

have paid £83 for Vernacular Scriptures, and there can be no doubt that where they thus buy they read. May it not be hoped that these are preparatory steps in God's providential dealings, prior to the Truth being written upon their hearts through the renewing influence of the Holy Ghost! Numerous extracts from the letters of correspondents are appended to the report, most of them of an encouraging character. The Rev. W. Hooper, Principal of St. John's Divinity School, Lahore, thus writes:—

“My students are in two ways greatly indebted under God to your Society: first, in that many of them can trace their conversion *chiefly*, though not solely, to the private reading of God's Word; and secondly, because as the Bible forms the staple of our instruction here, our work could not at all get on without a Bible Society. And I am happy to say, that all students who come here seem to increase in reverential love for the Word of God, and to desire to communicate its precious truths to others.”

BOMBAY.—The committee of the Bombay Auxiliary, whilst reporting a year of much distress through famine, are thankful to acknowledge that this sad calamity has produced no effect upon their work, except a reduction in the amount of the contributions.

The issues have been larger this year than for several years past, a result which may be attributed either to an increased desire to possess the Scriptures, or to increased efforts to promote their circulation. Such efforts are indeed loudly called for, inasmuch as although there is a very small percentage of the 20,000,000 who inhabit the Presidency that can read, only a fraction of those who can read possess the Scriptures.

The issues from the Bombay depôt have amounted during the year to 12,510 copies. A new scheme of colportage has been adopted, under which eight colporteurs have been employed, but only for limited periods. They have succeeded in selling 1,593 copies. The following account is given of a tour taken on the shores of the Persian Gulf:—

“With a view to circulate the Holy Scriptures at Bushire, Bussorah, and other places, the Rev. Mr. Stothert proceeded in the beginning of the cold season on a tour to the Persian Gulf. He had been furnished for the tour with a considerable supply of Scriptures in the Hebrew, Arabic, Persian, Armenian, and English languages. To help him in the work of seeing and distributing, Mr. Stothert took with him a Christian agent well acquainted with the above-named towns and the languages spoken there. This agent sold at Kurrachee, Muscat, Bushire, Bussorah, and Baghdad, 230 Bibles, New Testaments, and Portions, the proceeds of which amounted to 123 11 0 rupees. He had many opportunities of speaking on the subject of religion to Jews, Arabs, and Persians, and to such of them as he thought would make a profitable use of the Scriptures, he presented 173 copies. To meet the expense of colportage on this tour, the Parent Committee kindly made a grant of £50. They also sent for the tour a supply of Hebrew Scriptures.”

MADRAS.—This Auxiliary, which last year reported an increase both in its income and issues, has experienced this year a falling-off in both. Famine has prevailed to a fearful extent throughout the Presidency, and as many as 20,000,000 of the population have been subjected to its effects. Under these circumstances it was hardly to be expected that the circulation could be maintained at the same level, or that the same amount of contributions would be received. Among the poor the struggle for life absorbed all their resources, and the perishing multitudes had necessarily a first claim upon the charity of their more wealthy neighbours. It is, however, satisfactory to find that, notwithstanding these hindrances, the operations of the Auxiliary have on the whole been successful. The following is the concluding paragraph of the report of the Auxiliary:—

“Viewing the work in its entirety it is clear that through the instrumentality of colportage great good has been accomplished. The sales have been encouraging, and what is better still is the knowledge that the Scriptures have been read by large numbers of Hindoos, and to some extent by Moham-