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THE MEMOIRS
OF
R. D. Somanader Mudaliyar
and his family
AT
Batticaloa



A. C. M. Press, Tellippalai, Ceylon.

1923



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PREFACE

I have been allowed the privilege of reading the following pages while in manuscript. With the exception of the tribute from Mr. Gillings, all the letters were written by Mrs. Rigg, wife of the Rev. Edmund Rigg, for many years missionary in the North Ceylon District. They first appeared in the "Christian Herald."

The family here spoken of is one of the best known and most distinguished in Batticaloa. Many of them have held high office under Government, and Government has recognised their faithful service by continuing the rank 'Mudaliyar' in the family for upwards of a century. The eldest grandson of Daniel Somanader Mudaliyar now wears the title, and he is responsible for the publication of these memoirs. He well upholds the great traditions of his maternal grandfather, Daniel Somanader Mudaliyar, as did also his predecessors Jeremiah Ezekiel and Edward Somanader Mudaliyars.

Daniel Somanader Mudaliyar and his wife were pillars of the Methodist Church in Batticaloa. It may almost be claimed that they laid the foundations of the present large and influential Methodist Community. Their children and grandchildren, and great grandchildren with scarcely an exception, have followed in their footsteps. The present large membership is comprised mainly of descendants of this devoted Christian family. The whole Christian Community reveres their memory and finds in it an inspiration to noble living.

Only the other day I was told about Daniel Somanader's high regard for the Lord's Day and of

his regular attendance at Public Worship, along with his wife and children. When the children married and had homes of their own, the father's solicitude for their spiritual welfare continued unabated. If any of them were not present in the Church at Morning Service the Mudaliyar made a practice of immediately visiting the home to ascertain the reason for their absence. He was 'diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord'.

The following pages reveal the character of Mrs. Daniel Somanader Mudaliyar. She was indeed an ornament to the home, a treasure 'far above rubies'. Her noble spirit, constant faith and strong Christian character are clearly indicated in these memoirs. The manner in which she placed loyalty to Christ before conformity to social conventionalities is worthy of that emulation which is the highest praise.

In the Batticaloa Wesleyan Methodist Church there have been many trophies of redeeming grace. These memoirs are a loving tribute to the memory of some of them, and should serve to perpetuate their memory among the present generation and provoke them to like faith and good works.

Batticaloa,
16 October, 1922.

J. A. BARKER,

INTRODUCTION

The subject of these Memoirs is R. D. Somanader Mudaliyar, and his family. He was the son of A. Ramanader, who was the Kachcheri Mudaliyar of Batticaloa during the earlier years of the British occupation of Ceylon. His parents were Hindus. He was born in the year 1799, and in early years became a convert to Christianity.

R. D. Somanader Mudaliyar received his education in the first Wesleyan Mission Boys' School started in Batticaloa by the Rev. William Ault, and under the Commandant of a Native Regiment then stationed in the Batticaloa Fort.

It is said that in those days there was such a scarcity of paper in Batticaloa that the Mudaliyar had to resort to the use of tender plantain leaves or olas (palmyra leaves) for writing purposes.

He was first appointed Assistant Kachcheri Mudaliyar under his father, receiving the permanent appointment sometime later. He was a Circuit Steward of the Wesleyan Town Church, Batticaloa. He also held the office of Local Preacher. His superior, the Assistant Government Agent (Trincomalie then being the head of the province) was also a Local Preacher of the same Church. They travelled the district together and while doing so would frequently hold Evangelistic Meetings in the villages of Muthalaikudah, Amplanturai, Amirthagali, &c. Through his influence and exemplary Christian character many were led to the foot of the Cross.

Mudaliyar R. D. Somanader had 10 children. The names of his sons were.

Jeremiah Somanader Mudaliyar, President of the V. T.,

Ezekiel Somanader Mudaliyar, Chief Mudaliyar E. P.,
 Abraham Somanader, Vanniyah of Akkaraipattu.,
 David Somanader, Clergyman, S. P. G.

Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel were Local Preachers and Circuit Stewards in the Wesleyan Church. In fact the descendants of Daniel Somanader Mudaliyar down to the fourth generation have been or still are members of that Church. The name of his eldest daughter is perpetuated in a Wesleyan Mission property called "Mrs. Joshua's Bungalow" erected on a piece of land donated by her and used regularly for public worship. It was this lady who started the first Tamil Girls' School in the Province and conducted it herself for many years.

Batticaloa, Albert Canagasabey Mudaliyar.
 October 14th, 1922,



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29 JY 1925
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1875

The
WESLEYAN JUVENILE OFFFRING
July 1859

A contribution from Rev. James Gillings the then
Superintendent Missionary of Batticaloa.

Daniel Somanader Mudaliyar

The accompanying is a likeness of Daniel Somanader, a native Christian of Batticaloa, in the Eastern Province of Ceylon. His title, Mudaliyar, means the headman, from a Tamil word signifying "first" or "chief" and so he is regarded by his countrymen throughout the whole of the Batticaloa District, which contains many thousands of people chiefly Hindus and Mohamedans. He is head Mudaliyar at the Kachcheri or Government Office, where all public business relating to the sale of lands, and the general administration of the province is carried on between the European Agent (or Collector as he is called in India) and the people. By the Mudaliyar, all deeds are signed, public documents published, recommendations to public offices made, and complaints and requests referred to the Agent; and to him the reports of sub-ordinates in all the country districts are brought; so that in all matters he is the interpreter and referee to whom the Agent and the people look. His influence is therefore great; and it is very important that he be a man of honour and integrity.

Daniel Somanader is truly a man of this character. The son of a pious father, from whom he inherits the title he bears, and to whose office he

succeeded. He was converted to God in early life, joined the Wesleyan Church in his native place, and afterwards became a Leader and Local Preacher, which offices he has honourably and usefully sustained for nearly forty years. His marriage was a singularly happy one. His devoted wife, who has just closed her worldly career, was esteemed and beloved as a princess among her people. They trained their large family of four sons and six daughters in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and had the happiness of seeing them all join the Church of their parents, and all the elder children married to Christian husbands and wives. It was indeed a treat to see this lovely household wending its way up the aisles of our neat chapel to the table of the Lord, and nearly filling up the communion-rail, clothed in the purest white and devoutly kneeling together as they plighted their vows to their common Saviour.

At our love feasts, the father always assisted in carrying round the bread and water, and shared it with the poorest of the members; thus laying down his caste at the Saviour's feet. Once in the year he holds a feast for all the poor of the country, of whatever sect or tribe they be who choose to partake his hospitality. The writer of this has been invited to the house on these occasions, and has seen two to three hundred persons seated on the grass in ranks, joyfully partaking a hearty meal of rice and curry in their own fashion, dipping their fingers first into the rice, and then seasoning it with the hot condiment and using a plantain leaf instead of a plate. When they were well satisfied, I was requested to preach to them the word of life; and invited them to that "feast of fat things" which the blessed Saviour has provided in his Gospel for all

nations; and when this was over, the large assembly separated.

On inquiring of the Mudaliyar the origin of this feast, he informed me that it was customary among the Tamil Headmen to make a feast once a year to their friends of similar rank to themselves; but since he became a Christian, and had read in his Bible our Lord's direction in Luke XIV 12-14. "When thou makest a feast," &c., he had established this feast for the poor and wretched, and for thirty years had continued it. Thus he gives a practical proof of his being a disciple of Christ by "doing the things that He says."

