiful grounds of the Hospital, one is struck by the number and beauty of the buildings and the neatness of the premises. Even knowing that the main blocks were provided for by the founders, one is compelled to ask, "Where did Dr. Curr find all this money"? It was fortunate for Jaffna that a Scotch woman undertook this great financial task. Dr. Curr had the proverbial Scotch thrift, thoroughness, and business ability. She had a splendid knack for interesting people in her work, and unloosing their purse strings; and, what is more, she was able to husband her resources carefully and make wise investments. The late Rev. G. G. Brown once said in the writer's hearing, "This little woman can

twist round her little finger all of us in business transactions."

Dr. Curr's professional ability was known through the length and breadth of this Island, and women travelled all the way to Jaffna to be attended to by her. The Tamil women in Malaya generally came to Jaffna not only to be under the care of their own ammas (mothers), but particularly to be attended to by Curr Amma. Dr. Curr, though small in stature, must have had exceptional physical powers of endurance for doing her work. She had sometimes to work all alone, night and day, and do operations that might have well tasked an able-bodied male doctor.

Psychotherpists are now placing a new emphasis on the effect of the mind on the body, and in treating ailments, have in view not only physical, but mental conditions also. Dr. Curr had always such a cheerful disposition and charming ways, that it was a tonic to her patients to see her pleasant ways and hear her musical voice and encouraging words. She was uniformly kind to all, poor and rich, high caste and low caste.

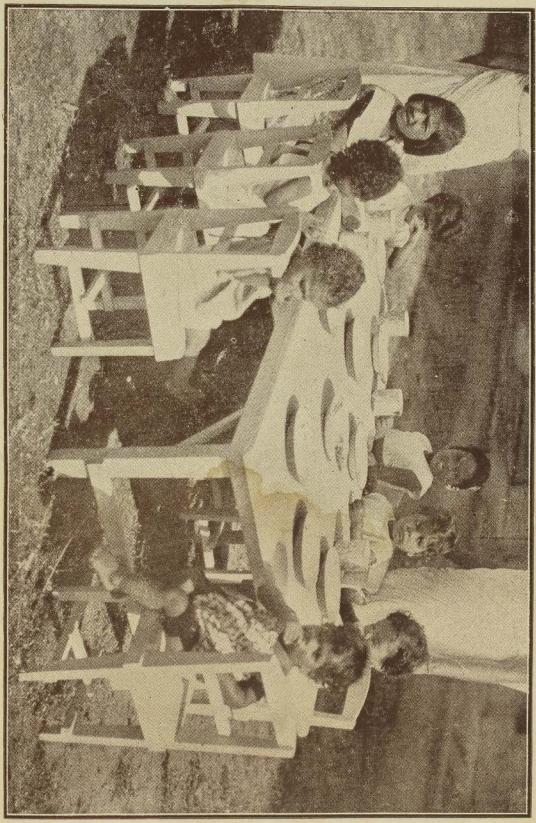
We have seen in the previous chapter from the testimony of a colleague how like a mother she was to her young colleagues and subordinates. There must be in the conduct of such a large Hospital numerous sources of irritation, and it is no easy task to deal with so many people of varying temperaments. Yet Dr. Curr was blessed with such tact and common sense that she was looked up to as a mother, and was obeyed implicitly.

The value of Dr. Curr's achievements should be measured not only by her professional work as Physician and Surgeon, but also by the great work she has done to popularise and elevate a profession that was deemed menial, but which is really most useful and noble. If today well educated girls from respectable families are anxious to become "Sisters of Mercy," it is entirely due to the inspiration of Dr. Curr. We must not forget the important by-product of this work. Dr. Curr has opened a new avenue of employment to girls, and has made it possible for many a girl to be economically independent. In a dowry-ridden land this work has proved a boon to several dowerless girls.

It should not be forgotten that after all Dr. Curr should be judged as a Missionary even more than as a Doctor. People sometimes ignore this aspect and think only of the professional side of a medical Missionary. A great Hindu Judge, himself a well-known social worker, once said in an address to a Hindu social reform organisation that all the work done by similar societies put together would not be equal to that done by a single frail missionary lady, seeing that she did the work inspired by a genuine love for the poor and the distressed. In estimating the work of Dr. Curr we should not forget that it was inspired by her love to the Lord of Compassion and to her sisters in Ceylon. She

would not treat a patient, or perform an operation, without prayer. She was never tired of telling her patients of the Great Physician who cures men's souls and bodies. The meeting house, the chapel, the morning prayer meetings, and the village school were at least as near her heart as her professional work. It is a truism that what one is counts for more than what one does. The greatest missionary work that can be done by a Christian is to enable people to see Jesus Christ in his face. And it may be truly said that the love of Jesus was always reflected in Dr. Curr's face.

