

Sunday Reading.

Room for my Saviour.

BY MRS. J. C. YULE.

Room for my Saviour here,
Heart, open wide thy door!
Hence, unbelief, and doubt, and fear,—
Hence, and return no more!

Room for my Saviour, heart,
Wide, wide thy portals fling!
Let each unhallowed guest depart,
Nor dare disturb my King!

Now enter, gracious Lord,
If thou canst stoop so low,—
Enter, and bid each guest abhorred
Forth from thy temple go.

Enter, and keep thy feast,
And let me feast with thee:
For on thy sacred pledge I rest,
That thou wilt sup with me.

No crumb have I, my Lord,—
The feast must all be thine,—
Thine the rich viands of the board,
And thine the hallowed wine.

And I shall feast with thee,
And thou with me to day;
And e'en at eventide with me
Thou wilt prolong thy stay!

Nor yet at eventide,
Wilt thou from me depart:
Eternity shall not divide
My Saviour from my heart.

Room for the Lord, my heart,
Wide, wide thy portals fling!
He enters, never to depart,
My Saviour and my King!

From China.

BIBLE WOMEN'S WORK AT SWATOW.

We have received the following from Miss Norwood, formerly of Cornwallis, N. S., now labouring at Swatow in China:—

A missionary Sister who has given herself to work among the women of China, has written, asking how Bible women's work is carried on at Swatow. In answering her questions, it has been suggested that others besides this sister might be interested in the subject. In preparing this paper, I am further influenced by the fact that notwithstanding all that has been written both by Miss Fiedle who began the work, and by myself, now her associate, a great deal of misapprehension still prevails, even among those who have taken no little pains to inform themselves concerning our work.

I will answer the questions in the order given.

1. 'What plan do you use in selecting the women you ask to study?'

We have no very definite plan. The rule is, to invite only members of the Church. Occasionally, an exception is made in favor of a wife of a church member, who, though she has not yet united with the church, is more or less interested in the 'doctrine.' In visiting the stations, if we find a woman who is trying to learn to read, or is zealous in telling her neighbors what little truth she already knows, we inquire into her domestic circumstances, and if it seems practicable for her to leave her home, she is invited to come and study for three months. If, at the end of that time, it is not deemed advisable to keep her longer, we dismiss her kindly to her own home, impressing upon her the duty of telling what she has learned to those about her.

2. 'What support do you give them while they are studying?'

We allow a dollar and a half a month to each woman whom we invite to come and study. This sum is barely sufficient to furnish her food, and without this help, rarely is there a woman who could leave her home, since it is all she can do to earn her support from day to day. After she has learned to read the Gospels in colloquial, if she remains longer, it is because it has been decided to use her in church work, and she is then allowed an extra half dollar a month—the same that is received by a Bible woman. This additional allowance is supposed to cover the necessary outlay for clothes. You may ask, 'is not the help given, rather than a desire to learn to read, often an inducement to enter the class?' This is guarded against by personally inviting the women ourselves, after care has been taken in each case, to learn whether or no she be worthy. Occasionally, we find that we have been deceived, but the mistake is easily remedied. True, we meet with many requests to be allowed to enter the class, but only in exceptional cases do we receive such, the exception being made after consultation with the preacher and Bible women at the station to which the applicant belongs.

3. 'Do you make Bible women of all who come to study?'

By no means. Within the last three years, only four have been considered suitable for this work, although thirty new women have studied in the class.

4. 'When you ask women to study, do they come with the expectation of becoming Bible women?'

Not as a matter of course. It is known from the first that some will not be, and from their domestic circumstances cannot be. But they are fitted for usefulness in other ways. In this respect we—the ladies—approve of, and follow the plan adopted by the gentlemen of the Mission. They take in, not only certain ones who at the start are regarded as candidates for the ministry, but they also take into the class certain other persons who, it is perfectly well understood, are not to go into general evangelizing work on mission pay. Any man at the out stations, who has evinced some capacity for usefulness, and who has been actually helpful to the Pastor, is encouraged to come out and study any length of time, long or short. All that is demanded of him is, that when he goes back to his home he will use what he has learned here for the good of the church and of his neighbors. Unless he gives evidence of usefulness he is not encouraged to remain in the class.

