

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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The Ministry of Literature in the Foreign Field.

A request for "copy" comes from our editor, and this must be my excuse for writing on a subject of which I know comparatively little—"anything of interest regarding literature used in connection with our mission work."

Only one cold season have I spent in touring during the quarter of a century since I joined the mission; however, I can give a few facts.

The literature used in evangelistic work in our field comes partly from Calcutta, partly from Cuttack. It consists of Bibles, single books of the Bible; quite a variety of small books on religious subjects, as "Pilgrim's Progress," "Imitation of Christ," "Peep of Day," and the like; bound tracts both prose and poetical, the latter being especially appreciated; and leaflets, nearly all in paper bindings. All these may be had in very many languages, but in our field we rarely have a demand for more than six or seven, Bengali, Oriya, Santali, Telugu, Hindi, and Urdu. They are furnished to our missionaries at less than the cost of production, this being made possible by aid received from such organizations as the British and Foreign Bible Society and the American Bible and Tract Society. Years ago it was customary to give away this literature, but one day—now many years ago—my brother (Dr. J. L. Phillips) had an experience that led to a sudden change in this policy. He asked a Brahmin to accept a Bible, and was haughtily told that *their Shastras* were too valuable to give away! I don't think he ever took the risk of receiving a like rebuff again! The selling price, however, is very low, ranging from one-half cent to fifteen and twenty cents, for which a whole Bible may be bought.

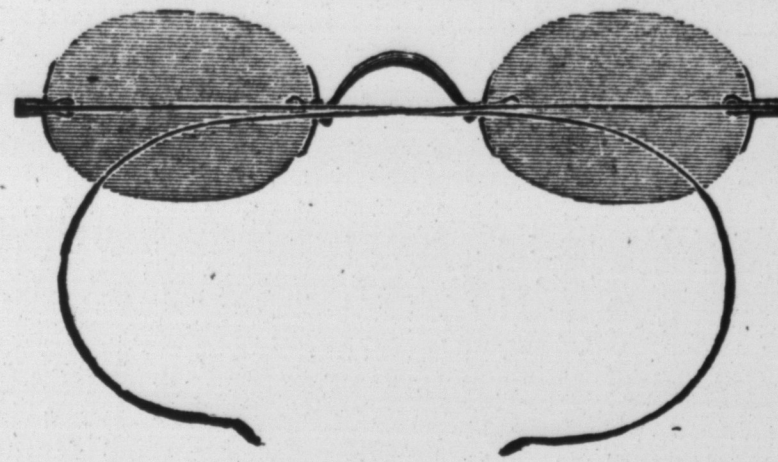
When the missionaries and native preachers start out for a cold season tour, they go well supplied with this literature, and usually dispose of a good quantity at *jatras* (religious festivals) and markets—usually held weekly at certain fixed places, and frequented by thousands of people. The ability to read is not yet so common but that almost any boy or man possessed of it is pleased to get hold of a book, and sitting cross-legged, with body swaying slowly backward and forward, "sing" its contents to any one willing to listen. Unhappily, to many of them, the sing-song sound is of more value than the truths conveyed by the words, but experience has proven that in some cases

the gospel contained in this literature has been as "good seed in good ground." I recall one instance of a village found by some of our workers, where was quite a body of believers, who, if I remember rightly, were in the habit of meeting regularly for worship. Being questioned, it transpired that the entire movement was the result—humanly speaking—of the reading of one of these little books, bought by one of their number.

To a similar circumstance—under God—we owe our good brother, Sachitanda Rai, a man of unusual gifts as a preacher, one to whom I would rather listen than to one in ten of American preachers, with all their superior advantages; one whose genuine spirituality is attested by his daily life. Soon after the opening of the Bible School in Midnapore, he came to my brother asking for admission. Inquiry revealed the fact that his attention had been first called to the Christian religion by a tract bought several years before, when he was a mere boy, at a market. When the little worn and soiled messenger was produced, my brother found written on the margin of the cover, in his own handwriting, the price of the book (probably one-half cent), the date of sale and his own initials. The date recalled the tour on which he had sold the little book which eventually brought in several members of the family. Surely this was "bread cast upon the waters which returned after many days."

Born a Brahmin, with all that that means of pride and selfness, when he came among us Sachi still had a way of carrying his head rather high, but the grace of God has wrought in him humility along with other fruits of the Spirit, so that although he is the ablest man we have he is yet possessed of the spirit of the Master in an unusual degree. Right here I want to ask for him the prayers of every one who reads this. His health has become so impaired that he has been forced to give up pastoral work, but is still employed in the Bible School, where his influence over the young men is of great value. Do ask that his health may be restored and his life long spared to bless his fellow-countrymen.—*Harriet P. Phillips, in Missionary Helper.*

—A Christian leader of the Liberal party in Japan was put forward as a candidate for the Imperial Parliament. He had been for many years an elder in a Presbyterian church. Since the Buddhists were appealing to religious prejudices, some of his political friends came to him, saying, "The fact that you are an officer in a Christian church is likely to lose you in the election. We cannot ask you to give up your religion, but we do request that you resign your eldership. If after election you wish to resume it, you can do so; but if you want to be elected, we must be able to announce that you have ceased to be an officer of the church." He replied, "I cannot do what you ask. I care more for my eldership than I do to get a seat in parliament." He did not lose the election.



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Mission Notes and News

—The Week September 28th to October 4th was observed by missionaries in India as a week of prayer with special reference to a general revival in the mission churches.

—North Africa has one Protestant missionary to 122,000 Moslems, the Sahara one to 2,050,000, the Soudan one to 45,000,000, West Africa one to 30,000, and Central Africa one to 14,000 heathen.

—Brazil has a territory as vast as the United States. With a population of 18,000,000, with only five missionaries, with about the same number of native helpers, 8,000 Brazilian converts, the 2,000,000 of aborigines of the interior are yet unreached.

—Dr. David H. Greer rightly declares that foreign missions are not only foreign missions; they are home missions purifying the home life with that larger conception of charity, redeeming the home life with that worthier conception of Christ which they teach and give.

—An anti-Christian journal in India calls attention to the fact that the negligence of the wealthy natives to the needs of the widow and orphan is tending to the Christianization of India. It says: "Do not think that Ramabai has carried away only 1,700 girls whom the nation did not want much; she has laid the foundation of 1,700 Christian families."

—The Methodist Episcopal Church began mission work in Nagoya, Japan, eighteen years ago, and now reports one fine large church with a strong, self-supporting congregation, another partly self-supporting, and a third where regular services are held. Besides this, there is a missionary home, and the ladies of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society have a fine large girls' school which is doing a great work among the girls of the city. Nagoya has over 300,000 inhabitants, and is said to be the most rapidly growing centre in the empire.

SONS OF TEMPERANCE.—The Grand Division, S. of T., New Brunswick, met in annual session in St. John last week. The reports showed considerable progress in the last year, due in a large measure to the work of the G. W. Patriarch, Rev. C. W. Hamilton. Several divisions were reorganized, and some new ones established. The Grand Scribe, Mr. A. J. Armstrong, who has served fourteen years, resigned and Mr. E. A. Everett was elected in his place. G. W. Patriarch Hamilton was re-elected.

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—The Stockwell Orphanages, established by Mr. Spurgeon, now have 464 children in their charge, and the income this year was \$140,855, the largest in their history, enabling the governors to add the half of the sum to endowment.

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