When the news of Dr. Curr's retirement was announced, people began to say, "How is the Inuvil Hospital going to be carried on? Why should she leave us?" We must realise that after strenuous work for four decades, Dr. Curr is entitled to rest. And then, as the Poet says, "The old order changeth yielding place to new . . . lest one good custom should corrupt the world." Even the best of institutions and persons have to give way so that God may "fulfil Himself in many ways." In God's economy no person is indispensable. He will raise persons to adequately fill the places vacated by worthy souls. Dr. Curr has done her work so well and laid the foundations so secure, that it is now easy to carry on her work. What is more, her life and work has been such an inspiration to the people of this land that we may hope and pray that some national sisters may be found to rise to that sense of sacrifice and service that was shown in her life. Her hundreds of 'children' rise up and call her blessed. When the history of Jaffna comes to be written, the name of Isabella H. Curr will hold a place of honour in the roll of the great benefactors of the Peninsula.



Tea Time.



CHAPTER XVI.

RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT.

We have seen how during the last four decades from small beginnings, with a single Doctor and no nurses, the Hospital has expanded into a fully-fledged institution with five Doctors, one Nursing Superintendent, ten Staff Nurses, twentyfour Senior Nurses, twenty-seven Probationary Nurses, and three Dispensers, besides a number of other Assistants. Two new Departments have been created: a Nurses' Training School and an Orphanage. Wards, Operating Theatre, Nurses' Home, Residences and an Electric Plant have been added. The grounds have been enlarged. Thousands have been cured or have received alleviation in their suffering. Thousands have heard the Glad News. The nursing profession has been ennobled. Unwanted children have found an asy-In short, as Sir John Anderson and other lum. high officials have remarked, the Hospital has been doing a work which even the Government could not undertake. These are indeed glorious achievements.

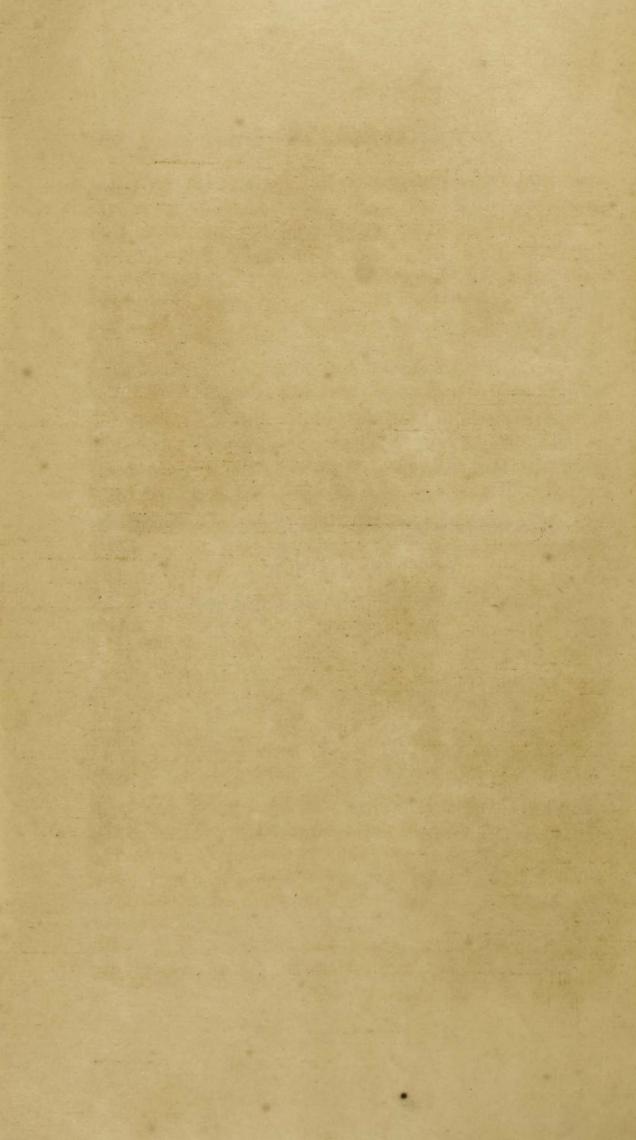
What about the prospect that lies before us? The foundations have been well and truly laid. According to the wishes of the founders there should be two lady Doctors with high qualifications. No lady doctor has yet been found to take the

place of Dr. Curr. But we are glad that Dr. Kennedy has just come to us to look after the Hospital for the present.