Our own methods are substantially the same. Women who give promise of greater usefulness in their own families and among their neighbors, are invited to study, more with a view of helping to create an intelligent, zealous and helpful female membership, than to obtain Bible women. Indeed, the latter is almost, if not quite, a secondary consideration.

5. 'What do you teach beginners and what do you teach Bible women?'

All are taught to read in consecutive order, the Hymn book, some sheet tracts, a catechism, and the Gospels so far as we have them in colloquial. We have Matthew and Luke prepared, and Mark and John in press. Miss Fiedle used, after the Hymn book, the 'Compendium,' a book prepared by herself with the aid of Dr. Ashmore. It is simply a translation of 'Bagster's Consolidated Gospels,' containing sixty chapters, each of which is longer than an ordinary chapter of the Gospels. This book is still used as a guide in the oral teaching, three chapters a week being deemed sufficient. In this, all prepare the same lesson, new women beginning, on entering, wherever the class may chance to be. Just now two or three are going over a part of it the second time. Our aim in oral teaching, is to have each woman able to give in her own words, and without the aid of a book, a clear account of each incident in the life of Christ. For this, the 'Compendium' is admirably adapted. Unless it is intended to use her as a Bible woman or as a teacher, what I have already indicated is the extent of the instruction given to each woman. I should, however, have included a simple outline of old Testament history which during this year has been given by Dr. Ashmore.

One whom it has been decided to train for a Bible woman, should have not less than two years for preparation, unless she is possessed of more than average ability. It is sometimes six months and even longer, before we are sufficiently certain as to her qualifications for the work so as to decide upon the advisability of employing her as a Bible woman. In the present class, there is one who has been here a year. She seems a reliable, earnest Christian, has more than average capacity in learning by oral teaching; but is very slow in learning to read. Though I have not fully decided to employ her, yet I hope she may prove useful as a Bible Woman.

6. 'How much time in the year is spent by the Bible women in study?'

The time for special study varies somewhat. Miss Fiedle thought three months during the Spring of every alternate year sufficiently often. In accordance with this plan, all the Bible women were here three months of last year, beginning with April. Their study was confined principally to the journeyings of the Israelites as contained in Exodus. This year we had all the preachers and Bible women out for special study during the month of July. For further particulars I refer you to a paper that has just been prepared called 'A Chinese Chautauqua.'

7. 'When do you have other than Bible women for study?'

Whenever we can get them. There is always a class. When the Bible women are here, the others participate in the oral teaching intended for the former, but their instruction in reading is left entirely to the care of the Chinese teacher who, while I am absent at country stations, has entire charge of the class. As a matter of fact, now, while I am alone in this work, I do not always do as I would wish, but as best I can.

8. 'How often do you require the Bible women to give in reports and what is the nature of them?'

Once in three months, when all our workers come together for the meetings of 'Communion week.' But it is results that we are more anxious to see than mere reports. Yet the latter are important, though only so far as they serve to give us a knowledge of the former. In this connection, it may not be amiss to say that we consider it of the first importance that preachers and Bible women be mutually helpful, the preach-

er being the head, of course, but not assuming any unpleasant dictation. The plan, at present pursued, necessitates the Bible woman's being dependent upon the preacher for the filling out of her report, as she cannot write this difficult Chinese character. She is furnished with a blank book so ruled that the names of families willing to hear the truth, may be entered under their respective villages. The object is, (1) for her own guidance that she may visit each family repeatedly, (2) that other Bible women who may follow her will know where to find openings, and (3) that we ourselves may know where to look for results.

9. 'Do you require them to work in other cities besides their native places or do they always work in their native villages and surrounding country?'

While in the employ of the Mission, they are never sent to labor in their own villages, lest the temptation to neglect the work to which they have been set apart, to attend to local personal matters, should prove too great. If they cannot leave their homes, they are encouraged to do what they can as unpaid Bible women. But, on the other hand, they are not often sent great distances from their own villages, seldom more than thirty, or less than five miles, and, as a rule, within their own district. They are sent two together, to live at or near some chapel, and are directed to visit in the region thereabout. Sometimes, two women will visit in as many as twenty villages during the three months.

10. 'Do you allow them to go about at their own pleasure, or do you designate their field of labor and give them a limited liberty?'

After mutual consultation, they are designated to definite stations, and are not allowed to go about at their own pleasure, except within certain limits. Each Bible woman is allowed one week out of every three months at her own home.

11. 'Do you have them return from their stations at any time besides the study time?'