As a benefactor of the poor, a liberal supporter of Methodism, a friend and counsellor of the Missionary, a man of sound judgment, unblemished reputation, and high toned piety, Daniel Somanader has but few equals. He is now patiently awaiting his change to the society of the redeemed above.

JAMES GILLINGS.



CROWNS AND RUBIES

or

Gleanings from an Eastern Mission Field

"A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband. Her price is far above rubies." Pro. XII. 4, XXXI 10.

In the sunny little island of Pulliantivu, Batticaloa, which is surrounded by a peaceful lake whose shores are skirted by groves of the beautiful Eastern palms, there was born, in the year 1806, a little girl of high caste but heathen parentage named Amara-pathy. She was brought up as a heathen, and as

such, was diligently instructed in the faith and worship of her fathers, but her education otherwise was totally neglected. Her parents would have deemed it a disgrace to have allowed her to learn to read and write, so we can imagine her early years spent in ignorance of every thing beyond the narrow sphere of her own home. When about seven or eight years of age she was baptized, according to the practice of the Dutch Government, by the Proponent, for in those days all who held office under Government were compelled to accept baptism for themselves and their families. The name given to her was Angelina. As is the custom in the East she was early married, and was only 14 years of age when she became the wife of a Christian, a man of considerable influence, territorial and social, Daniel Somanader, by name. It is often a sad drawback to a Christian to marry a heathen wife. In many cases the result is that the man returns to his old religion and his old friends, while Christ is forgotten and the Bible put out of sight. However in this case it was not so. Daniel Somanader was very anxious that his wife should forsake her faith in idols and turn to the true God, and he left no stone unturned to induce her to do so. Daily he tried to impress upon her her error, and daily his efforts were supplemented by prayer that the Divine Light might shine into her heart and show her the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. He brought her from his father-in-law's house, where she resided even after her marriage, and in his own house read the Scriptures to her every day and admonished her to believe in the Christian's God. His efforts for a long time were unavailing, for, as all her own relatives were heathens and her own faith in her religion was very strong, she had all those barriers of Custom and

ancient belief, of which we have spoken, to overcome. Gradually however, the sun rose in her dark soul, the Light pierced her mind and the Holy Ghost revealed eternal things to her in their true aspect. Then it was that, leaving the religion of her youth, she took her husband's God for her own. For some time she was prevented from attending the house of God and thus making a public profession of her faith, but it now became her practice, in some retired part of the house, to engage in prayer with her husband and her two little daughters.

In the year 1822, the Rev. Joseph Roberts and his wife were appointed to labour in connection with the Wesleyan Mission at Batticaloa, and it seems to have been partly by their influence that Mrs. Somanader was induced to decide for Christ, for while they were there, they were in the habit of paying frequent visits to Mr. and Mrs. Somanader and on these occasions they conversed with Mrs. Somanader about her soul's salvation.

They subsequently opened a prayer meeting at Daniel Somanader's house. The good man so fully appreciated this means of grace and was so anxious that its influence should be widely diffused that he put up a bungalow in the yard in front of his house and here the word of God was preached by Mr. Roberts every Thursday evening. Mr. and Mrs. Somanader with their children and some of their neighbours and friends, attending regularly, and to this day, a stranger passing by that way may hear, on certain evenings of each week, the voice of praise and prayer ascending from the same spot, though from under a much more commodious roof than formerly.

Mr. and Mrs. Somanader now began to consider the question of education to their eldest daughter, the Missionary and his wife urging them on to it. This was a decided step in advance, as the prejudice against the education of girls amongst the heathen is as we have already stated, very great and it will be remembered that Mrs. Somanader's relatives were all heathens. The work of instruction was, however, commenced, although her friends were very angry and expostulated with her and her husband in bitter words. They said "you have not only left our religion and become Christians but have also begun to ruin this child, who is very dear to all of us, by educating her." Ah, they little knew that that very child was to become in future years a bright light in the surrounding darkness of heathendom, and her turn was one day to be worthy of a place amongst those whose price Solomon has declared to be above rubies! Thank God, though the parents were somewhat discouraged by the entreaties of their relatives, yet the child's education was carried on. In future papers we hope to be able to tell of some of the benefits which have already accrued from the breaking of this chain of foolish and heathenish superstition.

Signed M. E. R.



CROWNS AND RUBIES

or

Gleanings from an Eastern Mission Field

In the year 1828 an event occurred which, for some time, cast a gloom over Mr. Somanader's

family, but which, in the wise Providence of God, ultimately resulted in their eternal good.

Mrs. Somanader, after having given birth to a son, suffered greatly from rheumatism. Everything was done that love and kindness could think of for her, but her disease was beyond their skill, and her husband and friends feared they should lose her. Now let us note the difference in the conduct, on this occasion, of her heathen father and her Christian husband, and see how in her own case the Holy Spirit's influence proved to be greater than that of early friends and early training. Her father, as is often the case amongst the heathen, attributed her non-recovery to the unlucky position of the planets and determined to perform Pujas. These Pujas are ceremonies accompanied by offerings to the heathen divinities and in this case the propitiatory sacrifices were to be made to the Planets. Knowing that the Mudaliyar would not connive at such things, Mrs. Somanader's father wished to remove her from her husband's house for two or three weeks and at his own house to perform the Pujas for her and then to administer medicine. Mr. Somanader, hearing this, was anxious to know what his wife's views on the matter were, so he told her of her father's intentions and asked her whether she was willing to believe in these ceremonies and to sacrifice her soul to the devil, or whether she was determined, come what may, to exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and thus, in case of a death, to claim an inheritance with the saints in light. Mark her answer! She said, "The time in which I believed in vain superstitions is gone, I shall never more put my faith in them, never more be a slave to the devil and never more go to my father's house to perform any ceremony, and whether I live or die, I will trust in my God."

Had not the Lord spoken to her heart? Had not the Sun of Righteousness risen upon her dark soul with healing on His wings? Yes, indeed, and now in the time of trial we see her triumph, death is staring her in the face, but she has no inclination to return to her idols, she has cast them behind her and now Jesus is hers, hers for life or hers for peace.

The same night her father, after having prepared everything necessary for carrying out his plans, came to her, and said, "My beloved daughter, I intend to perform Pujas for you, propitiating the planetary gods, but I fear that your husband will never consent to such a thing, therefore I wish you to come to my house for about two or three weeks, and after the ceremonies are performed you can return home. For this purpose I am ordering a palanquin for you, as you are unable to walk." Mrs. Somanader, however, steadfastly refused to accompany her father, she told him that she knew that he pitied her and kindly sympathised with her, but, she said, "you seem to wish to sell my body, which is weakened by sickness, and my soul, to the devil. Though you may be displeased with me for disobeying you, it matters but little, it is better for me that My Heavenly Father be pleased with me. These doctors, whom you have called to administer medicines to me are not doctors, but men who offer sacrifice to the Planets. This thing is utterly hateful to me; you can do with them what ceremonies you please, but as for me, I will never consent to do such things nor to come to your house with such an object." Brave woman, nobly has she stood her ground! Her father, as might be expected, went away very angry with her, and the doctors also left her one by one.

