

Foreign Missions.

W. B. M. U.

MOTTO FOR THE YEAR:

"We are laborers together with God."

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PRAYER TOPIC FOR JUNE.

For our young ladies on the mission field, that the power of the Holy Spirit may accompany their labors.
For our associations, that the Lord's blessing may attend every session.

Pundita Ramabai

St. David's Presbyterian church was filled to overflowing last Tuesday evening by the missionary societies of the various denominations of St. John and others interested in mission work, who were assembled to greet Pundita Ramabai, a converted Hindu lady of Brahmin caste, who is making a lecturing tour of these provinces in aid of her school for the child widows of India. On the platform were Dr. Bruce, Presbyterian; Dr. Carey, Baptist; Dr. Pope, Methodist; Rev. Mr. Dewdney, Episcopalian, all of whom assisted in the preliminary and closing exercises, also the speaker, accompanied by Mrs. Bruce and Mrs. Wm. Allwood.

The chairman, Dr. Bruce, with a few fitting remarks introduced the speaker, who is of low stature, bright, genial countenance, clear expression, exhibiting at times a keen sense of humor. She was attired in her native costume.

The Pundita's address was a lengthy one and most impressive, telling of the different castes of her country, every one of which had its own religion. She dwelt on the condition of women there, especially the widows of whom there are 23,000,000. Their religion teaches them that they are created by God for the use of man and their only God is their husbands. All required of them is to make their husbands comfortable and, whether he is living or dead, she must worship him. As she can never be independent of him, if she happens to get to heaven it will only be to wait on him. Women are of less account than cattle. They have a hospital for the care of sick cattle, while women are not cared for when sick but instead illused. Should the number of girls in a family exceed that of the boys, it is considered a disgrace and the girls are put to death. Consequently there are 6½ millions less women than men in India. The speaker dwelt very tenderly upon the trials and ill usages of the child widows, among whom she is doing noble work in the way of teaching them to work, educating so as to elevate and Christianize them. She feels sure these are the methods required to reach all the women of the country. One of God's ways is to take those that are despoiled and rejected of men and use them for the elevation of others. The speaker felt that through these abused widows God might elevate India. What is needed is a training home for girls. There were 200 Christians in India. If they were all to do their duty more Hindu men and women would hear of Christ, more missionaries should be sent. There is great need. The Pundita was listened to with rapt attention.

Perhaps a short synopsis of this far-famed woman's somewhat curious history might be interesting to some one who may not have the privilege of hearing her. Her father was a learned Brahmin professor or pundit, by the name of Ananta Shastri, to whom came many students. He married a child wife nine years of age and resolved to put in practice his liberal theories of female education. This was not permissible in his caste. His people were so indignant that they drove him from them. He sought refuge in the woods, still continuing to educate his young wife. After Ramabai's birth, the life of the family was a wandering one for a time, but the child's education was not neglected. At the age of twelve years she had gained her great knowledge of the Sanskrit tongue. When 16 years of age she lost by death her father, mother and sister, within a short time of each other. Ramabai and her brother were desolate indeed. Then taking courage they travelled through a large part of India, adopting their father's practice, advocating female education, and during their journey reached Calcutta. The young Sanskrit scholar attracted much attention and astonishment among the pundits of the Calcutta University. They conferred upon her the highest degree for learning known among them. Her title was Sarvasati, meaning Goddess of wisdom. In their journeyings she had free access to the homes of the high caste Indians, saw the home life in all its cruel details and determined to devote her life to the redemption of her unfortunate sisters, especially the child widows. She married a Bengalee gentleman, a graduate of Calcutta University and during her short married life her husband and she planned a school for Orphan and Hindu girls. She was to teach and he would support it. But his sudden death by cholera left her alone and without means. It was then she turned her thoughts to England. She spent 10 years teaching Sanskrit in Cheltenham college and received so much encouragement and kind Christian help, both in England and America, that she was able to return to her native land and open a school in Poona, in 1889. One Missionary says: "We love to visit her school, many of the girls are so bright and beautiful. It seems to us impossible that most of them are widows, they love Ramabai as a mother." December 23, 1897, another Missionary writes: "Ramabai now has nearly 300 famous widows. Of these,

250 have embraced Christianity. The pundita seems have no fear as to attaining the necessary funds. She says it is the Lord's work and He will provide. There is but one other school for widows in all India, taught in Bengal by a Bengalee gentleman. No English or American lady could have gathered such a school as Ramabai's together so she is very justly called India's foremost woman.