The Hospital is now managed by a Board of Directors, some of whom are nationals. Changes are in the air. The McLeod and Green Hospitals are likely to be run by a single Board, with two Committees for managing internal details of work. The purpose is co-ordination of work, and not amalgamation. The finances of McLeod Hospital, according to the wishes of the founders, will be kept separate, and its identity will not be lost. Dr. Kennedy will for the present act as a liaison officer between the two Hospitals. This will prevent reduplication of work and promote efficiency.

As we stand at the thres'iold of a new era one great idea suggests itself. So far back as 1904, Proctor T. C. Changarapillay, a great friend of the Hospital, say the vision of the Hospital becoming a national institution. Is it too much to hope that in the near future Tamil women doctors with high qualifications will be found to take Dr. Curr's place, and the Hospital become a national institution financed and managed by the people of this country?

APPENDIX.



REPORT FOR 1938

The important event during the year. was the retirement of Dr. Curr, who left Ceylon early in December after 40 years of very devoted and faithful service. In appreciation of her work, H. M. the King was pleased to confer on her the title of O. B. E. in June.

Miss Crombie s. R. N. and S. C. M. joined the staff as Nursing Superintendent on the 1st of November. The staff otherwise has remained practically the same except that some new girls have joined the Nurses' Class and few of the old ones have been sent out to take up work in villages and schools.

There has been an all round increase in the number of patients treated in the Dispensary and Hospital and also in Maternity cases, while the mortality death rate is slightly lower. The number of still-births is less than that of last year, but there is an increase in infant mortality largely due to premature births caused by Ankylostomiasis, Albuminuria and Anaemia in mothers.

The Clinic for Mohammedan women has been continued and there was a marked increase in the number of patients treated. The help given to the Uduvil School and Mather Orphanage has been continued.

As in previous years the Staff helped with the Health Week exhibition in Jaffna by giving lectures and demonstrations. The Nurses' Dining room extension was completed in August 1938, and the airy, spacious hall with the new furniture, is a great pride to the nurses. This was decorated and formally opened by Dr. Curr after a prayer meeting, and in that hall the same night, Dr. Curr gave a Staff Dinner which was much enjoyed by each and every one.

The Hospital has had several visitors during the year, among whom were Professor and Mrs. Harlow, Dr. and Mrs. Horton, Dr. Goodsell, and His Lordship, The Bishop of Colombo. They wrote the following accounts in the Visitors' book:—

November 21st 1938. "Way back in 1897 my sister Anna and I heard Mary and Margaret Leitch tell the story of Jaffna. We asked them whether we could help raise money enough to furnish a room, and we attained our aim. We were children then. Later we went out to Turkey as Missionaries of the American Board. That night we heard Mary and Margaret Leitch had promised each other that with God's help they would become Missionaries. Now 41 years later, it has been a great joy to see this great work which Dr. Curr has so magnificently carried on. Mrs. Harlow and I rejoice in the opportunity of seeing this most Christ-like service. My sister Anna, after years of Missionary service in Turkey has gone home to God, but she too must rejoice in this work.

Smith College.

(Sgd.) S. Ralph Harlow Marion S. Harlow.

Dr. Isabella Curr Building with the Operation Theatre,

- INOVIL



"What a work Dr. Curr has done in Inuvil! Si Monumentum requiris circumspice".

(Sgd.) CAROL & DOUGLAS HORTON, New York.

"I was very impressed with all I was shown, particularly the Stanley block, and am delighted to hear that this Hospital is self supporting. It says wonders for the work of Dr. Curr and the spirit of co-operation and economical working which makes this possible.

May God bless this work done in the name of the Great Physician."

(Sgd.) CECIL, Colombo.