Her husband now, being left to himself, had recourse to an English doctor, although his friends and relations tried to dissuade him from doing so. Still Mrs. Somanader was no better. And now in the midst of his sorrow and affliction the Spirit of God moved the heart of the Mudaliyar and he seemed to hear a voice within him, saying, "If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it," and from that day forth he tried to comfort his wife by telling her of the boundless mercy of God, and several times a day he took his little children and meeting with them around her sick bed he laid all their wants before God, asking him to pardon all their sins and to restore Mrs. Somanader to health and strength. The poor sufferer's faith also did not waver, she would often try to cheer up her family by saying to them, "Let us place implicit confidence and trust in Jehovah our God; let us lay our wants before Him and ask Him to grant us health and strength. He is the great Physician. He alone is our Father and has promised to grant whatsoever thing we ask of him."

And so prayer went up constantly in the ears of the God of Sabaoth, and sometimes in the dead of night when Mrs. Somanader's sufferings were worse, the little family gathering, the father and three children, might be seen meeting at the bed-side of the sick wife and mother with clasped hands and tears running down their faces, beseeching the Lord to have mercy on them and to restore their loved one to her family and her home. Was the Most High inattentive to the cries of these sorrow-stricken ones? No, he saw their faith. He stayed His hand, He said to the disease, "It is enough" and gradually the sickness subsided and in the course of two or three months the voice of prayer was turned into

that of praise and the afflicted household received back as from the dead, the one for whom so many prayers had been offered.

Mrs. Somanader herself came from her bed of sickness as gold refined in the fire and from this time it was quite evident to all that she was a changed, regenerated woman. The whole course of her life was different, Jesus shone in and taught her, and she determined that she and her family should be Christ's alone. Him only should she serve. She now forsook all the foolish and useless customs of the land and began weekly to attend the house of God with her husband and children. Other means of grace such as, prayer, praise, fasting and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper were also regularly observed by her. Not only was she the first at Batticaloa who thus brought her family to God's house, but, we believe, the first woman who attended the service there, and more than this, it was through her example and that of her husband and children, that the Tamil Christians of Batticaloa broke through very strong prejudice and took equal seats in the chapel, husbands and wives sitting together and conjointly worshipping and praising God. We do not know of any other Tamil Church in this part of the island where this practice is observed. As a rule the husbands and wives do not even walk to the house of God in company, and when there, the women sit on one side of the Church and the men on the other. We should be only too glad to find the good example set by the Christians of Batticaloa copied elsewhere, and why not? Is not Christianity a religion for the families of the earth? Does it not elevate woman and give her a place as her husbands peer, his equal? Oh!

that these bonds, which are but relics of heathenism, were for ever snapped asunder and that man and woman, who together sinned and lost their earthly Paradise, might together learn that God is no respecter of persons, that all are His, and that His great heart of love would fain see those who have acknowledged Him forgetting differences of caste, of sex and prejudice, when worshipping in His Holy temple. But it was not only in the house of God that Mrs. Somanader's changed spirit was manifest. The Sabbath day was honoured by her at home, she restrained her servants from work on that day and took them with her to the Chapel. She longed to work for God, in her heart of hearts she began to feel, that,

"If all the world her Saviour knew"

"Then all the world would love him too."

She also saw the importance of education and being advised by the Missionaries and their wives then resident at Batticaloa, began to learn the Tamil language with her children, her good husband the while encouraging and teaching her the word of God. As soon as she was able, she herself began to read and explain the Bible at her leisure to her children, her servants her neighbours, or with any who might come in, to see her. Here again she led the way amongst the females of Batticaloa being the first to seek a scriptural education for her children. Richly was she rewarded as the sequel of our story will show.

And what about her heathen relatives, her father and mother and brothers and sisters? Was she ashamed to confess Christ before these? No, indeed, she longed that they too should prove the efficacy

of a Saviour's blood and should know no other name than Jesus, and labouring hard for their conversion both by visiting them in company with the Missionaries and their ladies and by conversation with them, she tried to shew them the way of salvation and to lead them to Christ. Here we have the true marks of a Christian. Like Andrew of old, she finds her own relations and says to them. "We have found the Messiah" and then brings them with her to Jesus. Oh! with what tender love and holy joy the Saviour must have looked on such scenes as these! and now great was the blessing which he accorded to these earnest ones! Those who had once opposed Mrs. Somanader and grieved over her because she had become a Christian, were by constant entreaty and expostulation, aided by the Holy Spirit, now brought to see their folly and sin and to believe in Jesus. Yes, her heathen father and mother, and brothers and sisters with others of her relatives were heathens no longer. They "that walked in darkness" saw "a great light," and "they that" dwelt "in the land of the shadow of death, upon them," did "the light" shine. With what devout gratitude must Mrs. Somanader now have approached the throne of God. How must her heart have bounded with joy when she thought of the conquest which her Saviour had gained over those who had been so benighted and misled.

And now her own religious experience began to deepen. A class meeting was held by Mr. Somanader at his own house, which Mrs. Somanader attended, and many a time the hearts of those present were deeply moved as she spoke of her dread for sin, her love for her Saviour, and her duty towards God. She afterwards took the leadership of

this class herself, and in the room in which it was conducted placed a Missionary or collecting box and urged upon all who attended to bring a penny or a half penny weekly, herself and family being the most liberal donors. This money was delivered up to the Missionary at his quarterly visitation of the class.

Other good deeds were not wanting. Mrs. Somanader assisted greatly in a school which was opened about this time by her eldest daughter, for the education of her heathen girls of which we shall speak in our next paper; visited the women and children of the land without distinction of caste and rendered them help when help was needed. To the poor she was specially good and kind, making it a practice on special occasions such as Christmas days, good Fridays, &c, of feeding hundreds of poor people at her own house and at her own expense. After the Rev. R. Stott and Mrs. Stott commenced their labours at Batticaloa, Mrs. Somanader often accompanied them in visits to the heathens around, extending her labours to the adjoining villages of Kottamunai, Amirthegaley, Kallady, Navetkuda, &c, and in this way many were reached to whom the Missionary and his wife could not otherwise have obtained access, and several were really converted to God and admitted into the Church by baptism.

And so Mrs. Somanader lived, from the time of her conversion in 1828 to the time of her death, her life was one constant rebuke to heathenism. She was a light in her own home, a helper of her husband in his Christian toils, a successful woman in the training of her household, and a blessing in the Church and in the world around her.

And now the time of her decline came on, but while the body was losing its vigour, the soul was refreshed with strength and joy from the spirit of God. She frequently talked about death, and on the Sunday before her decease expressed her feelings to the Rev. R. Watson, Native Minister. She told him of her steadfast faith in Christ and her joy in the Holy Ghost, and to others she spoke words of edification and advice. She was taken ill with cold fits on Thursday, the 27th of January, 1859, and on the following Saturday the 29th triumphantly and fearlessly passed over the dark river and entered the portals of the New Jerusalem.

"Her memory is precious," "her children arise up and call her blessed," for, "a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."

Sgd. M. E. R.



