

One thing we can do at once; and that is, pledge to one or more of our own denominational missionary societies a gift each year. Let every Endeavor society become auxiliary to its denominational missionary board. However poor it is, let it feel ashamed of itself if it does not give something every year. Let it stimulate in every possible way the missionary zeal and generosity of its members. Let it supply them with missionary information. Let it make its missionary meetings the most interesting of every month. Here, as I said, is a good starting-point, a regular, definite pledge of money every year to the denominational missionary Boards, to be considered as indispensable to a Christian Endeavor society as the prayer-meeting covenant itself. It will be a great step in advance if our Boards know that they can count on every Endeavor society for something.—FRANCIS E. CLARK, in *Golden Rule*.

PREMADINA.—A TRUE STORY.

Premadina means Daughter of Love, and dearly her mother loved her, and cherished her tenderly, though she was "only a girl." She knew full well that, humanly speaking, the girl's only happy days would be those spent by her fond mother's side.

While too young to remember much about it, Premadina was one day bathed, anointed with sweet odors, dressed in Turkey-red silk, adorned with jewels, and told that she was now to be married. She was given sweetmeats to eat and a rag doll to keep her amused, and, after many tiresome ceremonies, her tiny, dimpled hand was taken by the priest and tied fast to that of a Brahman gentleman, thirty years older than herself and possessor of three or four wives already. A white sheet was thrown over the newly married couple, and the frightened little wife was enjoined to look up into her husband's face for the first time.

The wedding was over, and still, for a few more precious years, mother-love could watch over little Premadina. She was taught to cry at the idea of going to her husband, and when her mother gave her lessons in carding and spinning, she taught her to sing this spinning song:

All day long my skeins I make,
Nor kisses give, nor kisses take;
In my own home the queen am I—
Why should I for another sigh?
I, that bow to my God alone,
Shall I a man for master own?
Shall I fall into another's snare,
Pass my life in another's lair,
To another my heart's secrets lay bare?
Oh, what is marriage here below,
What but harter of bliss for woe?
Dust turns to dust, and dust am I,
Why should my dust for marriage sigh?

When Premadina was ten or eleven years old, her husband sent for her. The bare walls of an ill-furnished zenana, or women's quarters, now shut the little girl in with three or four older wives, who tormented her, tyrannized over her, and kept her constantly at work preparing the food, scouring cooking vessels, grinding the day's allowance of unbolted flour, or spinning the thread which the village weaver would turn into cloth, to be dyed and made into gay wearing apparel for the older wives. But above all, did this little Cinderella shrink within herself with dread unspeakable, from the sound of her husband's footsteps. His dog might run to

meet him with pleasure; his little wife would draw her veil over a face drawn and pinched with fear.

There is a Turkish proverb which says: "The nest of the blind bird is built by God," and He that builds the nest of the blind bird and notes the sparrow's fall yearned over little Premadina.

One day a missionary called and asked leave to visit the ladies of the house and teach them to read. The husband gave an ungracious consent, "You can try it, lady, but you will find it useless. Women cannot learn to read. You might as well try to teach my cow!" Great was his astonishment when some months later he was called in to hear Premadina read. He could scarcely believe his own ears. "A girl able to read, did you ever!"

Little Premadina now began to hear and eagerly drink in sweet stories of the Saviour. That in all our afflictions He is afflicted, that in His love and in His pity He redeems us, and comforts us, as one whom his mother comforteth—what wonderful words were these! Never such were spoken of Hindu deities, of the gods of wood and stone which she had been taught to worship and dread! And when she read how the Son of God spent His days in healing, in forgiving, in feeding, in seeking and saving, she nestled up close to her teacher and whispered, "I would love to be saved by such a Saviour." Thus this sorrowful heart yearned to Him, sought Him, and now trusted Him. She must also now obey Him, and renounce idolatry. How could this frail young girl brave that cruel man's wrath? Only in God's strength did she pluck up courage to tell her husband that she could never again offer incense to idols. His answer was a terrible beating, and the shutting of the door forever against the missionary's visits. God only knows the days of pain that were Premadina's lot now. But Jesus kept His lamb.

One day her husband found her poring over God's Book. He snatched it from her, tore it up, and beat her cruelly. Another day she was singing softly to herself out of her beloved hymn-book, her one remaining comfort,

The sweet, sweet voice of Jesus
Hath eased my troubled heart
The sweet, sweet voice of Jesus
Hath bid my fears depart.

Her husband returned from his office unexpectedly, entered the room, destroyed the book, dragged the tender little girl to the fire, and with a red-hot iron burned away all the palm of her left hand. A beating followed, and then, with a kick and a curse, Premadina was flung half dead into the street.

The missionary, returning from her work, was passing just then and came upon her poor, maimed and half-unconscious pupil lying in the street. A crowd of pitying neighbors explained the situation, and she was carried to the missionary's house. There she was nursed with gentle hands, baptized into Christ, and then placed in school where she is now, under training to be a worker for Christ as well as a sufferer for His name's sake.

The wind that blows can never kill
The tree God plants:
It bloweth East, it bloweth West,
The tender leaves have little rest—
But any wind that blows is host.
The tree God plants
Strikes deeper root, grows higher still,
Spreads wider boughs, for God's good-will
Meets all its woe.