

New Circles.

A Home and Foreign Mission Circle was organized at Alvinston on May 28th, Miss Mary Winger was elected *President*, and Mrs. W. W. Collins, *Secretary*. L. W.

Sherbrooke, Home and Foreign Mission Circle, organized June 4th, by the Director Mrs. Forbes, officers, Mrs. D. Deamund, *President*; Mrs. W. Root, *Vice-Pres.*; Miss Mirriam Minor, *Sec.*; Miss Louisa Dick, *Treas.*

Iona Circle organized May 3rd. Officers, Miss Davis, *Pres.*; Miss Brown, *Vice-Pres.*; Miss McRitohie, *Sec.*; Mrs. Scott, *Treas.*; Misses King and Dancy, *Collectors*; Miss L. Dancy, *Agent for Tracts.*

YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEPARTMENT.

A Visit to our Sunday School.

Rouse up, little folks! rouse up! and make haste with your dressing, else we shall be late. But I think I hear a sleepy voice say "oh dear; I never did rise at five o'clock on Sunday morning and why to-day?" But you must, if you would come with me, so hurry and we will have our "early tea" of bananas, bread and milk; and now jump up behind me on my horse and away we go, down the dusty red-gravel road, past the burning ground, and yes! there is a little curl of blue smoke and an odour of roasting flesh and a group of men, all tolling only too plainly that during the night some one has died and the body will soon be but a heap of ashes; past the tinsmith at the entrance of the village where the tin-smith, sitting out on the veranda, has already begun his work for he knows no Sabbath rest; past the goldsmith, who like the tinsmith, is hammering away making jewels for the nose, ears, neck, arms, waist, ankles and toes of the Akidu men, women, girls and boys; past a tumbled-down old heathen temple; past the Mahomedan mosque; past the queer little bits of shops, where you never can buy anything you want, because only things for native use are kept; these are spread out on the floor of the veranda and the salesman sits behind them tailor-fashion waiting for his customers; past a group of children who shout "salaam" and, "did you bring any books?" "will you give me a paper to read?" "I shake my head—"no, I have neither books or papers to-day," "will you bring one next time?" they call after us as we turn a corner into a wee bit lane and round another corner on to the Brahmin street. Here all the men and boys are sitting outside the front door cleaning their teeth with a stick. On we go past the place where they sell awful stuffs to make men drunk, and we have reached the Malapilly. The horse slackens his pace to a walk and I raise my voice and call "Children! oh children; come to Sunday School; come to Sunday School!" Through the street we go and at one door after another dusky little forms appear bobbing back again to tell to a sister, brother or mother that we have come, or we hear a great shout of "oh! this is Sunday and here is the miss-ammagarn (as they call me). They come trooping out to join us and we all turn on to the veranda together, they pop down into their places on the floor and we take our seat on the block of wood placed ready for us; a hymn is given out and sung while the late comers gather in—still they come and the number swells—forty, forty-five, fifty, or fifty-five, sixty; sixty boys and girls ranging in age from two years to fourteen or fifteen and a few mothers and fathers

who form a Bible class off to one side. The bell rings, all know its meaning and every voice is hushed, every little formed bowed with face to the floor, while prayer is offered, or as one little girl said "while we talked with the white lady's God;" Then the lesson for the day is given and the teachers take their several classes, teaching a verse to each child therein; they are learning the Commandments and to-day 'tis the fourth—"Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy." Why they are thus engaged let us take a look at them—yes! this is the very school of which I wrote long ago, you hardly recognize in the orderly children before you the wild, frightened, naked little youngsters of whom I wrote, do you? True they are still naked or nearly so, though the older ones have made some little attempt at clothing and some of the girls even comb their hair before coming; but the great difference is in their behaviour, they no longer scamper off in a fright if I look at them or rise from my seat, nor is it any longer common to see a couple of boys here and two or three girls there trying to settle their small differences with high words, and doubled fists. See that laughing faced boy, sitting with folded arms! there was a time when we did not know what to do with him, he would persist in pinching the little ones, poking them (not at all gently) in the ribs and pulling their hair. Was in fact a general disturber of the peace; and that curly headed girl in Deborah's class! she was a trial too, she wouldn't sit down, was always ready to run, sometimes I almost wished she would stay away, for being one of the older girls, others followed her example.

Once, some of the teachers said "give it up; no use trying to have a Sunday School here," for the fathers and mothers, instead of helping us by sending their children, tried to keep them at home, and those who came were so unruly that 'twas small wonder if there were discouraged ones, but we knew that Jesus could and would help us, and sure enough He did; but the lesson hour is over, another hymn is sung and then comes the recitation of the verse learned, each child rises in turn, recites his verse and receives his reward; another prayer and 'tis time to close, a touch of the bell and all rise, another touch and with one voice they all say "salaam" "salaam," and rush away.

I think I hear some one ask—"Whoever heard of a Sunday School that met at six o'clock in the morning? why do you have it so early?" Just because many of the boys are cow-herds and the girls shepherdesses and the earlier the sun rises the earlier they must be away to the pasture fields; so if we would have them in school we must be early too. Some months ago we met at half-past seven, then at seven and so on till now we meet at six and next Sunday we hope to be earlier still, for last week a man came and looked round upon the school just as though he only wanted to see how we were getting along, but he no sooner espied his daughter than he struck her three or four heavy blows with his stick before I could stop him and dragged her off to work; and a little mother came and ran her eyes over each class, at last they rested on her nine year old son, very quick she caught him by the "juts" and led him off; I plead that he might remain a little longer but she said "no, the cows had been waiting over so long and she couldn't have any more delay, if our Sunday School was going to keep people from their work, it was a very bad thing and she would not allow her boys to come again."

Hoping that you have enjoyed your visit and now that you know us, will not forget to pray for us.

I am your friend,

F. M. STOVEL.

Akidu, India, May 9th, 1890.