The meeting of the W. B. M. U. in connection with the Western Association of N. S. will be held at Milton, Yarmouth Co., on Saturday afternoon, June 18th, commencing at 3 o'clock.

The meeting of the W. B. M. U. in connection with the Central Association of N. S. will be held at Hantsport on Saturday afternoon, June 25th, commencing at 3 o'clock.

Will Delegates as far as possible bring verbal, not written reports?

Will our Mission Bands each send a representative to these meetings?

Our Eastern Association meets July 9th, with the church at Boylston, Guysboro Co. Notice of the date of our W. B. M. U. meeting will be given in the column as soon as our arrangements can be perfected.

A. E. JOHNSTON,

Prov. Sec'y, W. B. M. U. for N.S.

Dartmouth, June 3rd.

Horse Racing.

Preamble and Resolutions adopted by the Evangelical Alliance of Halifax, May 27th, 1898.

Whereas, in the year 1896 the Legislature of this Province passed an Act to establish an agricultural and industrial Exhibition at the joint expense of the City of Halifax and the Province, fixing the sum of thirty thousand dollars as payable by the City and a like sum by the Province, and by the same act created the Provincial Exhibition Commission a body corporate to carry the project into effect, and conduct such Exhibition year after year.

And whereas, in the year 1897, it having been found that further legislation was necessary in order to acquire title to certain lands needed for Exhibition grounds, an act was passed appropriating the lands described therein, and containing a clause in the words following: (See section 5 of chap. 3 of acts 1897) "The track or course to be constructed on the land hereby vested in the said Commission shall be used solely for the purpose of a county, provincial, or Dominion Exhibition, including the exhibiting of horses, cattle, and other animals, and shall not be used or let for any other purpose, and the same shall not be used or let for use except at a time when an Exhibition is being held."

And whereas, the prime object of the enactment of said clause was to prevent the said track or course from being used or let for horse racing purposes, and in order effectually to secure that and it was deemed necessary or expedient by the Legislature that said clause should be framed in the absolute and unmistakable language which it contains;

And whereas, the purpose for which said clause was enacted, as above stated, is one that in our opinion commends itself to the vast majority of the people of the province and of the citizens of Halifax, inasmuch as horse racing forms no legitimate part of an agricultural and industrial Exhibition, and because it is a most pernicious and demoralizing sport and is almost invariably accompanied by gambling and drunkenness, and other forms of vice;

And whereas, it may, in our opinion, be most safely assumed that the people of this city and province would never consent to vote a sum of money to build a race track for the purpose of carrying on horse racing, and thereby as a people become a party to the evils flowing therefrom;

And whereas, the said clause, forming, as it does, a part of the act whereby the Exhibition grounds were acquired, and the expropriation thereof being granted, under the express condition that the track or course should not be let or used except as therein provided, it would, in our opinion, be a breach of good faith should the Legislature by any subsequent enactment permit the said track to be used for horse-racing purposes, and would be spending the people's money for a purpose which was never contemplated but was expressly prohibited;

And whereas, in the year 1896 a statute was passed entitled an act to amend the Exhibition act of 1896, and providing for a large increase of the amount to be contributed by city and province for Exhibition purposes, and in the same act a clause was inserted repealing section 5 of chapter 3 of the acts of 1896, which section related to certain corporate functions of the Exhibition Commission, which functions, however, are by a general act bestowed on all corporate bodies;