Once in three months, only, unless we send for them, as we sometimes do to meet emergencies that arise.

12. 'How much do you consider it necessary for a woman to know before you appoint her as a regular Bible woman?'

In addition to what I have already named in answer to question 5, they should be familiar with the Acts of the Apostles, and we aim to give them a clear comprehension of the plan of salvation, repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, resurrection from the dead, and Eternal judgment, and kindred fundamental doctrines.

13. 'What is the difference between a Bible woman and an evangelist?'

Practically none, so far as the nature of the work is concerned. You were probably misled by my report of last year. I wrote, 'my class numbered fourteen women,' and this was understood to mean 'evangelists.' I should have been more explicit. By the omission of important sentences in my Report of this year, the paragraph on 'Bible women' leaves the impression that I received twenty of Miss Thompson's Bible women, whereas the fact was, the twenty included Miss Fiedle's as well as my own. In like manner, the paragraph on 'Training School' was made to read very differently from the original. But such things will now and then occur, and I presume, the incongruities are scarcely noticed, except by those who write the Reports.

14. 'When the Bible women go into the country, is it a part of their duty to teach the Christian women to read, and to hold meetings with them?'

Most certainly it is, and not only to teach them to read, but to give them a clearer knowledge of the 'doctrine' than they already possess. For this purpose, they are urged to hold Sunday morning meetings with those who can come together at an earlier time than that named for the general Sunday service.

15. 'How often do you go out with the women, say, for instance in a year?'

In the two years since I have had the whole responsibility of this work, I have been able to visit each station, and go about with the Bible women stationed there, but once a year. Our field is large, and to visit all the stations even once in the cool season is really more than I can do. But this is my endeavor.

A. S. A. NORWOOD.

Swatow, 13th August, 1883.

Rev. Wm. George writes from Zee-gong, August 9th:—

'I am glad to be able to report our general good health, with ample opportunity for work. My class of assistants has been studying with me since the 1st of June, and I am pleased with their progress. We have been at work in the Acts of the Apostles, and have completed the twenty-second chapter. Mrs. George is still at work with the class of girls and Bible-women. They are growing in grace and in knowledge. Our preaching, too, has been kept up without any break. We have baptized for four Sundays in succession,—three last Sunday, two the week before, and one each of the two preceding Sundays; and there are more on the road.'

A few Words about Preaching.

BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

Address at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, on Monday evening, September 17.

I think that the preaching of the Gospel should not be confined to one part of the truth, but should take in all revealed truth as far as we are able to know it. We preach the doctrine of election, we preach God's special love to His chosen, and at the same time we give an unlimited invitation to men to come to Christ. At least we know no other than this, 'Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.' 'Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price.' I have been rather amused lately by a story told me by a dear brother who preaches near here. I dare say you can guess who it is. One of his members came to him and said that she was going to unite herself to another church. 'A church that was sounder in the faith than this church,' so she said. 'For,' said she, 'when I hear you inviting sinners to Christ, my heart goes down into my shoes.' That is a very sad thing of course. So he said, 'Of course you are quite right in going to hear the doctrine that suits you, but I shan't alter my preaching for that.' So last Monday evening this good brother said, 'If there are any more of you that do not like sinners to be preached to, you can go where you like, but I shall preach to sinners as long as there is another left. If only one sinner is left I shall seek that sinner's conversion.'

Our brother said these high-doctrine brethren reminded him of a boy he used to go to school with. He had a very nice apple and threw it up in the presence of our friend and said, 'William, do you see this apple? Now take a good look at it, for that is all your share of it,' and he put it in his pocket. Another boy standing by, who was more generous, said, 'Give the poor fellow a smell.' That was the extent of his generosity. There is a sort of preaching like that. They preach to saints and say to the sinner, 'Do you see it? Do you see it?' Then they put it back in their pockets. The more generous give them a smell. I feel inclined when I am preaching to invite everybody to put it in his pocket. For this remarkable apple will go into everybody's pocket and yet be outside for somebody else's pocket. There is not a single sinner in the world but what may have the whole of Christ, and yet there will be the whole of Christ left for you and for me. What a blessing to preach a free salvation as well as a full salvation! Many years ago I had an old friend who, like myself, had a sweet tooth for Calvinistic doctrine. 'I cannot do with anything else myself.' He said to me one day, at dinner, 'I cannot bear your sermons when you invite sinners. I cannot bear to hear them.' 'Shall I give it up?' said I. 'By no manner of means,' he said. 'A few years ago my son-in-law came to hear you. The sermon was full of invitations to sinners. I could not bear it, but, when I went home, my son-in-law was in tears. That sermon brought him to Christ. Don't you give up preaching to sinners for a silly old man like me. If I don't like it the Lord does, and I must get used to it.' 'That is just what I thought,' said I. 'Now you have said it for me.' I shall go on giving you the doctrines of grace and the invitations of the Gospel as I have done.

