

The Woman's Missionary Society.

[This Department is in the interests of the W.M. Society. All communications for it should be addressed to Mrs. Jos. McLeod, Fredericton.]

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REPORT OF REV. J. N. BARNES.

To the Corresponding Secretary of the Women's Mission Society:

DEAR SISTERS,—I have visited thirteen churches and five Bands, and had reports from three others by superintendents. The first was at Seal Cove, Grand Manan. It is prospering under the faithful care of Sister Maker, and is doing good work. Castalia has no Band, nor has North Head. I could not organize in either place. The Band at Wilson's Beach is doing excellent work. The pastor and his beloved companion are much interested in the work. This Band was organized last August, and is now one of the largest in connection with our work. The next visited was Waterville, Carleton Co. It is doing fairly well; the attendance is small. The next visited was Waasis. It is a good Band; the children appear to be much interested, and the attendance is good. I was at Rusiagornis; had meeting Sabbath evening, but did not meet the Band nor that at Bunkerville, but saw both the superintendents, and they reported the Bands in good condition. I also visited the Band at Marysville. I am sorry to say that the superintendent is sick, but her assistants are doing well with the Band. They have a good attendance, and the meeting was deeply interesting. I saw the superintendent of the Southampton Band, on our way up river, and she told me the Band in that place is in a very prosperous condition. I hope to do some special work in the month of May. Summary of work in April:

Families visited,	59
Prayed with,	35
Meetings conducted,	16
Miles travelled,	327
Cash collected,	\$22.50

J. N. BARNES.

THE WOMEN OF INDIA.

Intellectual, Social and Religious Conditions.

(Conclusion.)

Another significant movement has been the preparation of a suitable literature for women. India is practically without a Christian literature for women, and any one who in attractive form breathes forth the truth on printed page and scatters it in the homes of India is doing a great and needed work. That eminent English missionary, A.L.O.E., had a realization of this fact, and wrote or translated nearly one hundred books adapted to the needs of India's women, the greatest legacy she could leave to the daughters of the land.

All missionary societies have done much to meet the growing necessities of the case. It is a sad comment on the character of the literature of India that the government has positively forbidden the publishing of some of the "religious literature" of the Hindus because of its obscenity.

About twenty years ago the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church established an illustrated zenana pa-

per, called *The Woman's Friend*. It is now published in five dialects, two of Northern India, and three of Southern India. It is estimated that it reaches about twenty-five thousand women.

One of the recent ventures in Oriental literature is the establishment of *The Indian Ladies' Magazine*. This is a monthly periodical, now in its second year, and devoted entirely to the interests of women, discussing education, social reforms, and all evils under which the daughters of India have labored for years. The starting of this magazine marks an epoch in the intellectual life of the women.

Some of the institutions of learning are exerting a great influence in the zenanas. The Isabella Thoburn College, of Lucknow, gave during the past year two entertainments, sending invitations to a number of purdah women. The hour announced was four thirty, but many of the guests arrived at two o'clock. They were all gorgeously arrayed and seemed like birds let out of a cage. There was music by the students, and stereopticon pictures explained to the delighted audience by one of the teachers. The women asked numberless questions, and kept up a continual chatter, for everything was a novelty. They seemed more pleased with pictures of animals and people than with landscape views.

Every precaution had to be taken to protect them from the gaze of the public. As the carriages were driven to the veranda they were carefully screened, the driver jumped from his box and hid until the women were safely inside, shielded by curtains held up by the college girls.

At the last entertainment given the moon was full, and as the women saw the broad lawns flooded with moonlight, they seemed even more delighted than they had been by the stereopticon views and music. They danced like children in the moonlight before entering their closely curtained doolies that were to take them back to their dingy homes behind the purdah. These entertainments are a part of the practical work of the College Young Woman's Christian Association.

One of the teachers writes: "The interest in these entertainments shown by the women more than compensates for the trouble of converting the college premises into a zenana."

A similar entertainment was held in connection with one of the schools in Bombay. The drawing-room was crowded to its utmost limit with about two hundred women, a large proportion of them being from the zenanas. Many were flashing with jewels rare. Views of the "Life of Christ" were shown and explained, interspersed with music, after which refreshments were served, and this fact alone shows the giving away of long and deep-seated prejudices in that these women would consent to eat with Christians. The superintendent of this school writes that she is frequently invited to dine with native ladies, and in every case where she had accepted, a delightful time was spent. She gives one instance when the gentleman led the way to the dining-room, where a table was spread for about twenty, and everything served very daintily. After dinner they spent the evening in singing Christian hymns, for the women of this house are much interested in Christianity.

The permeating character of Christian teaching is working a great

transformation, as evidenced by the following: A teacher in one of the schools was leading the singing of the hymn, "Rejoice, the Kingdom of Christ is Coming," when a Hindu teacher exclaimed, "His Kingdom has come! Here we are—Hindu, Mohammedan, Christian, high caste, low caste—all sitting together on the same mat, singing His praises. His Kingdom has come!"

A society has recently been formed in India for the protection of children. This society is destined to exert a great influence over the present and future life and character of India. It aims to present the public and private wrongs of children and the corruption of their morals, and to take action for the making and enforcing of laws for their protection.

I have referred to only a few of reforms that are agitating the country, but the result of the agitation will yet give freedom of thought and life, and when this freedom comes who can estimate the power of the Indian woman? Touched by the transforming influence of the Christian religion, she will come out of the long night which has enshrouded her, into the dawn of a brighter and better day. There are women in the zenanas of India of great capabilities. There are Marys now sitting at the Master's feet, learning of him; there are Marthas ready to serve, Deborahs, that will yet fight the Lord's battles, and Miriams who will lead the women in their songs with thanksgiving for their deliverance.

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NOTICE.

Received per Miss Sadie D. Dakin, \$12.50 from the Light Bearers, Grand Harbor, and \$6.50 from C. E., Grand Harbor, in all \$19.00, for the support of Dukkic, who has been adopted by these societies of Grand Harbor.

M. A. VINCE.

15-5-03.

* * *

A SCHOOL OF POISONERS.

A merciless school of poisoners once flourished in Venice. During the fifteenth century even the government of the State used poison without any disguise as a weapon. A body called the "council of ten" was appointed to determine who should be dispatched, and they dealt with the lives of princes, kings and Popes as one would deal with superfluous trees in a wood. A curious document is still extant in which the proceedings of this council are recorded. It shows that one John of Raguba prepared a selection of poison and scale of fees. The fee varied with the importance of the victim and the length of the journey to be made for his dispatch. For poisoning the Duke of Milan he charged 60 ducats, for the Pope 100 ducats, for the King of Spain 150 ducats, for the "great Sultan" 500 ducats.—Clipping.

* * *

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