CROWNS AND RUBIES

or

Gleanings from an Eastern Mission Field

The establishment of girls' schools in any part of this land is an inestimable boon, and the nation is yet ignorant to a great extent of the blessings which are in store for it through the influence of these schools. The time has not yet come when an uneducated woman is a disgrace to her friends, but it will come and the Christian young men, as they become more and more enlightened will seek for education in those whom they choose as companions for life. It is well-known that girls' schools in this coun-

try were, until recently, very rare. There is however, a great change coming over the face of affairs, so that now in several of the villages which afford an education for boys may be seen by the side of the boy's school neat little bungalows in each of which may be found seated some ten or fifteen little girls with their ola leaves, spelling out the letters of the Alphabet, or writing with their finger on the sand the Ana, Avana, which they chant out in their sing-song tones. These are surely the beginnings of brighter days. Here, if anywhere, may we look again for our buried rubies, for we doubt not many of those who, in these little schools, now seem to be but "untempered mortar," will, when educated, polished and Christianized, shine out as bright jewels; crowns to their husbands, their price above rubies.

We spoke in our last paper of a girls' school, which was opened in the bungalow of Mrs. Somanader's house. It will be remembered that Daniel Somanader, Mudaliyar, had taken pains to instruct his wife and children, so that they, unlike their relatives and friends, were able to read. Mrs. Somanader's eldest daughter, Mary, was born in the year 1820. In common with the rest of the family she was taught the way of God's Commandments and after a while she realised a personal interest in Christ as her Saviour and Redeemer.

In 1836 she was given in marriage to Mr. Joshua Swaminader and her father's house and compound were given to her as dowry property. Anxious that the heathen girls around her should be educated and brought to a knowledge of the true God Mrs. Swaminader formed a project for opening a school for girls in the bungalow, which, as we have said, was used for service on Thursday evenings.

But difficulties presented themselves, parents were not willing that their girls should be educated and Mrs. Swaminader was obliged to appeal to her own parents to exert their influence with the people, so that their prejudices might be, in some degree, lessened.

At length eight children, including two from the Mudaliyar's own family, were brought together and on the morning of the 5th of April, 1838, Mr. Somanader opened the little school with prayer, invoking the blessing of Jehovah on the undertaking. God did bless it and that abundantly. At first, however, it was found necessary to offer sundry inducements to the children to continue their attendance. Food, clothing, and books were given to the poorer girls, and prizes to the richer ones, and by this means more and more came to the school till in two years time the little number of eight had increased to thirty. Mr. and Mrs. Stott who were then stationed at Batticaloa, took considerable interest in this school and Mrs. Stott kindly assisted by Mrs. Atherton of Batticaloa took upon herself the not easy task of teaching needle-work to Mrs. Swaminader and her pupils.

It was some time before the poor little girls could gain sufficient confidence in the white ladies to be much benefited by their kindness; they were naturally afraid of them and in some cases even stayed at home on the days when they were expected. Gentle and firm persuasion, however, won the day and the needle work soon became a popular item in the instruction carried on in the school. The embroidered jackets and clothes attracted several besides the little girls: women from the neighbourhood came in with their children and grand-children to be taught with the pupils of the school.

And so God granted prosperity ; the good behaviour of the children induced many to come to the bungalow, and it was not long before Mrs. Swaminader could count, amongst her scholars, several, both heathens and Roman Catholics, who professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the year 1849 the Rev. J. Gillings was appointed to the Batticaloa Mission Station, and on visiting the school he proposed that it should be transferred to the Wesleyan Mission. Mr. Somanader advised his daughter to accede to this proposal, pointing out several reasons why she should do so. It would be under wise and good superintendence and an assistant teacher would be employed, the standard of the school would be raised and these advantages would tend to increase the number of scholars in attendance and would be decidedly for the good of all.

Accordingly, on the 3rd of October, 1849, Mr. Gillings took over the school for the Wesleyan Mission, employing Mrs. Swaminader as head teacher and granting an allowance for an assistant. Mr. Gillings himself, also, spent an hour daily teaching the children English and singing, besides conducting two meetings weekly in order to instruct them in our most holy faith. Prizes which he gave to the children who excelled either in learning or needle-work formed an incentive for them to attend.

A class meeting was also established by Mrs. Swaminader for those who were anxious to gather together and her testimony is that the experience of many with regard to Christian faith was real, sound and genuine.

Mr. and Mrs. Kilner and other Missionaries, who succeeded Mr. and Mrs. Gillings continued to

took the same kindly interest in the school, visiting it and instructing the children.

There arose, in course of time another difficulty [to be combated with—that of caste. The question was were children of low caste to be instructed, and if so, were they to be admitted into this school and to take their places with those of higher castes? What was to be done? Mrs. Swaminader wisely determined that girls of all classes should be taken into her school, and that as far as lay in her power, the ruling evil should be extirpated. But how? In the first place she took care that at first the children of the lower classes should have separate seats given to them and that her own sisters should sit with these, thus setting an example to those who were accustomed to think such a thing a disgrace. Mrs. Swaminader's sisters were often taunted by the higher caste children, some of whose parents tried to keep them away from school in consequence of this supposed invasion of their rights. Perseverance and rectitude of purpose, however, prevailed and gradually the children learned to sit side by side with each other, till peace and order and kindly feeling were spread all over the school.

This is as it should be. Would that such tact were used everywhere and with similar results. It is grievous beyond measure to see the evils which are caused by this system of caste. The people of the higher grades of Society would forbid those of a lower stratum to rise, even supposing these latter to be possessed of extraordinary genius, talent or ability.

It is something like trampling on a fallen foe, is this everlasting consignment of our fellow creatures to a state of servitude and subordination.

Suppose the case of a boy of the dhoby or of the fisher caste, gifted by God with ability for learning of the highest nature. By some chance he is taught to read and write; and perhaps even distinguishes himself as one likely to excel, he gets a thirst for knowledge and pursues it as far as he is able. But, however well he may succeed, he may not associate himself with those who ought to be his fellow-students, but must find his companions amongst the uneducated of his own caste and may rise no higher. What is he to do? How can the nation be educated and Christianized thus? Oh that the Christians of the land, both men and women would follow the example of Mrs. Swaminader and set their faces steadily against such things. Let us not compromise matters. God is no respecter of persons and when we stand before His judgment seat He will not ask of what caste we are, but those who have learned to love him in sincerity and truth will sit down together with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the truly noble of all ages, while the wicked will together be cast into outer darkness.

But to return. These little girls learned not only to sit and to study together but they formed little meetings for prayer, meeting in company to ask the help and blessing of God's Holy Spirit, and their teacher testifies that her heart has often been gladdened by seeing exemplified in them the fruits of the spirit, faith, hope, and love. What are the results which have already attended this godly training? Many of the children who came to the school when it was first opened, are now Christian mothers and some of them even grand-mothers and the children have been brought to the same school and taught the same blessed lessons which their parents learned before them.

Temporal blessings have also accrued to the girls in consequence of their being educated. For instance, the mother of a poor girl learning in this school is a cooly woman, her work is to buy and carry paddy, etc., here and there; the daughter, who most likely, if uneducated, would have had no better employment, can now earn a more advantageous and respectable living by her needle work.

Some of the girls who have left the school have established small schools of their own and so are diffusing the blessing which they themselves have received, others, in their own homes, are shedding their light on those around them. It has been estimated that in the space of 36 years the number of girls who have been educated in this school is about 500; 65 or 70 of whom have already passed from time into eternity.

The school is now taught in a bungalow put up by the Rev. J. Brown in the compound adjoining Mrs. Swaminader's and is classed amongst the Government A schools. Mrs. Swaminader still teaches the girls who attend there, and has three assistants, one of whom gives lessons in English. Amongst other things the girls are learning to sing. Little hymns from the Pala Keetham, such as, "There is a happy land, &c," may now be heard in the school as well as in the homes of the children. We greatly regret that Christian song is not more generally understood and practised amongst the Tamil race, but we hope that now something is really being done to imbue them with a love, not for their own lyrics only, but also for our more classical and harmonious Western Music.