We wish to express our deep gratitude to the President, Proctor Rajaratnam, and every member of the M. C. L. H. Local Board, for their help and support. We specially thank Mr. Edson C. Lockwood, who in addition to his very heavy work, has been our Financial Manager since Dr. Curr left, and a ready helper in all matters. Above all, we thank our Heavenly Father, for His great mercies in leading and guiding us so wonderfully.

We wish to express our sincere thanks to Mr. J. V. Chelliah M. A., J. P., a good friend of our Hospital, who took much trouble to hunt up all old records and facts to write this book and has made it so very interesting.

Maud and Alice Nurses' Training Hore.

Dr. Curr and all the Staff were glad to have a Jaffna Tamil lady succeed Miss Stenborn. We were specially proud as she is the first Jaffna Tamil to take her C. M. B. in England We were glad to have her services for one year, after which she resigned in July 1938.

Miss D. Gnanamuttu R. N. (Madras) our Senior Staff Nurse ably acted as Nursing Superintendent till Miss Crombie S. R. N., and S. C. M. (England) arrived from India on the 1st of November Miss Crombie took up work whole-heartedly and ready to help in any way possible. Owing to language difficulty, she left us the last week in June to take up work in Assam where she felt she would be more useful knowing the language of the place.

During the year, six nurses passed the Government examination in Midwifery. As in previous years, several of our Nurses have done relief duty as acting Midwives at various Government Hospitals at the request of the Provincial Surgeon. Few of our nurses have been sent out to take up work in villages. Many of our girls are employed in different parts of Ceylon in Mission or Estate Hospitals, in Schools, Health work and Urban District Councils.

12 Students with either English or Vernacular School leaving certificate, from different parts of the Island, have joined the Nurses' Class. We are

glad to find that educated girls from good homes are coming in for nursing now.

Five of our girls who were among the pioneer class of the St. John's Ambulance in Jaffna, passed the First-aid examination in the St. John's Ambulance and were presented with the certificates, by lady Abrahams. This group, is now attending the Home Nursing classes. while a 2nd group (of 10 of our girls) is preparing for the First-aid examination.

When we got the happy news of H. M. the King conferring on Dr. Curr the little of O. B. E., we felt greatly honoured. A beautiful Thanksgiving service was held in the Inuvil Chapel after which the Inuvil Villages took her in procession with native band. A garden party was held that evening and the nurses took her home in procession, carrying palms and singing all the way.

The Rangers have continued the Brownie meetings among the Inuvil Village children. The Ranger company and the Brownie pack gave a little farewell of their own to Dr. Curr, with items specially got up for the occasion, and presented her with a Thanks Badge for all her help and generosity. Distinguished friends of the company were present.

The much dreaded days drew nigh, when early in December we had to say Good-bye to Dr. Curr who was much loved by one and all.

The Staff gave a farewell when the nurses staged a play depicting her characteristics and the activities she had taken part, in and outside the Hospital. They presented her with an Album with all the pictures of the McLeod Hospital which she had built up, a betal leaf address and a gold wristlet.

21st of June early morning saw a procession of white sareed people with palms, lined up near the gate giving a warm welcome to Dr. and Mrs. Kennedy and their little son Bobbie. 8 a.m. a beautiful Thanks-giving service was conducted in our chapel, by Revs. Welch, Bunker and Aseervatham. The same evening we had a garden party where our chief guests met the members of the Mission and our Local Board.

Proctor Rajaratnam as President of our Local Board gave an eloquent speech of welcome and Dr. Kennedy replied expressing their sincere thanks. Our expectations are not one bit dimmed but surpassed, for in Dr. and Mrs Kennedy we find a young family full of the spirit of Christ, which will go a great way towards wider extension of His Kingdom.

Evangelistic Work.

The impressive candle light service about the close of November 1934 stands vivid in our minds as we think of this side of our work. At the close of the service, Dr. Curr pinned on the Hospital badge saree pin, (with the motto, "we scatter light," and a picture of a Jaffna lamp) to the

staff and senior nurses. All the staff marched round singing, to light the candle from Dr. Curr's lamp repeating "we scatter light". Dr. Curr closed up with:—

"The Tamil lamp
Shall be the stamp
To show the bright
And lovely light
Of those in white
Who serve the sick by day and night
For love of God, the Infinite."

The daily morning prayers of all the staff together in the Chapel at 8 are much appreciated.

Some of the nurses have been visiting village homes near by carrying the Gospel message and also talking to the people about health.

