

What a magnificent work this is, even when regarded from the secular standpoint of literature and science! How stupendous, how sublime to the Christian when he reflects that each copy of these books contains the living Word of God, with all its limitless possibilities for the salvation of men! No nobler work could be done by any body of Christian men than that which is being done by the British and Foreign Bible Society in India. It is carried on in that country, as you are aware, by six auxiliaries; three in Upper India—at Calcutta, Allahabad, and Lahore; and three in Southern India—at Madras, Bombay, and Bangalore. The Bibles are sold at central depôts at these places, and are also distributed over the country through branch depositories, through missionary institutions, and by colporteurs.

No part of the work, perhaps, is of more importance or has deeper interest than that done by the Bible women. Five years ago the Bible Society offered annual grants to other Societies working in the East, in order to secure the more widespread diffusion of the Scriptures among Eastern women; and of these grants more than twenty Societies working in India have availed themselves. The importance of this work can hardly be over-rated. During last year the 314 Bible women, of whom 209 are employed in India, read the Scriptures every week to about 15,000 of their Eastern sisters, and distributed among them over 10,000 copies of the Scriptures, or Portions of the Scriptures. These women are to the work of the Bible Society what the Zenana missionary is to the Missionary Societies—penetrating where the ordinary missionary cannot go, and sowing the seed of the Word in fields otherwise inaccessible. That all this work is silently producing immeasurable moral and spiritual results it is not permitted us to doubt.

Everywhere in India in the present day new life is to be seen. We see it in the breakdown of the superstitions of centuries; we see it in the growth of new beliefs, in the formation of new religious societies, in the spread of education, in the demands for social and political reform, in schemes for the amelioration of the condition of women, and in a thousand ways, among which not least is the extraordinary growth of the Native Christian Church and the spread of Christian truth. In such a state of things, the dissemination even of good secular literature is invaluable as a civilizing and elevating agency. How much more the circulation of God's living Word of Truth. That Word is spirit and life. It is living seed which has within it a germinating force. "So is the kingdom of God as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep and rise, night and day; and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how."

In every Missionary Report you will find instances of this living, quickening, self-evidencing power of the Scriptures. Carey first published his Bengali New Testament in 1801. Seventeen years afterwards, when the mission extended to Dacca, there were found several villages of Hindu-born peasants who had given up idol-worship, were renowned for their truthfulness, and were seeking for a true teacher come from God. They traced their new faith to a much-worn book, kept in a wooden box, in one of their villages. No one could say whence it had come; all they knew was that they had possessed it for many years. It was Carey's first Bengali version of the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

And what happened only the other day at Akola? I had better give the story in Mr. Fuller's own words. He says: "Some time ago I was in one of the large towns in our district. In the evening, after a hard day's work, I sat down by the cart to rest, when three men came up to me, one of them falling prostrate at my feet after slipping a rupee into my hand. I raised him up gently, and enquired what he wanted. From his conversation I gleaned the following story: Eleven years ago a blacksmith in his village had bought a copy of the New Testament from some gentleman who was passing through. I could not learn who it was, and he and this farmer and another had been reading it all these years. Six years ago the Brahmins