In our next paper we hope to give a short sketch of some of the girls, who, from this school,

have already passed the bounds of time and space, and are now basking in the clear, unclouded light of God's countenance.

The history of many a school might be written which might possess as much interest as the one which we have just penned, but perhaps not many have exerted a wider and more healthful influence on the many families around it than this. Batticaloa and its neighbourhood has cause for thankfulness to God that such a school has been established and has flourished for so many years. Since its commencement other schools have sprung up in the vicinity, and recently a Girls' Boarding school, similar to the one we have in Jaffna, has been opened in connection with the Wesleyan Mission, on the premises adjoining the Mission house. This, we hope, will supply a want; there are many heathen girls who, if attending a day school only, lose considerable degree of the good obtained there by intercourse on their return home with heathen relatives. A Boarding School greatly mitigates this evil, the girls there have the advantage of a constant Christian training and only return home occasionally for a short holiday. On the Sabbath day, they are sure to have Sabbath day lessons and to be taken to worship God in His Temple, while the morning and evening family prayer together with the inducements held forth to the girls to pray to the Father, who seeth in secret, cannot but abound with blessing.

Oh that many such schools may be seen rising up in the midst of heathenish darkness and superstition, and that the Holy Spirit may so work upon the hearts of the parents amongst all classes of the people that they may be led to see the advantages which must follow the sending of their girls to such establishments!

E. M. R.

CROWNS AND RUBIES

or

Gleanings from an Eastern Mission Field

The records of the good resulting from such a school as that of which we spoke in our last paper are written on high, and not until the day when the sealed books are opened shall we know the number of those who from that little bungalow now help to swell the song of Moses and the Lamb before the Throne of the Triune Jehovah. And still less shall we know in this world how many have been chosen heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ Jesus our Lord, who would never have known of their Saviour but through those who have gone forth from this school, spreading the blessings which they received, on all around. Just as when we throw a pebble into a stream of water we cannot trace the ever increasing, ever widening circles thereby formed, or as we cannot find out the numerous corners which are penetrated by the all diffusing rays of the great luminary of day, so with regard to such a school in a heathen land, it is impossible for us to calculate the wide-spread good which must result from it. The Bible command is, "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." Eccl. xi. 6.

Amongst those who attended Mrs. Swaminader's school when it was first opened was her own sister Johanna (the mother of Albert Canagasabai: Mudaliar). She was born in the year 1830. so that at this time she was just eight years of age. Her conduct

while in the school was very satisfactory, she was attentive and intelligent and delighted in the reading of the Word of God, asking questions when she could not understand what she read. She often conversed with the other girls in the school about the truths of the Bible, as far as she was able, and was several times observed talking to Hindu and Mahomedan children about God and Christ, in some instances so far interesting them that they anxiously asked, "What shall we do?" She attended the school for six years and then remained at home until she was eighteen years of age, when her father gave her in marriage to Mr. Alfred Canagasabey, a Catechist in the Wesleyan Church. Eighteen more years were passed by her in her own house. She had seven children, four daughters and three sons, all of whom she brought up with great care, educating them and leading them to Christ, at the same time not neglecting her neighbours and friends, but living before them and with them as a Christian woman ought to live.

Of such is the kingdom of heaven. To some, long years of Christian usefulness are granted, others are early gathered into the garner above, and others, while in the prime of their life, just when it seems that they are most needed in the family or in the church, are taken away. We wonder why and are dumb, while a voice from within the veil seems to speak to us and say, "what thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter."

Mrs. Canagasabey, when about 35 years of age, was again expecting to become a mother, and was by no means in her usual state of health. Instinctively she seemed to feel that it was not only possible, but probable, that she would not live, and un-

der that conviction she frequently talked with her eldest sister Mrs. Swaminader on the subject. She was, as may be supposed, anxious about the matter but her anxiety was not so much for herself as for the children whom she must leave behind her. Her sister comforted her by telling her not be unnecessarily troubled, but to put her trust in God, who is merciful as well as righteous. Although Mrs. Canagasabey was in such a weak state of health she attended very assiduously about this time upon another of her sisters who was sick, but who recovered.

One morning in March, 1866, Mrs. Canagasabey came from the house of this sister to Mrs. Swaminader's looking particularly anxious. On being asked the reason, she again said that she did not think she would live long, and that she thought the time was approaching when all the members of the family would have to help her, for she did not expect long to be able to come and see them at their own houses. Her sister reminded her of the kindness and love of her Heavenly Father and told her it was impossible for any one to know what the will of God concerning them was. Mrs. Canagababey replied, "True, we cannot know the will of God, but my heart warns me daily, saying that death is approaching and that I must be prepared. Besides which, I had a dream a few days ago which troubles me." The purport of the dream she related in some such words as these. "While I was asleep my deceased father came to me, and called me. I gladly ran to him and asked him why he called me. He replied, 'You must not stay here and be troubled by wordly cares, come with me. Be quick and dress yourself,' I said, 'I should be glad to go with you, but how

can I leave my little ones?" He answered, "Those who are left will take care of your little ones, I do not like you to be troubled, come quickly." I then went to the house, got my children to sleep and leaving them in their beds, put on my chapel dress and started. My father rose immediately from the chair, saying that we must go quickly. I walked on with him for some time thinking that though it was painful for me to leave my children, I ought to do as my father wished, when having got some distance from the house we heard some one screaming and it appeared to be the voice of my child Amelia. I turned and saw my son Albert running towards us with Amelia in his arms, crying, and I stopped. My father looked at me and said, "Walk on without delay, those who are at home will take care of the child. We went a little further and turning round again, I found that the child was gone and that my father and I were alone. I was stunned at this and awoke. On opening my eyes I wondered what this could mean and concluded that my Heavenly Father meant to separate me from my children and that I should soon die."

Who will say that dreams are always meaningless and void? We hear again and again of those who have been forewarned of coming events by dreams, and in many instances at least we must credit the testimony of those who relate these things to us. Dr. Bushnell, after relating a dream and its fulfilment, says, "Let any one attempt to account for the coincidences by mere natural casualties, and he will be glad enough to cease his labours by the acknowledgment of a supernatural Providence. It is not necessary now that God should reveal His will to men in dreams as He used to do, because that

will is made known to us in His own word, but it seems certain that sometimes still a heavenly messenger is sent to warn or to encourage one and another, here and there. It appeared to be so in this instance, as we shall presently see. The evening after Mrs. Canagasabey had related this remarkable dream to Mrs. Swaminader, she sent for her sister and requested her to stay with her that night, as she did not feel at all well. Mrs. Swaminader did so, and a great part of the night was spent by the sufferer in prayer. Her prayer was, that if it were the Lord's will, he would restore her to her family, but if not, that He would cleanse her from her sins in the blood of Jesus and grant her a place in His heavenly Kingdom. On the night of the 5th of April, she gave birth to twin daughters and though for a short time after this event she appeared to be better, fever eventually came on and she grew worse again. Her fears with respect of death were revived, and calling her daughter Caroline to her, she requested her to bring pen and paper. She then instructed her to make a memorandum of everything that was due to her as well as of what she owed to others and taking the paper from her hands she read and folded it, and handing it to her daughter told her to keep it and to act according to it, as she would probably soon leave them. She then begged her to treat her sisters and brothers kindly and expressed her anxiety that all her children should walk as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. The poor child wept sorely, but her mother entreated her not to do so assuring her that God would be to her in the place of a mother and then sent her away to help her sisters. When Caroline had gone out of the room the mother herself could not refrain from tears. Her two brothers, J. Somanader Mudaliar, and

