

It was soon found that male colporteurs had very considerable difficulty in finding access to the thoroughly degraded of the opposite sex, so as to carry on the object of their mission among them; and it had occurred to some zealous friends of the cause, that if female agents could be obtained, respectable and trustworthy, while socially not far removed from those whom they sought to benefit, the "Missing Link" between the Society and the objects of their solicitude would be supplied. The manner in which this happy idea came first to be carried into effect is thus described:—

"A lady, who had long been engaged in promoting the circulation of the Word of God in country districts, walked one midsummer afternoon, about two years since, with a friend through the streets of St. Giles's. The friend was a retired physician, who had known the secrets of the Seven Dials in the days of his early practice. The lady had recently become a resident in London, and the two having been village neighbours, this was a kind of exploratory walk to observe the condition of the London poor. Meantime, the question arose, how far these people, in their countless courts and alleys, would be found to be supplied with the Bible.

"This enquiry grew into a determination to ascertain that they were so supplied, and led to a reference to one of the active missionaries of the district. He was asked if he knew of a poor, good woman who would venture with a bag of Bibles into every room, as a paid agent for the Bible Society, and give a faithful account of her trust.

"In reply, he said he thought he happened to have a letter in his pocket from a woman who might be trained to this employment—a good, grave person, of middle age, and whom he had known for some years. She was a resident in St. Giles's, and her letter to him, which was a remarkable one, expressed the desire quite spontaneously, to devote three hours a day to the visitation of these sorrowful children of sin whom none else would go near. Of that which she had, the treasure of time, though she depended on it for her daily bread, she was willing to offer a portion to the Lord—without money and without price."

"The history of Marian B—— was a singular one. She earned a scanty livelihood in cutting fine papers, or moulding wax-flowers, or making bags for silver smiths in London; and her lot had been cast, for three and-thirty years, in some one or other of the parishes of the Seven Dials. A drunken father, who broke her mother's heart, had bought her, as a young girl of fifteen, gradually down, down from the privileges of a respectable birth, to dwell in a low lodging-house in St. Giles's. He died shortly afterwards, and left her an only sister, of five years of age, orphans, in the midst of pollution, which they, as by miracle escaped, often sitting on the stairs or door-step all night to avoid what was to be seen within. An old man, who was her fellow-lodger, kind hearted, though an atheist, had taught her to write a little, and he bade her never read the Bible—it was full of lies; she had only to look round her in St. Giles's, and she might see that there was no God!"

"Five years before the time at which the lady met with her, she was passing through the streets one rainy night, when she took shelter in an alley that led up to a little mission-hall in Dudley Street, and hearing a voice, went in to listen. It was almost the close of the address; but some verses quoted from the eleventh chapter of Hebrews struck on her ear and touched her heart. She knew that the book always used in such places must be a Bible; but her attention was further arrested by an announcement that books would be lent on the next evening, from that place, from a newly-formed library for the poor. Going early at the appointed time, she was the first claimant of the promise. She had intended to borrow 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' but a strong impulse came over her which she could not resist—it was as if she had heard it whispered to her, 'Do not borrow Uncle Tom, borrow a Bible.' So she asked for a Bible.

"'A Bible, my good woman!' was the missionary's reply. 'We did not mean to lend Bibles from this library; but wait, I will fetch you one. It is a token for good, that the Book of God, the best of books, should be the first one asked for, and lent from this place.' He brought her the Bible, and asked if he should call and read a chapter with her. She said respectfully, 'No, sir, thank you; we are