

GETTING GIRLS TO SCHOOL IN INDIA.

LETTER FROM MISS JAMIESON, OUR MISSIONARY IN NEEMUCH, CENTRAL INDIA.

WHEN I opened the first girls' school two and a half years ago now, the girls were afraid to remain in the room alone with me. The women were much the same.

It was months before I had any regular attendance. Numbers of both women and girls came in daily, and, after looking at the room and at me, and a multitude of questions which usually began with "Has your *shadi*—marriage—been made?" they went off again.

But the singing of *bhajars*, hymns, soon attracted some who wished to learn to sing them, and several girls were induced to begin to learn to read.

For a week or two I began to think myself established, but the Brahmmins evidently feared the same thing, for, going from house to house, they forbade the women to learn *bhajans* or the girls to read? What followed? Not a girl came to read, and few women came to visit me for over three weeks, during which time I went every day and turned the school-room into my study!

But the God in whom I trusted heard my many prayers and gradually the girls began to gather in again; and I may say the few women who came to me during those trying weeks are among my warmest friends still.

About a year ago now I took the girls to the river bank, just outside the city, for a picnic. A pleasant and profitable morning was spent, but alas, it was to end in anything but a pleasant way. The Christian teacher sent to her house, which is in the city, for drinking water for her little girl. The woman was seen by the friends of the girls, as she passed through the city on her return.

At once the cry went round like wild fire, that the girls were to be made drink that water in order to break their caste. Mothers, grandmothers, and brothers flew to where we were assembled, shouting and jabbering as only natives can, and carried off the girls.

It was impossible to get a hearing at the time, but in the evening I sent one of the native Christians to explain matters to the offended parents. She succeeded so well that the whole circumstance proved rather an advertisement for the school than a hindrance.

At another time several girls ceased attending school, and the reason assigned was their parents would not allow their girls to go where they heard the name of Christ so often.

Again, when I sent the different classes to separate rooms to be taught, this was objected to as giving more opportunity of making the girls Christians.

The first calisthenics song I taught, resulted in several vacant places next day, with the excuse that the girls could not go to school to learn *natching*—dancing—an amusement which no respectable woman indulges in here.

The last event of this kind took place only a short time ago, the effects of which are still somewhat felt. I asked the heathen woman who is employed in the school, to have her two little ones taken care of instead of doing so herself while at work. When I refused to pay a servant for her she left, and went most diligently from house to house, telling the friends of the girls most absurd stories of ways I intended to force their girls to be Christians.

I will now turn to the bright side of the picture.

I cannot count my pupils by hundreds, but there is much cause for thankfulness. The girls seem anxious to learn and fond of attending school, so that the days of our severest trials are at an end.

I have at present two Bible-women employed to do nothing but *zenana* work, for, in January last, when the house of the Subah was opened to me, it at once became the popular thing to "call Miss Sahib." And now, in a number of the houses, neither reading nor fancy work is taught, nothing but gospel truths, and our visits are welcome. In the second *zenana* which opened its doors to me I met objections to Christian teaching