And whereas, it is averred by the Hon. Attorney General that said section 5 was intended to repeal the prohibitive clause in the act of 1897, and that the number "1896" had been inserted by mistake;

And whereas by reason of such mistake the said prohibitive clause in the act of 1897 still undoubtedly remains in full force and effect;

And whereas, so far as we can learn, the question of the repeal of the prohibitive clause was never under discussion in either branch of the Legislature, and no evidence is before us of any intention on the part of the members of the House of Assembly or Legislative Council with one or two exceptions, to effect such repeal;

And whereas, assuming that it was intended in the act

of 1898 to repeal said prohibitive section, such repealing act should have been introduced as a separate bill and not as a section of an act to amend the statute of 1896, and by this misplacement it may be fairly assumed that the act of 1898, so far as relates to such repeal, thus escaped the observation of members of the House and Council;

And whereas, a short time since, tenders were requested, through the public press, for a lease of said track for a period of three years, the tenders to state the highest rent they would give and keep the track in order, or what they would give and the Commission to keep the track in order;

And whereas, upon receipt of tenders by the Commission its Executive met and decided upon giving a lease to one of the parties tendering therefor;

And whereas, at this stage and before any lease had been given, the Alliance, in connection with the Law and Order Association of Halifax, in order to prevent the threatened violation of the clause prohibiting the letting or use of the track except for Exhibition objects, determined to apply to the Supreme Court for an injunction for that purpose, having previously placed the matter before the Government without result;

And whereas, in order to apply for an injunction it was found necessary to institute an action against the Exhibition Commission, which action could not be maintained by any one not a member of the Commission, without the sanction of the Hon. Attorney General as the chief law officer of the Crown;

And whereas, application was made to the Attorney General for a writ for the issue of process to prevent a lease from being granted;

And whereas, by his failure either to grant or refuse the same, time passed and the lease was granted;

And whereas, application was then made to the Attorney General for the allowance of a writ to set aside the lease and prevent the illegal use of the track;

And whereas, the Attorney General refused to sanction any writ against the Commission to set aside the lease, and would only grant a writ against the lessees (the Halifax Riding Club) to enable an application to be made to the Court to restrain them from using same track as a race course;

And whereas, an application to the Court under such limitation and restrictions would leave the lease of the track outstanding and in full force, and would be attended by difficult and perplexing questions of facts, as to whether horse racing or only some modification of the evil was intended, and would not enable the applicants to secure the entire prohibition of that sport which the act itself provided for;

And whereas, by such refusals of the Attorney General (refusals which we regard as altogether arbitrary and a distinct denial of justice, and an unworthy taking advantage of a discretion vested in him as an officer of the Crown) we have been debarred from applying to the Court, and are left without remedy in that direction;

And whereas, such an amazing and startling breach of a public statute by the Exhibition Commission, advised and led by the Attorney General of the Province, demands the severest censure and the earliest possible rectification;

Therefore be it resolved, as follows:

1. That this Alliance do petition the House of Assembly and Legislative Council at their next session, to cancel the said lease and provide adequate penalties for the violation of Section 5, Chap. 3 of the Acts of 1897, prohibiting the letting or using of said track for other than Exhibition purposes.

2. That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the representatives of the different denominations connected with the Alliance, with a request that at their ensuing annual meetings they will take steps to petition the House and Council to the end above stated.

3. That inasmuch as the well being of our beloved country can only be ensured by a faithful and honest observance of the law of the land, and it is desirable that every departure from such observance, especially in the case of those occupying prominent and responsible positions, be marked by the strongest disapprobation, we will do our utmost, and ask the religious bodies with which we are associated and all good men of every denomination, to incalculable by every means respect for law as the only safeguard of the welfare of the country, and that they will by their petitions demand the cancellation of a lease that is both illegal and immoral, and contrary to the best interests of the province.

JOHN LATHERN, President.
ROBERT MURRAY, Secretary.

Halifax, May 27, 1898.

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