

Then two of their number had been doing a little independent mission work of their own. They had gone across the river selling onions, and had preached the Gospel as they went, to the caste women of many a new village where the Gospel had never been heard before. How their faces shone as they told of their experiences, and how my eyes filled with happy tears! I told them they had the honor of being the first missionaries to some of those villages, like Paul. These two missionaries are poor women, they cannot read a word. They preached Christ as they knew Him. Of the eight Circles three are quite new ones, having been founded this year. During the year one Circle has died. I hope we shall be able to revive it during our touring visitation.

It is the desire of my heart to see voluntary workers come forward in the work. Those who love the Lord truly, should surely love to work freely for Him. But women have been 'of no account' so long—for so many centuries—in India, that it seems hard for them to realize that they can or should, do anything but the housework. We have tried to put before the Christian women their privilege and duty as regards spreading the glad tidings among their heathen sisters. Some of the pastors' and teachers' wives are responding, and are a help in the Sunday School work. Some make good leaders for the Helpmeet Societies. Also, there are on the field a few lay sisters, like the two mentioned, who do a good deal of humble but loving service in the way of telling their heathen sisters about their Saviour. Pray that their numbers may greatly increase. I think some of them would be willing to come with me on tour once in a while, as my guest, to help in the work. Each of the three Bible women have toured with me this year. They have all had their turn and have worked faithfully. I ask also, that you pray for them that they may be renewed in physical strength and always be "strengthened with might in the inner man." They continue to be my faithful supporters, and often cheer me with their hearty sympathy and co-operation. During the hot season we had a daily Bible class for a month, on Romans, which they evidently enjoyed and profited by. May the Lord be with us all always, May we be careful to follow where He leads.

Our *Zenana Workers* in Cocanada send us their half yearly reports regularly. Their work continues to increase and they ask for our prayers that a rich harvest may follow their labours.

Miss Gibson reports for the first six months ending December, 1899: "A larger number of houses visited than ever before, eighty-six in all out of a total of eighty-eight, making altogether two hundred and twenty-six visits, reaching three hundred or more women. Of these houses, seven were quite new. This is the most encouraging feature of the work, as consequently fresh women are reached, most of whom have never heard the name of Jesus. Many

are being convinced of the truth and in many a home now, idols are not worshiped as they used to be.

"Caste prejudices are broken in a wonderful way. Many have learned, that the *zenana* worker is more ready to sympathize with them in time of trouble than their own relations and that it is good to lean on a friend, even if they have not accepted that friend's Saviour. Few, if any, resist the truth, almost universal is the verdict 'What you say is truth and no lie. We are deluded, but lack courage to accept the truth and put away the delusion.'"

Miss Beggs writes: "I was specially cheered by the marked interest and spirit of enquiry shown by some of the women, which made it a perfect delight to talk to them. It is true, that some who listened with such eagerness then, are now comparatively indifferent, but there are others who have remained the same and are, I feel, now really believing in Christ. The women and girls whom I have partially taught, have made fair progress in reading. It is pleasing to notice several, who at the beginning of the year, evidently took little interest in their Bible, reading, not merely for the sake of learning, but because they enjoy it, asking questions and otherwise showing that the mind is not apathetic.

"Sixty-nine houses visited during the first half year and 72 during the second."

In financial results the Society reports for the year, total receipts of \$1,740.56, as compared with \$1,669.04 last year, showing a gain of \$71.52.

When we pledged ourselves a year ago to do all that we could to help on the "Forward Movement," there were few of us apparently, who did not think but that we could raise the one-fifth allowance for which we resolved to have our Circles endeavour.

We have failed in coming up to this standard, through many of the Circles and Bands having sent their "extras" through other sources. It is certainly not for us to say, with whom the blame lies. Let each of us here present, strive so that it may be written of her as of another worker: "Say not she did well or ill, only, she did her best." The signs of promise for the future abound and it is our purpose to plead for a continued advance movement for "Jesus' sake."

In conclusion our earnest prayer is that these meetings may have the result of sending us away with the determination to do the work of the Lord with more consecration than ever, and that we may be more faithful to the great task that has been committed to us.

Respectfully submitted,

ETHEL CLAXTON AYER.

Cor. Sec.

"Christianity is not a terminus but a progress."—  
Robert E. Speer.