

the others, in the hundred and forty-four different villages that they inhabit, scattered over a very wide area, and we ourselves also visit them in their own homes perpetually."

Mrs. Boerresen had been absent for a time, in Europe, but had returned, accompanied by Mr. Skrefsrud. Their reception was not quite so brilliant as that of the Prince of Wales, but was interesting in its way:—

"A large number of Christians had come in from their villages the previous day, and the boys and girls of the schools and some of the neighbouring Christians had erected a couple of triumphal arches at the entrance to the compound. The new-comers were accordingly greeted by a large concourse of Christians, singing to them a hymn of welcome specially composed for the occasion."

VERNACULAR LITERATURE FOR INDIA.

While friends at home, both in this country and the United States, are deeply concerned at the progress of an unwholesome and immoral literature among the masses, the friends of India are even more deeply moved by what is found to be circulating most extensively among the natives of that country. Even the ability to read may be terribly perverted; and certainly it is a most deplorable fact that many who have acquired that ability in classes of society where hitherto education has not been common, seem unable to make a better use of it. The articles in the *Church Missionary Intelligencer* are usually full and well-informed, and the paper in that journal for November of this year contains a copious statement of facts bearing on the subject we have named. It appears that many of even the vernac-

ular school-books used in the Government schools are of immoral character, and it is hoped that steps will be immediately taken to replace them. At the Allahabad Conference, a resolution was unanimously passed, instructing the managing committee to bring the whole subject under the notice of the Government. Mr. Yorke, Principal of the Vernacular Native Society's College at Dindigul, says:—"There are tales and poems in praise of the gods so utterly vile, that it would not be possible to translate them into honest Anglo-Saxon."

And again:—"Though mingling with the people, and acquainted with their language, during my thirteen years' residence in India, I was not alive to the open manner in which these books were sold until within the last year of that period. Wishing then to make a small collection of native works, I sent to the book bazaar, requesting the owner to send me specimen copies of the works he had in store, that I might select and purchase. On examining them I was astounded. Many of them were of the most obscene nature. On consulting the bazaar-man's list I found these were the books which sold most readily, as the number sold was entered against the names. Further inquiries in Dindigul, and in the city of Madura, showed that such books were sold at every book-stall. At only one stall did the man assert that one of the worst could not be sold by him, lest the Government should prosecute him; and then the inquiry was made by me personally, instead of by a native agent, as in the other cases."

The facts of a similar kind that attest the extent to which the mind of the reader is polluted by Indian popular books and songs, are only too abundant.

It is gratifying to find that considerable progress has been made in supplying books of a suitable kind.