The Bible women have been carrying on their work faithfully talking to the patients, conducting ward services and visiting the village homes. One often finds anxious listeners looking up to catch every thing they say, but sometimes you find strong healthy discussions.

We were sorry to lose Rev. and Mrs. Welch from our circuit on their transfer in May 1939. We are glad to have Rev. and Mrs. Aseervath am in our midst full of enthusiasm.

The Gospel meetings for those in the Hospital as well as to those who care to come from outside, and a Bible class for the nurses have been regularly conducted by the Pastor on Wednesdays every week.

Some of our nurses have been conducting Sunday School classes for the village children in our Mission School.

Four girls of the Hospital received adult Baptism while two were confirmed about the close of last year in our chapel.

We shall always remember Miss Crombie, who took special interest in the Evangelistic side of our work, made our Chapel look very beautiful, and helped in many other ways.

My grateful thanks are due to every member of the staff for their willing co-operation and help.

HANNAH R. WILLIAMS, Director (Acting).

31st July, 1939.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE McLEOD HOSPITAL 1938—1939.

T. C. Rajaretnam, Esq., J. P., President. Rev. S. Selvaretnam, Secretary.
Mrs. S. Bunker
Miss L. K. Clark
Mrs. Dr. Kanagam (Curtis) Buell
Edson C. Lockwood, Esq.
T. Buell, Esq., J. P., K. I. H.
Dr. Isabella H, Curr, O. B. E.

HOSPITAL STAFF.

Physicians: — Miss Isabella H. Curr, L. R. c. P. & s. (Edin), O. B. E.

, Hannah R. Williams, L. M. P.,
Madras,

" Mary Kurien, L. M. P., Madras.

Mrs. Kanagam (Curtis) Buell, L. M. P., Madras,

Miss Packiam Solomon, L. M. P. Madras.

Nursing Supt: Miss A. F. Crombie, S. R. N., S. C. M.,

Dispensers:— Mr. K. V. P. Christopher, Regd, Pharmacist.

J. W. Chelliah

Asst: Disp:— Miss Josephine Naidu Miss Gnanasugirtham

Clerk:- Mr. D. A. Solomons

Asst. Clerk:— Miss Lily Samuel Lab. Asst:— Miss Cherian

Electricians:—) Mr. S. Massillan Mr. D. Sundaraj

Bible Women:— Mrs. Faith P. Vallipuram

,, Alice Chelliah

Nurses Home J ,, Philips
Matrons:— Miss Nesam Henderson

SISTERS.

Miss D. Gnanamuttu
" L N. Muttusamy

Mrs. Sundaraj Miss Amirtharanie Mills

APPENDIX

STAFF NURSES.

Miss Rita Vollenhoven

Mrs. Jacobs

Mrs, Chellachey

Miss Kuddypillai

" Ratnam Manuel

Miss Chellachey Ramanathan

.. Manickam S.

,, Thangamma S.

" Johanna Joseph

,, Muththalai

SENIOR NURSES.

Miss Nesam Nannitamby

- " Rasamma Sinnadurai
- " Poomany McLeod
- " Irene Wijesinghe
- " Grace Thangaponnu
- " Grace Chellamma A.
- , Grace Kanagam
- ,, Mary Samathanam

Miss Margaret Josiah

- ,, Alice Chinniah
- " Pauline Karunaratne
- " Kanagani Murugesu
- " Sivapackiam Thambiah
- " Lily Nagamany
- ,, Mariam S. Vethanayagam
- " Gnanapushpam Monion

Miss Mercy Cumaru

NURSES CLASS.

Miss Jessie Bastiampillai

- ,, C. Fernando
- " Emily Jacob
- " S. Eliathamby
- , G. A. Chinniah
- " A. Lazarus
- " F. Chellamuttu

Miss S. Kathirithamby

- ", Mabel Ranatunga
- " Nallamma Ponniah
- " Sivakolunthu T.
- " Mabel Muthiah
- " Salley Money
- ", Chellamma Gethsy

Miss D. R. Sankarapillai

NURSERY NURSES CLASS.

