

A VILLAGE LANTERN LECTURE

By Miss S. BISWAS

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For our village work, we went to Khaurapukur, a village beyond Tollygunge. We spent a month there, we were very happy; village people are very simple and friendly with us and they are quite eager to learn simple hygiene, simple rules for bringing up the children and all about diet. They tried to follow our advice, but some of them are so poor that they cannot even buy spinach, which is very cheap there. As we wanted to make our teaching a little interesting, we arranged to give some lantern lectures. On the first day, we gave a lecture on Tuberculosis and Maternity and Child Welfare work at a village called Sajnabera. The day was very cloudy and it was drizzling, still we started our work with 30 to 40 in the audience, but within half an hour, the place was overcrowded and the number went up to 100. They were much interested. In the middle of our lecture, the carbide was finished, so we wanted to stop the lecture, but they did not like it, they were anxious to hear and see the whole number of slides. They themselves arranged for carbide and we finished it in the end.

Gradually this news gained wide publication and we were asked to show our slides in a very far-distant village called Gangrai. Gangrai is far away from Khaurapukur, three hours' journey by shalti (country boat). It was arranged that we will spend one night there in the Mission house. We left Khaurapukur at about 12:30 p.m. We were six students divided between two shaltis, in one big shalti four students and the luggage and in one only two students. The day was very bright, but we did not feel so hot, as there was a nice, pleasant breeze. As we were going, we met many other people, they were watching us very curiously. Gradually, as we were going up the canal, we met many of our Centre mothers and babies, having baths in the canal. After two hours' journey, we came to a place where the canal divides, one branch goes straight on farther down and one joins with paddy fields. Our boat arrived first, so we waited there for the other boat and made the time pleasant with the help of Thermos flask and tiffin basket. From now on our boat entered the paddy fields, the water here was quite deep, about 5 to 6 ft. deep and as the boat was passing onward, the paddy stems were hurting our eyes. Then at about 3:30 p.m., we reached the place, we had to pass the Mission house and then we came to the gate. We were given nice tea and after tea, we were taken round to see the village. It is a perfect island, situated just in the middle of the paddy fields. During the year, for six months, these paddy fields are under water and no other means of conveyance but boats. On our way round to the village, we had to pass a village school; as soon as they saw us all, boys and girls, even the teacher, flocked round us and when we declared the news about lanterns, they were dancing with joy, they said we will give all the necessary help to clean the place and ran to inform the

parents about the lantern shows. We started our lecture about 6 p.m. and continued till 8.30 p.m. Gradually the crowd was increasing in numbers and just after the lecture, many women came with their children, and asked about diets and for advice about small ailments. The day after the lecture, one woman came to us with her husband; her history was a very sad one. This is her fourteenth pregnancy and only three children are living, so she wants to have a safe confinement and came to us for advice. Some of the women folk were so interested that they asked us to stay there. It was a moonlight night, when we were coming the moon was quite high up and helped us to see our path. After dinner we were introduced to some school teachers and other Bengali ladies; they were quite interested in our work and asked all about our training. After saying goodnight, when we came to sleep, we found our beds were in the verandah in a very nice place from which we could see the moonlight sky and the paddy fields, as far as the eyes could reach all round was green, green. We feel as if we are in Green Island. We had a very peaceful night. Next morning, after saying goodbye to all, we started our journey. On the way back, our journey was very pleasant, the sun is just peeping from his home and announcing to the whole world his approach, paddy and all other aquatic plants shaking off their night's laziness and making themselves bright and smart in the warm atmosphere, water lilies are opening to enjoy a sun bath. In this atmosphere we felt very happy and cheerful, we gathered lots of water lilies and paddy on coming down. We finished the journey in nice, cool time and before the sun got too bright, we reached Khaurapukur. The beautiful scenery and friendly behaviour of these people will be ever green to us.



THE MIDWIVES' UNION SECTION

Hon. Secretary—Miss S. M. Round (Sister Sallie), All Saints' Dispensary, Panvel, Dr. Colaba, Bombay.

Members are asked to send any helpful notes of cases, and articles for this Section to the Secretary.

HISTORY OF A LITHOPAEDION

By Miss F. FLETCHER, T.N.A.I. No. 388

Halima—Admitted 25-7-1938.

History—Said she was six months pregnant. Had been pregnant for ten months three years ago, but did not give birth. A tumour remained in her abdomen, however.

General Examination—Patient was very thin and looked very ill. Mouth and teeth very dirty; breath offensive. Hæmoglobin 35 per cent.

Auscultation—Heart dilated, mostly to the right.
Lungs crepitations heard at both bases.