E. Somanader Mudaliar, seeing her weep, told her to put her trust in God and promised that they themselves would take care of her children. This comforted her very greatly and after praying quietly she slept for a short time. When she awoke she said she had no pain and was quite well still she believed that the time of her departure was at hand and she wished to sit up and eat and talk with her brothers and sisters about the journey which she was about to take. She asked them what day of the month it was, and how many years it was since she was born and she was told that she was 36 years of age. "Well," she said, "these many years God has kept me with you and has done me good and now it appears that it is His will to call me to himself. Do not sorrow, but bid me farewell, What time is it?" She was told that it was ten o'clock, She then requested that her children might be fed and put to bed, and that the friends who were around her would take their own food and come again soon and give her a little tea. She took the tea, rested a little and said she wished to sleep awhile. Mrs. Swaminader remained in the room with her, but the desired sleep did not come, so she clasped her eyes and prayed for a long time while the tears streamed down her cheeks. Again she asked what day of the month and what time it was, and on being informed, requested that her friends with her husband and elder children might be called in. Taking a Tamil hymn-book which was near her, she found the hymn which commences.

"God of my life, through all my days,
My grateful powers shall sound thy praise;
My song shall wake with opening light,
And cheer the dark and silent night."

and said, "I cannot see well, but I want you to sing this hymn and others, which speak of my departure.

Her brothers and friends sang several hymns from the Tamil hymn-books, such as the 81st. the 83rd and the 173rd, suppressing meanwhile their own sorrow. After they had sung for some time Mrs. Canagasabey asked them to stop a while, and calling her three eldest children to her, begged them that, as they had been dutiful and obedient to her till that time, so they would now obey their uncles and aunts, above all taking God for their father and friend. She then committed the children to the care of her brothers and sisters and said "In a few moments I shall be gone." Again looking at Mrs. Swaminader she said, "Many a time we have conversed about what we should feel at the hour of death. Now I see it, some day you will see it too. And now my eyesight grows dim. Place a light between you and me and read such hymns as will comfort me."

While her sister was reading, Mrs. Canagasabey listened with great delight, when suddenly turning round she looked at a place where no one stood and said, "Make haste, and bring a chair." She was troubled at some delay in bringing the chair, but when it was placed near her, she saluted some one and said, "Take a seat on this chair." Her sister asked her why she had ordered it to be brought, she replied, "When people who are more respectable than we are come, should we not give them a more respectable seat. Look here, the chair he brought is dirty. I shall stay no longer. I am going." She was asked where she was going and replied, "I am going to live with my sisters and my father who have gone before me." Again looking at her sister, she asked how many days it was since she had given birth to her children, Mrs. Swaminader said, "Seven days

then," she said, "it will be eight days tomorrow, bathe me and put me on a clean dress and lay me on the bed, as you always have done on the eighth day. Hymns were again sung at her request.

She then again asked what time it was and on being told that it was three o'clock, she said, "I will not delay any longer, make haste and sing a hymn." Her husband asked if he should pray for her but she said she had finished praying for everything she needed and wished her friends still to sing. Then she called them all by name and bade them farewell with a joyful countenance and without any agitation. "I am going" she said, "from this world, I am going." At this one of her sisters became so overwhelmed with grief that she went out of the room. Mrs. Canagasabey asked her where she was going and then she said with a loud voice, "I am leaving" you. So saying she closed her eyes, breathed quietly four or five times, and then her happy spirit winged its flight into the presence of the God in whom she had put her trust.

She died on the morning of the 12th April. Her request that she might be bathed and dressed in clean clothes was complied with, and on the evening of the same day her remains were laid in the tomb by the Rev. E. Rigg, until the day break, and the shadows flee away, then shall the great multitude of the redeemed from North and South, and from East and West, meet in that,

"World of Spirits bright
Who reap the pleasures there;
They all are robed in purest white
And conquering palms they bear,
Adorned by their Redeemer's grace,
They close pursue the Lamb;
And every shining front display
The unutterable name."

May this be your portion and mine, dear reader, let our constant aim be to follow those who have trod in the foot-steps of Christ, that with them we may, at the end of our journey, possess the land which is very far off, the promised land of rest and light and love and joy unutterable.

M. E. R.



CROWNS AND RUBIES

or

Gleanings from an Eastern Mission Field

The eldest daughter of the subject of our last biography followed in her mother's footsteps. In the year 1853 Alberta Caroline, being then but four years of age, was brought to Mrs. Swaminader's school, and there she remained until she was twelve years old, setting a bright example of love and gentleness to all her school fellows. Her mother died when she was but sixteen years of age, and she was given to the care of her uncle, E. Somanader Mudaliyar. She behaved like a mother to her younger brothers and sisters and often went to Mrs. Swaminader's school to assist the children in their lessons and needle work. Subsequently she was married to Mr. William Canagaratna, the eldest son of Canagaratna Mudaliyar, and after her marriage she still resided with her husband at Mr. Ezekiel Somanader's house. It was not long before Mrs. Canagaratna's health began to fail, and she appears to have had early a sort of presentiment that she might die. It is remarkable that Tamil people very readily succumb to disease, owing, perhaps to various causes. Their

climate may have something to do with it; to the ignorance of the native practitioners in medicine a great deal of the blame must be laid, and we certainly have noticed a lack of spirit and courage. There have been many, who, with judicious treatment and a certain degree of determination might, we doubt not, have been saved from an early grave. Whether it might have been so in Mrs. Canagaratna's case or not we cannot say, but if every one were to prepare for death, and to stand ready for it, it would be well. She prized her Bible, was faithful to her God, and loving and obedient to her husband. She was very regular in her attendance at at the house of God, not being easily deterred from going on account of sickness.

On the 21st of November, 1873, Mrs. Canagaratna accompanied by one of her sisters, went to visit Mrs. Swaminader's School. She looked particularly joyful, and on being asked whether she would spend a long time in the school that day, she said, "It may be that I shall not hereafter come to this school or see these children, so I am come to see them and to talk to them today." She then sent for the absent children and, gathering them all around her, she conversed freely and cheerfully with them and told them she was going to leave them. She said she should like to see them once more if it were God's will, but if not she wished them to remember this, her last visit to them. She then bade them good-bye and left them sorrowing and sad. The next three days she suffered much and on the 24th of November, gave birth to a son. She seemed convinced that she should die, and committed herself and her child into the hands of her heavenly Father, praying that He would do to her according to His

will. The doctors said that she was only weak and that there was nothing serious the matter with her, but she would not believe them and at about 10 o'clock at night she complained of pain in her head. The doctor was immediately sent for, but before he could arrive, she became delirious and insensible. In this state she continued for three days, until the 27th when she opened her eyes, gladly partook of a little food but could not speak.