You shall have the doctrine of election without any stuttering and Christ's free love without any hesitation. A dear sister sent me a letter saying that she believed the doctrine of God's sovereignty, but she would never have it preached. She did not put her name to the letter. I wish she had, then I might have explained it to her, but she does not think I am going to take any notice of her, does she? Everything that is in God's Word I shall preach, whatever it may be, whether some shall enjoy it or others be disgusted. I do not expect everybody to eat everything that is on the table. I do not believe that if I put nothing on the table but salt that you would all eat salt. We must have something of this and something of that according as the Great Head of the feast provides. All manner of things for the growth and spiritual entertainment of His guests.

Yet one thing we are sure of, we shall never give up loving the souls of men. We will never give up going out into the highways and hedges to compel them to come in. We will never give up crying, 'Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' The Master's blessed invitation shall be spoken to-night, and if men do not come, their blood shall be upon their own heads. For the blessing is free as it is full, and the gospel trumpet sounds out over hill and dale: 'Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely.' We cannot make them come, but if we cannot preach sinners to Christ we can preach Christ to sinners. We shall go on doing this, and may God's blessing rest on the Word whenever it is proclaimed.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Dr. Barnardo's Work.

Dear Editor,—

Among the many philanthropic institutions found in this country and in London in particular, there are few, if any, of deeper interest and more deserving the practical sympathy of all who have a heart to feel, and a hand to help, than the work carried on by the above gentleman. He may well be styled a father of the fatherless, a friend of the friendless, a helper of the helpless. He has under his care a number of 'Homes,' where the little waifs and strays of the streets are taken to and clothed, fed, educated, and fitted to occupy useful positions in society.

Last year there were in the Homes over fourteen hundred boys and girls. Besides this there are ragged schools, Sunday and night schools, and factory-girls' clubs, making over twenty six hundred more. To secure admission to these Homes the voting system, which prevails in some institutions, by which a certain number of votes of subscribers must be secured involving a great deal of labour and not a little expense, whereby very frequently the most deserving cases are unsuccessful—does not operate here. Destitution secures admission. On the front of the houses at Stepney in plain letters are the words: 'No destitute boy or girl ever refused admission.' Any boy or girl applying if they appear to be destitute are received at once; and this is not only the case with such as appear to be healthy, but if they are delicate, deformed, or disfigured, it only strengthens the argument for their reception. As Lord Cairns said at a late meeting in Exeter Hall: 'We take the child, if destitute as we find it, and we do not think that the child is less worthy of tender care because the poor little creature may happen to be of weakly health, or to labour under the effects of an accident.'

Here is a specimen of the work done by Dr. Barnardo and his helpers. One night on the Epsom race-course huddled together under a barrow were three boys aged respectively seven, nine, and eleven, fast asleep. They had had nothing to eat since the day before, shivering with cold and looking very wretched. They had never known a father; their mother (who was one whom I will forbear to describe) drove them out daily to beg, or steal, or both, and cruelly beat them if they were not successful. When found, they were clothed in filthy rags. They were taken to the Homes, enquiry first having been made as to the truthfulness of their statements, where they were cared for in common with hundreds more, many of whom have a history more touching and sorrowful far than theirs. Dr. Barnardo when on his mission of mercy and love while examining some lodging houses, among other pitiful objects saw a boy whose appearance was unusually sad. The Dr. shall tell the tale himself. 'He looked pale, worn, and wretched. The boy seemed to me to be very ill; so I spoke a few kind words to him, and soon drew him apart from the others. As is usual with such lads, he was clad in mere rags. I asked him, How do you get on? How have you fared? He replied sadly in these words, "Just as you see sir; rage, dirt, starvation, it can't be long before I'm a thief." I put to this lad the question I have asked hundreds of other lads at different times: "If a hand were stretched out to help you, and a home open to receive you, would you be glad to come in? Would you obey our rules? Would you stay until you were taught? Would you be what you ought to be?" The poor fellow looked up at me wistfully, and said, in tones I shall never forget: "Only try me, sir." We did try him. I took him there and then from the temptations and sufferings of his street life, and that boy is, I thank God, in our Home to-night.'