Miss Ruth Chinniah

- " Mary Harriet
- .. Rosaline Sirimalwatte

Miss Pearl Fernando

- .. Kanagam Ponniah
- ,, Lucy Gnanapragasam

APPENDIX

DIAGNOSIS OF HOSPITAL CASES

FOR 1938

Abortion	81	Dyananaia	7
		Dyspepsia	
" Threatened	-	Eczema	22
Abscesses		Endometritis	48
,, Gluteal		Endocarditis	7
,, Mammary		Enteric Fever	12
,, Multiple		Enteritis	151
., Labial		Flatulence	2
Accidential Haemorrage	2	Gastritis	8
Anaemia Pernicious		Gonorrhoea	19
,, Secondary	21	Gingivitis	1
Ankylostomiasis	513	Haemophilia	2
Ascaris Lumbricoides	95	Haemerrhoids	5
Asthma	25	Helminthiasis	183
Blepharitis	3	Hydatidiform Mole	2
Bright's Disease	1	Hypermesis Gravidarum	. 7
Bronchial Catarrh	6	Hypertrophied Tonsills	2
Bronchitis Acute	139	Hysteria	19
,, Chronic	8	Hydramnios	2
Burns and Scalds	2	Hepatitis	2
Cardiac Diseases	53	Influenza	75
Cerebral Embolism	3	Intestinal Obstruction	1
Cervicitis	3	Infantile Uterus	1
Conjunctivitis	2	Imperforate Rectum and A	nus 1
Convulsions Infantile	61		280
Cystitis	45	, Cerebral	15
Cancer	4	Mastitis	12
Carious tooth	1	Menopause	8
Carbuncle	1	Metritis	16
Debility	67	Meningitis	3
Dermatitis	4	Mania	1
Diabetes	8	Mucus Colitis	3
Digestive Disorders	271		6
Diseases of Pregnancy	248		3
Dislocation	1	Nephritis	111
Dysentery Amoebic	34		6
	10		9
Dysentery Bacillary	10		

IIO APPENDIX

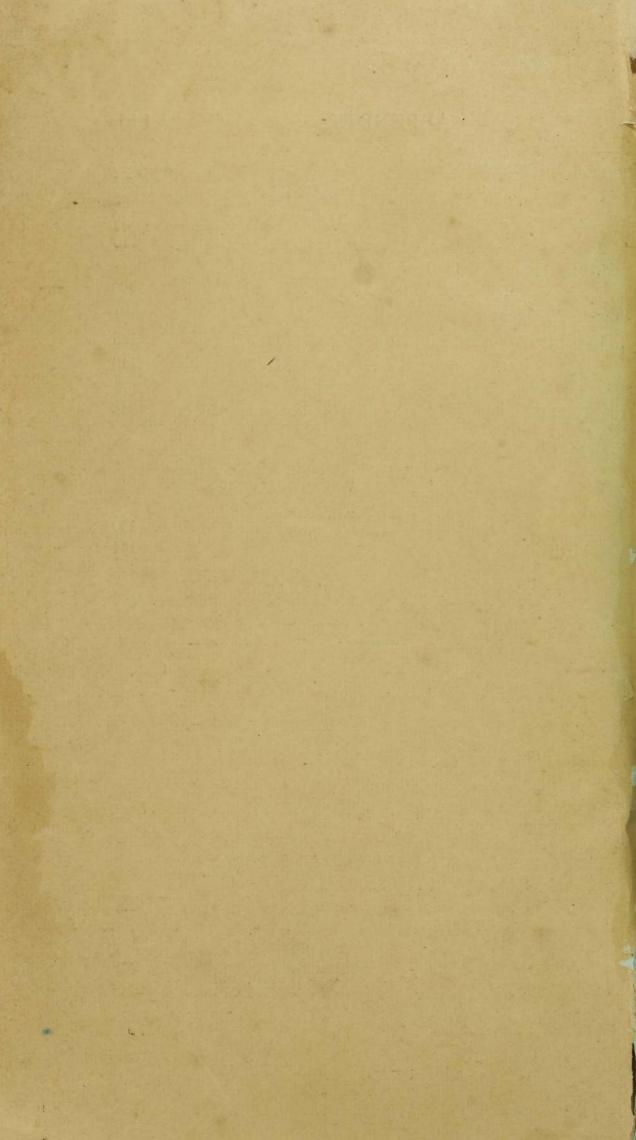
Neurasthenia	6	Prolapse of	Uterus	22
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	8	Rheumatisn	1	59
Otitis Media	3	Rachitis		9
Oedema of Lungs	1	Scabies		55
Puerperal Mania	6	Salpingitis		5
Puperal Eclampsia	32	Sterility		40
,, Sapraemia	7	StomatitisU	lcerative	18
,, Septicaemia	151	Syphilis		11
Puerperium	33	Sciatica		2
Pyelitis	12	Syphilis Con	ngenital	33
Pyelonephritis	3	Tonsilitis		17
Pertussis	3	Trauma		25
Para-Typhoid Fever	1	Trichiurias	is	4
Parturition	1323	Threatened	l Miscarriage	26
Peritonitis	2	Tubercular	Meningitis	1
Pharyngitis	14	Toxaemia o	of Pregnancy	5
Phlegmasia Dolens	3	Ulcers		13
Placenta adherent or reta	ined 8	Uraemia		1
Placenta Previa	25	Urethral Ca	runcle	1
Pleurisy	7	Uterus Fibi	roids	13
Pneumonia Broncho	50	19	Polypus	1
,, Lobar	20	,,	Procedentia	30
Pulmonary Embolism	2	,,	Retroversion	60
Prematurity	97	Vaginitis		4
Pulmonary T. B.	1			