When her friends, who stood around her, read and sang hymns, her face and eyes bespoke the comfort and joy of which she could not testify with her lips. And thus at about 8 o'clock on the morning of the 29th of November her spirit gently passed from its mortal tenement and put on its robes of immortality, for ever to bask in the unclouded sunlight of God's presence. Her friends sorrowed for her, but not without hope; they knew that her spirit had gone to be reunited to that of her sainted mother and of others of the family who, following Christ while on earth, have become joint heirs with him of the inheritance above.

"High on Immanuel's land
We see the fabric stand;
From a tottering world remove
To our steadfast mansion there;
Our inheritance above
Cannot pass from heir to heir."

But the trophies of grace won from Mrs. Swaminader's school are not, by any means, all to be found amongst the children of parents who were themselves Christians. The Saviour wears, as bright gems in His diadem, many who, though children of heathen parents have testified by word and by deed that they were worthy of Him, for they loved Him better than father and mother, brother and sister,

and having surrendered their hearts to Him on earth, have gone to join the church of the first born above. If we can, let us picture to ourselves, the mind of a little child, from its birth surrounded by nothing but heathenish darkness and superstition, learning of Christ, the sole Master and Ruler of all, of the human race as all sinners, and then of the great Redemption, the oft repeated, but ever new story of the Cross, and those of us who have watched the eagerness with which children will listen to something they have never heard of before, cannot wonder that such lessons should make a deep impression on many of those who received them. This impression, followed up by the prayers of the faithful teacher, and stamped by the Holy Spirit on the child's heart, brings forth fruit, in some thirty, in some sixty, and in some a hundred fold.

Take, as instance, two only amongst the heathen children who were taught at the school at Pulian-tivu. Many more there have been, whose names, though forgotten perhaps on earth, are written in the Lamb's book of life.

One little girl was received into the school about the year 1846, being then eight years old. This child was instructed both at the day and sabbath schools and gradually the light of the Holy Spirit's presence banished the darkness from her heart; she began to feel that she was a sinner and tried to lay hold of Christ as her Saviour. Whilst in this state of mind, she begged her parents to allow her to be baptized as a Christian. Mrs. Swaminader mentioned her case to Mr. and Mrs. Scott, who were then stationed at Batticaloa, and on their asking her why she desired baptism she said, "I desire to become a child of God

and to be baptized, and to walk as you do." The little girl was soon Christened and received the name of Jane, She lived, after this, for a short time only, but during that short time she attended the house of God with Mrs. Swaminader and took refuge at her house when her parents were absent from home to the heathen festivals. She fell sick of dysentery, from which she never recovered. On her death bed, she said, "I am very sick, I think I cannot live long," and again, stretching her hands towards her parents, she said cheerfully, I came into this world, as your child, but now am going away as God's child." She frequently prayed that her Saviour would bless her with his presence and that He would receive her to himself and very soon this blessed Saviour took this lamb of his flock into His arms, and gently carried her home, where in His bosom she has for ever found a shelter from this world of temptation and snares and sin, and an abiding resting place.

Another little girl, named Tangamuttu, who came to the same school in the year 1860, was the daughter of a bigoted heathen man; her mother died while she was very young. This child appears to have been somewhat remarkable for her diligence and constant attendance at the school, and also at the meetings, which, as we have elsewhere stated were convened for the spiritual instruction of the children. Not only so, but being anxious to understand what she was taught, she often remained behind when the other little girls had gone to their houses to ask further questions of her teacher.

Thus she learned that she, also, was a sinner and that out of Christ there is no salvation and she intimated to her father her desire to be baptized and become a Christian. Her father, however, objected,

whereupon Mrs. Swaminader, together with Mr. and Mrs. Dean did their best to get him to relent, but they could not prevail with him, and more than this he now hindered his child from attending school also, saying that she was too old and that she must remain at home to look after home duties. The poor girl was sadly disappointed at this arrangement, but she soon found that this was not all that was contemplated to keep her from becoming a Christian.

Shortly afterwards he gave her in marriage to a heathen young man, and now she was indeed more effectually hemmed in by heathen influences. Would the small gleam of light which had dawned upon her mind be entirely spread by the gathering clouds? And would she ever think now of Christ the Lord? or would His blessed Spirit be for ever banished from her heart? Surely some such questions must have arisen many a time in the mind of her teacher and she could but comfort herself with the remembrance of the precious promise, "Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days."

Tangamuttu did not enjoy good health, after her marriage, being often troubled with fever and perhaps for this reason she could not quite forget her former desire for baptism and often spoke to Mrs. Swaminader about the difficulty which existed between obeying the dictates of her conscience and pleasing her husband.

After a while she fell sick: and when her husband and father perceived that the sickness was unto death, they began to perform heathen ceremonies, made vows to Vyraven, and tried to propitiate the anger of the evil spirit through whose

agency they believed the sickness had been sent. Tangamuttu, however, was heard calling upon her Saviour, the Jesus of whom she heard in the Mission School, and thus praying her spirit passed away to be with him whom she had tried to love and serve. This is but an example of the difficulties that heathen girls have to encounter in finding their way to Christ and Truth. Truly they demand an interest in the prayers of all who long for the coming of Christ's Kingdom. These little ones belong to the Redeemer. Suffer them to come to Him.

M. E. R.



CROWNS AND RUBIES

or

Gleanings from an Eastern Mission Field

The blessings of a Christian house and parentage have been exemplified in the sketches which have been given of Mrs. Swaminader and some of her children. Oh that we had in this country, many more such homes and scores of such mothers; thank God their number is increasing; for as we have elsewhere observed, it is when the homes and daily life of the nation are regenerated that Christianity and its attendant blessings will combine to elevate and raise the people and of them it shall be said, "I will call them my people, which were not my people, and her beloved which was not beloved."

Catherine, mother of Rev. R. N. Sethucavalar another of Mrs. Swaminader's daughters was born in the year 1826, and with her sisters was early taught to read and to study the word of God. Perhaps only those who have lived in a heathen country can

imagine the difference there is between the training of children whose parents are still strictly heathen and those who seek a higher and better lot for their little ones. The little band of sisters in that Batticaloa home, who together were led to the feet of the children's Redeemer fully realised in their subsequent life their mother's wish that from them should emanate the graces of the Spirit, and one by one they are gathering home, to the Father's house above. Catherine was married in the year 1839, when only thirteen years of age to Mr. Solomon Sethucavalar, a Christian of Batticaloa. In her married life she carried out the teachings of her childhood's days. To her husband, she was obedient and faithful, conducting her household duties in such a way as to merit praise from all. She was no tale-bearer, as is sadly too often the case especially where topics of thought and conversation are so few, but endeavoured when others retailed scandal to turn the conversation to some account. A considerable portion of her time was employed in studying the Scriptures and in prayer and she made it a custom to search out and endeavour to ascertain accurately the meaning of what she read, sometimes having recourse to commentaries or asking her husband to explain difficult passages to her. She had four children, two of whom died early, leaving two boys as survivors and her first care was to train them in the fear of God. On their retiring to rest, they often asked her to read them a story, when she would generally choose some Old Testament history and thus make familiar to their minds the lives of the Patriarchs or of others of God's servants of olden times. Children are interested in what is true, the effect of a good story is often blunted in their estimation when they find that it is not true, but written either for amuse-

ment or for effect only. What could be better for these little ones than that the many beautiful narratives with which the word of God abounds from the story of the Fall to the "Old, Old Story of Jesus and His love." Mrs. Sethucavalor's children had those beautiful tales of yore, impressed early upon their minds and so, like young Timothy from the time of their childhood they knew the Scriptures which were able to make them wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

From Mrs. Scott, the Missionary's wife, Mrs. Sethucavalor learned to do fancy work ; so after having instructed her servants in their household duties, she would beguile many an hour with her needlework, while her Bible lay open before her. She was very regular in her attendance at the class-meetings and at the house of God and was ever desirous to hear sermons as well as quick to understand them. She gave willingly to the poor according to her ability, and towards her servants when reproving wrong doings, her manner was ever gentle and kind.

