

Northern Messenger

VOLUME XXXVI., No. 23

MONTREAL, JUNE 7, 1901.

39 Cts. Per An. Post-Paid.



LEPER BIBLE WOMAN AND HER CLASS.

Rhaibai, the Devoted Bible-Woman, who Became a Leper.

('Faithful Witness.')

Rhaibai was for many years employed under Mrs. Bissell, of the American Marathi Mission, at Ahmednagar, and did good and faithful work, being greatly used of God in blessing those to whom she read. Quite recently, however, the disease of leprosy showed itself in her, and she was obliged in consequence to relinquish her ordinary task. She was sent to the Leper Asylum at Nasik, newly opened by Miss R. Harvey, of the Zenana Bible and Medical Mission. Although unable to mix with the outside world, she could not remain idle, and the desire of her heart was to continue her work as Biblewoman to the poor leper women among whom she had come to live. At present the disease has not made much progress with her, only affecting the extremities of her fingers, so that she is quite able to carry on her mission. Miss Harvey, who superintends her work, writes:—'Her knowledge of Scripture is exceptionally good. Leprosy has appeared in her fingers. This prevents her from writing or keeping a report. Her work is confined to the Leper Asylum, and so she teaches the same number of people every day. In one fortnight she taught eight of the lepers more Scripture than our school children, though taught regularly, take in the three months. Besides teaching the lepers she is

a mother to them. She has a little house to herself, and is in authority over them. The lepers are very bigoted, like all the Nasik people, and besides observing caste, as far as possible, are fearful of any attempt to make them change their religion. In spite of this they all gather round Rhaibai to listen to her teaching, and to sing the hymns she has taught them. In the cool of the afternoon it is very pleasing to find them all gathered together singing one hymn after another. One woman said, "I can't tell you what these hymns are to us."

In the accompanying picture Rhaibai will be seen seated in the midst of her class of leper women, with an open Bible on her lap. Pray that ere she is called 'Home' to her rest she may be the means of winning many of these women for Christ.

Divine Leading in Dreams

(By the Rev. James M. Gray, D.D., in the 'Episcopal Recorder.')

The author of 'Madagascar of To-day,' tells us that the first volunteers for mission work in that island were led to offer themselves by means of a dream. They were Welshmen, David Jones and Thomas Bevan. Their theological tutor, Dr. Phillips, had been reading about the country, and was so deeply stirred in mind one night that he could not sleep. The next morning he related a dream on the subject which had come to him to his students, closing with the exclamation, 'Now, who among you will go as a missionary to Madagas-

car?' From the far end of the school room, without a moment's hesitation, Jones replied, 'I will,' and was immediately followed by his fellow-student, Bevan, in the same words.

One is rather shy about saying much in regard to 'Divine leading in dreams,' since it is likely to be misunderstood and misapplied. Jehovah warns Judah against prophets and dreamers of dreams, that cause her to forget his name, Jeremiah xxiii., 27, and declares that such should be put to death, Deuteronomy xiii., 5. And yet in both dispensations he himself frequently employs this method not only to instruct his own people, but to rebuke and restrain his enemies. Abimelech, Laban, Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Ahasuerus and Pilate's wife are instances in point in the last case. What unspeakable consequences hung on the Divine leading in dreams in the histories of Joseph, Solomon and David? We cannot forget that the husband of Mary was warned in a dream to 'take the young Child and his mother and go into Egypt,' and it is instanced as one of the signs of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the latter days that 'your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.'

Newman Hall relates that he was out walking one day, when a gentleman accosted him, and said he had once dreamed of being inside an unknown church, and hearing an unknown preacher, and being deeply impressed. Afterwards he was taken to Surrey Chapel (of which Dr. Hall was then