

There is an ever increasing number who though they have not become Christians are trying to lead a better, a purer life in consequence of what they have heard; who say to their co-religionists "Come let us try to make our lives as pure as that life required by the Christian faith." Many who for some time have been accustomed to hear us, regard us as their best friends, seek our counsel and look to us for comfort when they would not go to their own religious teachers. We find in many places groups of people who regularly attend our services, who appeal to us and say "You know we believe in Jesus, but if we leave our parents, our wives and children, what will become of them?" I may point to several bands of young men who meet together to read the Bible and pray, and to not a few men and women who like Nicodemus come to Jesus by night, hear His word in secret and love Him, though as yet they have not been baptized. In one town in my district, a congregation of twenty persons met together for years to read the Bible without the aid of any Christian Teacher; ten of these have been baptized, and are adorning the doctrine of Christ. When we see such results as these, which are to be found in many of our districts, we shall be unfaithful to our Master if we complain that the preaching of His gospel has failed to lead men to Him.

The Christian Church in India is growing in numbers and strength year by year, but I confess I do not quite understand what is meant by those who affirm that Hinduism is already tottering and ready to fall. I do not believe it. The field before us is ready for plowing and sowing; some parts of the field are white unto the harvest; and we are now reaping fruit; but there are vast tracts we have not yet touched. We must be prepared to labour long, with enthusiasm, love, wisdom; and if we work diligently, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, we shall with God's blessing win souls to Christ and fulfil our commission.

WOMAN'S WORK.

Mrs. Ferguson, Established Church of Scotland, Calcutta:

She was engaged in Zenana work twenty years ago in this city before her marriage. It rejoiced her to be back again, in God's providence. She stood there more from pride and thankfulness for her missionary ancestry, than anything else. The name of her mother, Mrs. Mullens, was still cherished in the zenanas. In her time they had scarcely anything; now she found zenana work thoroughly organized and in successful operation.

One thing we must not lose sight of—our connection with the home churches which send us out. We require faith, self-denial, and other graces, to come out and work; but do we always remember the self-denial of those at home, by whose gifts we are enabled to come? Last winter, when holding a meeting in a country parish in Scotland, she was deeply affected by the women crowding around her, asking: "What can we do to help? How can we assist?" To those who asked, in some instances, a sixpence meant a great deal.

She felt convinced it would be a help to think more of our obligations and responsibilities to those who send us out. In the hurry and perplexities of our work, let us not overlook our home sympathizers.

We can reach our zenana women best through the affections. The other day she visited a house for the first time after 18 years' absence. After the Bible lesson was given, two women came forward, asking: "What good is all our learning? What good is anything now that the son of the house is taken from us?" This afforded a favorable opportunity of speaking of Jesus. Our influence is to be a personal one. In quietness and confidence shall be our strength. It was after the seraph had touched the prophet's lips that he said, "Here am I, Lord, send me!" If our lips are touched with the heavenly fire, and our hearts filled with love, we shall have great success.

Miss Joseph, Baptist Mission, Benares:

The point to which I desire to call your attention is the necessity of having Widows' Schools in connection with zenana work. I have been engaged for 15 years in zenana work, and from the very first I have seen the great, the pressing necessity for these schools. Zenana women who have husbands and

children, when converted, find it almost impossible to come out of their homes to be baptized; but the case of a widow, especially if childless, is less difficult. But what is to be done with them when they do come out? Many have said to me: "We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; we wish to be baptized; but what after that? We have no means; where shall we live? How shall we be supported?" To these natural questions, we have no definite answer to give. We are quite at a loss to know what to do with such cases. I appeal to this conference for advice. If Christians will not provide homes for such women, their fate is miserable indeed. The case ought to be represented to Zenana Mission Societies, and they ought to be brought to see the need of immediately opening Widows' Schools. One case of peculiar hardship has caused me so much anxiety and distress, that I have resolved never to bring out another woman, unless there is a home available for her. It is Scriptural to help widows: it was done in the apostolic age. The schools could include Christian widows, as well as new converts, who might be trained as superior teachers. Zenana women sometimes dislike native Christian teachers, because they are inferior women who often do more harm than good. There are many most efficient native Christian teachers who command unqualified respect, who are well educated and refined. If theological classes are deemed necessary to train men for mission work, how much more do we need training institutions for women? There are a few such, but nothing like the number we ought to have. Let us acknowledge the necessity of such schools, and set about opening them as soon as possible.

Mrs. G. Kerry, Baptist Mission, Calcutta:

Was glad to say that in connection with her mission they have a Widows' School. There were not many pupils, only three at present, but they are prepared, and will be glad to take more. Two of these women are too old to make much progress in instruction. The third is a very interesting case. She has come over from Hinduism lately. Our Christian women found her in the hospital, and took her to their home. She was taught domestic duties, etc., and after careful instruction, became a real and hopeful Christian. She feared that, were inducements held out to widows to come out, more will come out than wish to be Christians. She was a representative of the old system of teaching—our Christian schools for children of Christians. She strongly advocated the better teaching of our Christians, the more careful education and training of those rising up among our native people. From their ranks are to come the teachers of the future. So we should try to make them efficient. Good teachers are our great want here in Calcutta. In her school she had the happiness of seeing a great number truly converted as she believed. Let us have more earnest prayer that those who are endeavoring to strike at the heart of heathenism may have more power.

Mrs. Major Tucker, of the Salvation Army:

I had not thought of speaking, but when asked to do so I could not refuse. I have been watching this zenana work a long time; when my husband was in the civil service and we went about through the villages, I often gathered the women by the hundreds and spoke to them of Christ. And I have often noticed these earnest zenana missionaries. In the Punjab I have seen my aunt, Miss Tucker, [A. L. O. E.] gather together women and children for religious instruction, and my heart has been in the work. Looking upon these poor heathen women, and slightly changing the words, I have often said—

Shall I whose heart is lighted
With wisdom from on high
Shall I to these benighted
The lamp of life deny?

The other day a native gentleman said to me, "These missionary ladies are so good and doing such a grand work;" and I want to say to these sisters here to-day, you are doing a grand work. The men are planting the strong guns, the rifled cannon, and directing these against the citadel; you are undermining the walls. The word preached in the zenana is not