But this young mother was not long for this world ; early the messenger of death was sent to carry her away ; the sun of her life ere it reached its meridian glory suddenly and for ever was extinguished, and she fell a prey to the fatal effects of fever. Her disease first appeared on the 14th of October, 1852. On the 17th it greatly increased and her parents and brothers were summoned to the house to render such assistance as tender love could give. On the 19th she told her sisters that this fever was of a different type from any she had had before and that she was assured she would not recover. No medicine, she said, would cure her. Her eldest sister reminded her that though medicine might be of

no avail, yet God could impart healing and restore her health and begged her therefore to make her requests known to him. She however, refused to pray for health, saying that she knew it was God's will that she should die, and added, "I will pray only for the forgiveness of my sins, if you desire to keep me in this world, do you pray to God. Afterwards addressing her sisters she said, "As my disease increases, take away all who come to see me and without allowing a noise or crowding of my room, read to me a few verses of Scripture and join me in prayer to God, and when my brain wanders remind me of some verses suitable for my journey. Sing hymns and pray and when those who are weeping for me would come near, do not let them. Do not be dispirited, get strength from above and take care to do all these things properly." It is remarkable how clearly and systematically she arranged everything and how determined she was that all things should be done decently and in order and it seems strange also that she should feel so certain that she should assuredly die. The disease continuing to increase on the 22nd of Oct. Mrs. Sathucavaler said, "Today the fever is very bad, burning me up, it scorches my body and my eyes. My hearing is going." After this she said, "My journey is nearly done," and then remained quiet as if praying. Her sister Mary, who was a great help to her in this time of trouble, seeing her weeping, asked her why she did so; she replied, I am grieved for my sins, I was praying for pardon. I want you to read our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. She then said, "there is a change in me." Her father called the physician's attention to this and asked him to see what the change was. The doctor immediately felt her pulse and being surprised, said he must alter

her medicine. Mrs. Sethucavaler, however steadily refused to take any more medicine, she told her doctor that he had done what he could, but that he could not cure this disease. Her father remonstrated with her and begged her to take what was prescribed, but she replied, "Father, till now you have been my earthly father, I have obeyed you, I am now going to my Heavenly Father, He has shown me heavenly bliss and calls me to Himself. I am rejoiced to go, why then do you disturb me? Call Mr. Kilner to me. He will help me by praying with me and encouraging me." She then called her two sons, Samuel Sethucavaler and R. N. Sethucavaler, to her and said, "you must fear God, read the Scriptures daily, pray daily and put your trust in God. Don't play with wicked children, don't be friendly with them." Good and sound advice this, whether it come from the lips of a mother in Christian England or from one of the less favoured sheep of Christ's fold in a land where heathenism abounds. Her eldest son wept when he heard his mother's words, but she told him she did not wish him to weep in her presence, but listen to what she had to say to him, urged him to go to school every day and to lay hold on God as his support. Her parents and friends were much troubled because she would not eat, but she said, "God has given me bodily strength and heavenly light. I have now obtained great light by His grace, never before have I known such light. Since therefore this is the case, why do you trouble me about earthly things. I need no food." She then prayed in these or similar words. "Oh God My Heavenly Father, because the goodness Thou hast shown to me is very great let thanks be to thee for ever. And now, Oh God do thou give grace to my parents and brothers and to my relations that

the darkness of their minds may be removed and that they may obtain this heavenly light. And not only they, Oh, Lord, but may the whole world through Jesus receive this blessing."

Then turning to her friends she said, "The place to which I am going is a place of light and joy; the time will come when you also must leave this world. Prepare yourselves to enter this glorious heaven." Her father fearing that she might exhaust the little strength she had, urged her not to talk so much, but she said, "God has given me strength and boldness and divine illumination, therefore I will not cease to praise Him. Don't hinder me." When she had said this, she clasped her hands and prayed.

About the middle of the night the Rev. J. Kilner was sent for. Mrs. Sethucavaler's joy at seeing him, was very great. She said, "Come in Sir, those who are standing round me are of this world, they trouble me with this world's concerns. Therefore I sent for you. Pray with me and do everything you can to help me on my journey." Mr. Kilner accordingly conversed with her about heavenly things, and her countenance beamed with joy, indicative of the great happiness with which her soul was filled. Whilst Mr. Kilner prayed, read and sang, Mrs. Sethucavalar followed him by repeating and singing the hymns &c. After some time had been employed thus, Mr. Kilner said "Catherine, I am going and will come again soon." But at her earnest entreaties he remained till morning light; she seemed so to dread her friends speaking to her again on wordly matters; her affections were set on high, she longed only to hear of Christ and of the heaven to which she was hastening. Her father therefore, promised not to trouble her again with the things of earth,

and after Mr. Kilner was gone, he with her eldest sister, read and sang for a long time.

She, herself, then sang with great earnestness in Tamil the whole of the hymn commencing.

“Rock of ages cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee,”

And whilst singing the words,

“Let the water and the blood.
From thy wounded side which flowed, &c.,”

she exclaimed “In that blood I have washed, in that blood, I have bathed, I am clean within and without.” The next morning Mr. Kilner visited her again when their conversation was still of heaven. During his visit convulsions seized her and she said, “I cannot speak any more, read the Scriptures and engage in such conversation as may prepare my mind for the journey I am about to take. I shall hear and be happy.” Accordingly whilst Mr. Kilner was conversing she kept saying. “Yes, yes, I am happy.” The fits increased, and Mrs. Sethucavalar hearing her mother and sister weeping said, “Who is weeping there? Do you wish me to look back upon this life as Lot’s wife looked back on Sodom? This light is a blessed one. How joyful I am! I am caged within my body, if I were not, this moment I would fly away to my Lord.” All the next day her body was convulsed with fits and her mind wandered. Her sister rousing her said, “Is not this the Sabbath? We must today cease from wordly pursuits and worship God, must we not?” She said, “Yes, yes, let us sing some hymns.” And thus whenever her disease permitted, she employed her time in the reading of God’s word and in singing. Her sickness rapidly increased, the Sabbath passed away, she grew worse, her speech failed, but even now at intervals her

weak voice might be heard attempting to sing God's praises. On the morning of Tuesday the 27th Mr. Kilner again came and sang and prayed with her: after which her Christian friends continued praying and singing. She joined them in singing "Happy soul, thy days are ended," &c. Whilst they still sang her happy spirit winged its flight to her longed for home. She died at the early age of 26; her remains were committed to the grave on the evening of the same day on which she died. But for her immortal spirit there remains, "No more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither any more pain, for the former things are passed away." And there the light which had illuminated her soul while on her dying bed would break forth into a far more glorious brightness for "the glory of God lightens that land, and the Lamb Himself is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it." Oh blessed land! Oh glorious light! Would that while on our pilgrimage journey we had more of the sunshine of God's presence lighting up our pathway, and preparing us for the fuller glories of eternity.

M. E. R.

