

BANSWARA

“Thy touch has still its ancient power”

Women's Medical Work.—*Dr. B. Choné Oliver.*—Being summoned from the south of the state, while on a medical evangelistic tour, our missionary had many and varied experiences, while inoculating against plague. It meant access to the households of the nobles and of the Prime Minister in Banswara, but owing to the precautions taken by the latter, the city had no violent outbreak. The men seem to have no prejudice against a woman doctor, and many come to the dispensary for treatment. School teachers and clerks from the state offices, men from the police department and the brewery, come themselves and bring their families for treatment. Dr. Oliver says, “I have often felt sorry that I have not time to talk to these educated men. But many Hindu books from my small library have been borrowed and read. Quite a number of these men have come to our Sunday services, and when I arranged that the young men who knew English should be addressed by Prof. Scott of our Indore Christian College, we had more present than we could seat. How attentively they listened to that fifty-minute address on “The Reform We Most Need!” Would that we might have a series of such, instead of only one!

Seeing the Lady Doctor Home

In the influenza epidemic, when I was going in and out of the city, very often on foot and carrying my bag, the people somehow made me feel I belonged to them and, on two occasions in the evening, when I met different young men, who had been at the Dispensary, they insisted on walking to the bungalow with me, to carry my bag. This may seem a small thing, but to do this was to do coolie's work, and it was a marked sign of friendliness.

I am sometimes beset with the thought that I am not doing the kind of mission work I came to do, when I have to attend to so many things besides the purely evangelistic and medical work. In a jungle station much time has to be taken to get things for which in another place one simply gives an order, or buys ready-made. How often we wish for someone who knows all about building, to take charge of the details for us and let us do that for which we came to India. There would be much of gain, but, nevertheless, I am glad the Dispensary is likely to be put up by the end of 1919, as my study has continued to be used for that purpose, and is now so much needed. This same room has served for church services, and has also been the chief operating room, the verandah being used for infected cases. Accidents are not common in this place of no machinery, yet, during the year I saw patients suffering from various accidents. Two women drowned in a pond near by were carried to our verandah, but life was extinct. A lad while cleaning a gun had it go off, and a piece of brass, bent double, was blown in under his chin. He made a good recovery. The carpenter came with a gash in his toe, and was delighted to have it heal in a few days. “Miss Sahib,” he said, “formerly when I got a cut like this I had to be off work for weeks till it healed.” This time he lost two days.

We have had a Red Cross branch for about six months, and all our Christian women, as well as some Hindu ladies, have helped to make articles needed in the war hospitals.

October ushered in the terrible toll of deaths from influenza, and heroically did Dr. Oliver and every possible assistant labor to combat the disease. One of the saddest incidents among many touching ones, was the passing to the better land of Mrs. Smillie. It is thus recorded: “Dear, bright, joyous Mrs. Smillie had come among us a bride, not five months before, wonderfully led, as she believed, to her heart's desire—the work among the Bhils. Her's is the first missionary grave in Banswara. We lay claim to the land for Christ. Who follows in the train?”

It has not been good for the women's work that I have been alone so long, and I shall welcome Miss Campbell back. I am sure you will rejoice