

his intimate knowledge of the districts and the prevailing conditions would be of great help in the endeavour to meet something of the material need of the distressed areas. Mr. Findlay too has been taking special care to provide for the spiritual needs of the people who were too poor to buy Scriptures; many refugees, having lost their all, needed the Word of God, and Mr. Findlay's request that £1500 should be allocated for the provision of Scriptures free or at a reduced rate was at once granted by the Directors. The Committee of the Scripture Gift Mission has also provided funds to meet the need for Scriptures, and Mr. Findlay has been giving useful supervision in this connection.

#### Soaring Prices—but the Work Goes on.

Costs of printing Scriptures, transport, etc., are very high, and the currency obtainable has depreciated greatly in purchasing power. Missionary work in Free China was facing a very critical time but it has been good to learn that after negotiations with the Government of China, in which the Society's Agent had a part, it was agreed to allow a special subsidy of 50 per cent. on money sent out from this country for missionary and educational purposes. Whenever the result of the negotiations was announced, Mr. Findlay cabled for £4000 to be sent out, which was done, so that this sum was increased for exchange purposes by 50 per cent. allowance—a very useful addition, and yet even that amount is very limited in what it can accomplish. The situation calls for earnest prayer, and in his latest cable Mr. Findlay appeals for the constant prayers of the people at home that they in China might be enabled to undertake the great tasks confronting them.

#### News of the Society's Agents.

As to the well-being of the Society's Agents, who with their wives and families, have been placed in some of the Civil Assembly centres in "Occupied" China, news is very scanty, but the word comes through from time to time that they are well. Rev. George Henderson, with Mrs. Henderson and their boy, were reported to be at Yangchow, Kiangsu; Rev. W. J. Baker, with Mrs. Baker and their two children, at Lunghwa, Shanghai; while Mr. Wm. McNeill, with Mrs. McNeill and their three children, were at Weihien, Shantung; Mr. Ian Morrison, whose wife and little boy are in Canada, is at Pootung, Shanghai, while Mr. Milward, who has given over fifty years service to China, has, on account of his age, been allowed a greater measure of freedom. Through the Foreign Office it has been possible to provide allowances for subsistence, etc., but the thoughts and prayers of many are around them and their loved ones in these days of trial and separation.

#### Amid Famine and Distress, there Must be No Famine of the Word of God.

In India, where famine and distress have been facing many in some districts, the work of Bible distribution has been going on steadily, and although many difficulties as to supplies have to be encountered, endeavours have been made to ensure that there is no famine of the Word of God. Higher costs of living have made the lot of the Colporteurs much more difficult; the situation has been well described by one missionary: "Rice is now being sold at eight times pre-war price,

and you can imagine the effect that has on the domestic budgets of our people who are mainly rice-eaters. Even at the high price, rice is difficult to get. It is not because the harvests are bad, but the rapacity of the merchant classes and the ignorance of the people, have opened the way for many abuses, and have made us realise more keenly than ever India's need for the Gospel of Christ. A more Christian India would have made a stronger stand for righteousness and justice." Some time ago the Directors considered the position in India, and granted what is called there "a dearness allowance." This will help those who so faithfully spread the Scriptures there, and the present challenging situation in that land to-day only emphasizes how vital for India at the present time and for the future, is the task of providing "the living Bread."

In one district, where colporteurs supervised by the Scottish Universities Mission are at work, the Directors had recently offered a grant towards the support of an additional worker, who hitherto had only been employed during certain months of the year. It was felt that his work was well worth while encouraging, but before the intimation of the grant could have reached India, Rev. Gavin Fairservice wrote intimating the death of this faithful worker:

"We were all very distressed at the death of Mikma, our temporary colporteur, who had worked mainly at the Hot Springs in the cold weather. He was a very enthusiastic worker, and his faith and witness were strong. The Bible Society work was foremost in his life, so that everywhere he was known, not by his family name, but as Mikma Colporteur. He died of typhoid."

#### The Challenge of an Almost Bible-less Europe

While throughout the world there is this great need for the Scriptures, nowhere is it greater than in Europe itself; but just there at the present moment it is not possible to supply the Word, and while messages have come in different ways to show that many have found the Bibles which were available to be of the greatest help to them in their time of need and distress, the Bible Societies will be faced with great demands whenever doors are open again. The Directors have considered carefully plans for the future, and while, as yet it is hardly the time to make definite plans for the post-war period, they have agreed upon their policy for what may be called the pre-armistice and post-armistice periods. In conference with the British and Foreign Bible Society, it has been possible to consider various fields where work can be so arranged that the best use will be made of available funds in order to meet what will undoubtedly be the greatest challenge the Bible Societies have ever been called upon to meet—an almost Bible-less Europe. Starving people in many areas will require food and clothing but they will also need to be provided for spiritually, and those who have suffered much will learn of Him who suffered all for them, and who in these tragic years of strife has been crucified afresh. Then again there are lands where the Bible has hardly any place at present, but those with faith in their hearts do not accept that position as final. They think of the possibilities of Russia, of its youth learning the great messages of God's Word almost for the first