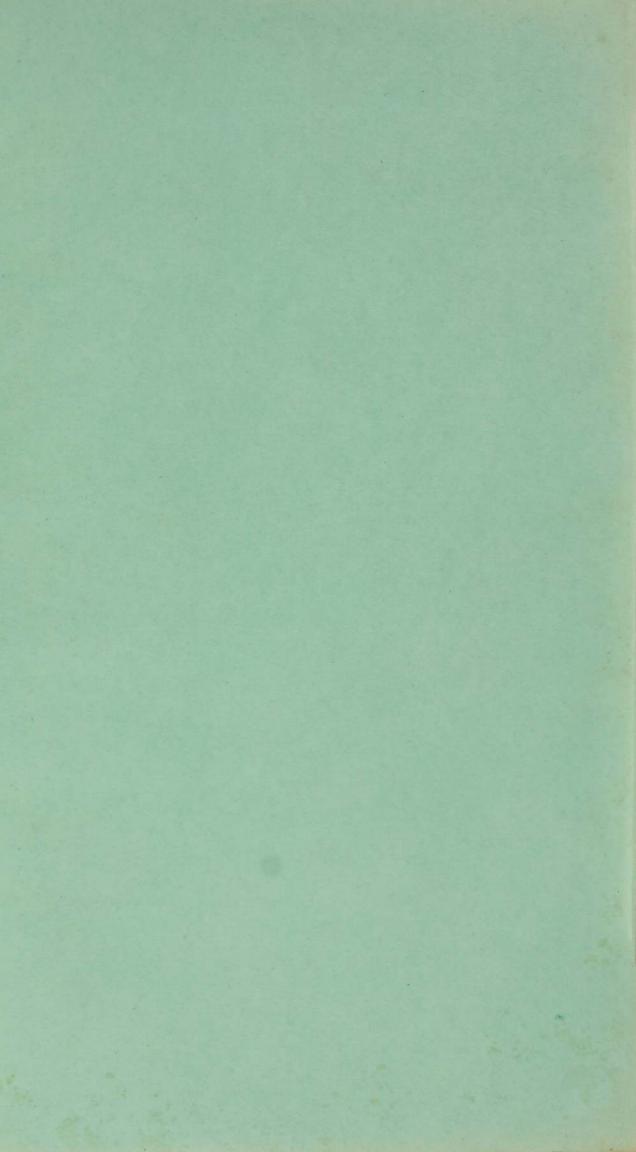
STATISTICS FOR 1938.

Dispensary Patients	(New)		7070
	(Old)	Total	10747
Moor St. Clinic Visits	(New)		403
" "	(Old)	Total	119

APPENDIX

Hospital	In-Patients		4526
,,	,,	Total days	47620
"	"	Daily Averag	ge 130
•••	,,	Average No.	of Days 10
		n Hospital 1396	
23	A Commence of the Commence of		Total 1490
	Villages		359
		ed in Hospital on 31, 12, 37	125
	1,	, on 31. 12. 38	
The lar		spital in one day	171
The To	tal Number	of deaths in Hospital was	150 or 3. 31%
Mortant	y Rate:—	Children under one wee	ek 91
		mo	nth 15
		Ve	
		Adults (above one year)	
Still Bi	rths		141
TOTAL STATE OF THE			





Sugarai 0772222047

Buldens Manipory Paris

5-vigetha 077-1882528.