When they leave the Homes for situations they are not lost sight of, nor are the influences of the Dr. withdrawn, for they offer prizes to those who stay longest and conduct themselves best in their situations. The prizes being given by a private gentleman. At the meeting above referred to, quite a number received good substantial silver watches. A goodly number have been sent to Canada, others to Natal, not however without some trustworthy persons in charge of them, both on the way and after arrival, whose business it is to secure for them suitable situations, and who after they are located look after them as far as the circumstances will allow. In Ontario there is what is called a Receiving and Distributing House, which will hold some forty or fifty; it is under the management of two persons properly trained under Dr. Barnardo, who receive the lads on arrival, and are the medium of receiving applications for them to be placed in situations. Some two hundred lads are about being sent out, if they have not actually started. This information may be of use to some readers of the MESSENGER. If any would wish to communicate with the manager I dare say to address 'The Manager, Dr. Barnardo's Receiving Home, Ont., would find its way to the proper place.'

A gentleman with a large heart and a large pocket (two fine things when found together) has bought between eight hundred and a thousand acres in one of our Midland Counties, where he is putting up suitable agricultural buildings, and is going to take from eighty to a hundred poor boys from the Homes at Stepney to feed, educate, and clothe at his own cost; teach them agricultural work and pursuits until they are ready to enter upon agricultural employment either in the Colonies or at home. Long live that noble man and may health, happiness and long life be his. I find my space is growing rapidly less, so I must soon come to a wind up, although I have a pile of interesting matter if my time or your space Mr. Editor permitted.

To show the interest taken by almost all classes I will give a few items. A servant girl from Devonshire sent half a crown, adding 'May it be accepted as a cup of cold water given in the name of the Lord.' A bereaved mother sent five shillings which was found in her little child's purse after death. From Wales twenty-two pounds nineteen shillings and fourpence was received, with this note 'Sir,—Enclosed find bank draft for £22 19s. 4d. for your Homes. It is the amount of the deposit in the Post Office Savings' Bank of our four year old little boy who has gone home.' A lady sent half a crown for herself, and ten shillings from her grand daughter who had earned it by early rising. A gentleman sent fifteen shillings, part of which was raised by his little son selling silkworms' eggs and silkworms. Some one named Martha sent seven shillings and sixpence as 'a thank offering for realising God's forgiveness after telling a lie.' A little six-year-old wrote Dr. Barnardo as follows:—'I have been saving my pennies to send to you. I was six years old last Tuesday, so mama opened my box and found 2s. 6d. in it which I send to you in stamps to help buy bread for the dear little children in your Homes.' A little lassie named Mabel sent 16s. 'for you to send two children to the sea-side for a change, and hope they will enjoy their trip.'

Not only however is money sent in various sums and from very various sources, but articles to be sold for the benefit of the Homes. Here are a few, Two silver snuff-boxes, pair of gold rim eye-glasses, silver mug, gold pencil-case, gold watch, a crucet, a gold chain, a donkey, two fowls, a barrel of sugar, glass flower stands, three jewel caskets, ten watch-stands, two gold bracelets, a Spanish gold coin, eight ivory purses &c., &c., &c. These articles are offered for sale in a room kept for the purpose at Stepney Causeway. Here I must end my very meagre and imperfect story of a most blessed work of philanthropy, and which I need hardly say is ever in need of funds, and among the many loud calls for practical sympathy ever heard from so many quarters, that carried on by Dr. Barnardo 18 to 20 Stepney Causeway, London, E. has a voice as loud and as deserving of being listened to as any.

Should any readers of the MESSENGER hear the cry and be disposed to respond, I should be happy to be the means of communication between them and Dr. Barnardo, or better still let them send direct to the above address. I should like that 'the blessing of them that were ready to perish' should fall on some of my Trans Atlantic friends, and having pointed out how it may be secured, I beg again to subscribe myself.

With affectionate remembrances,
J. BROWN.

Melksham, Wilt., Oct. 19, 1883.

If we had no faults, we should not take so much pleasure in noticing them in others.