

THE MISSION CIRCLES.

CROCHET LACE INDUSTRY IN INDIA.

For some time past, many individuals here in Canada have received letters from various Indian Christian men in India soliciting orders for lace, of which a sample was usually enclosed. It has been difficult for those receiving such letters to know what to do with these requests, so the Conference in India, being asked for a pronouncement which might aid in dealing with them, sent the following resolution:

"Applications that are made not as philanthropic, but as a matter of business pure and simple, we would not wish to unduly interfere with, only it should be remembered that in such cases the profits go to one individual rather than to the workers themselves, whereas the missionary who deals with the lace gives the workers a fair price, and any profits that may accrue go to direct mission work.

On the other hand, in case of applications that are made on the ground of poverty or distress we would earnestly request our constituency at home that they be sent direct to our Foreign Mission Secretary, Dr. Brown. Then he could forward such to India to be dealt with here, as missionaries here would be in a much better position to judge of the need or of the poverty than any one so far away as Canada.

Moreover, as far as we have been able to learn the great majority of those making such applications do not belong to our Canadian Baptist Mission, but to a neighboring one and we have heard that many of them have been those under discipline by their churches, for which reason their missionaries have refused to take their lace. The taking of lace from such individuals, it will be easily seen, would interfere seriously with the discipline.

We therefore earnestly hope that all who receive applications will take the above recommendations into their kind and careful consideration."

At Dr. Brown's request, a Committee of the Women's Foreign Mission Board has taken this matter in hand, and it might be well to make a few explanations concerning it.

The crochet lace industry was started by our missionaries primarily to give work to women and girls who, being either without any other support or in very poor homes, could in this way help to earn a livelihood for themselves. Many of them, for various reasons, were unable to receive an education. From a very small beginning it has grown to large proportions, and has been the means of helping the women in more ways than just the financial. As the numbers of those making lace for sale has increased, a committee of lady missionaries on the field has been appointed, and this committee has set standards for the quality of the work and a uniform scale for the prices to be given. The women are given the fairest prices possible for their work, after which a small percentage is added to each price, this being the profit which goes into the Mission work and which also provides a fund for the purchase of new material.

Those who desire further information regarding letters which they may receive from Indians, or about the lace, will please correspond with

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5 Woolfrey Avenue, Toronto.

In behalf of the Lace Committee.