

Mission Field.

Letter from Indore.

INDORE, Jan. 25th, 1894.

Editor of THE PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

SIN,—I have not time for a full letter this week; but a few facts may help to keep us in mind.

1st. On Christmas morning we tried to get our Sabbath school children to come to the central hall of the College, and succeeded in gathering in the unroofed room about 600 in all, there being representatives from all our seventeen schools. To these we gave prizes according to the results of the examinations that we had been holding the previous weeks. They were a motley crowd, representing all castes from the very highest to the very lowest; but they had all been taught the truth about Jesus, and some of them would put to shame many a more favoured school at home. To over six hundred every Sabbath day the Gospel is taught and as our Christian community grows we will be able to have a larger number of such schools—our only limit in this work being our ability to undertake it. In the evening of the same day we had a gathering of all our Christians, when all had a *chaita* or feast together. It was in many ways a striking gathering, and thoughts would go back to a year before, when as yet so few of these new brothers had been gathered into the outward Church of Christ. It was to all a very enjoyable time, and I trust helped to bring us nearer together.

2nd. Throughout the week beginning New Year's day we had meetings, morning and evening, for our Christians, as a preparation for the Communion the following Sabbath; but especially that we might together seek for fresh power for the new year's work. Every morning we had about half our people, and in the evening the church was full. They were all a real blessing, and especially to some of our workers who seem to have received a fresh baptism of the Spirit. Others will have written about the *Mela* at *Mhow*, so I pass on.

3rd. On Sabbath last His Excellency Lord Lansdowne, sent privately for the College a donation of Rs. 250—a parting gift as he was about to leave India; and on Tuesday last His Highness the Maharajah of Dhar sent Rs. 400 for the same purpose, along with a very kind letter. Both gifts were much needed, and came at a time when we were specially pleading for the College in connection with the opening of the Y. M. C. A.

4th. On Monday last, 22nd inst., our new room for the Y. M. C. A. was formally opened. In November last a strongly expressed wish for an association led to a visit of Mr. McCann, the energetic, warm-hearted General Secretary, who has been sent out from home to look after this special work. An association was formed and already we have sixty-five names enrolled, the greater part being Hindoos. For the accommodation of the Association I was led to offer the use of, the hall above the present church as soon as it should be finished, but at that time, as I had no funds, it was a very indefinite promise. On December 28th came Miss McKellar's kind letter saying she handed over for the College building a gift she had received of \$400. With this we were able to finish the room, which we have since called the McKellar Hall and on Monday last we dedicated it to the service of our Lord and Master. In this we were greatly helped by the presence of Mr. McCann who arranged to again spend three days with us. On Sabbath and Monday mornings we had prayer meetings and on Tuesday we had a conference with all the members to talk over methods of work, etc. On Sabbath evening Mr. McCann gave an address to educated natives after the Hindoo service, when we had a full congregation who listened attentively to his interesting address. On Monday evening was the formal opening. Major Hay, of *Mhow* was to have taken the chair, but was at the last moment unavoidably detained; but Mr. McCann ably filled his place and gave a stirring address to the young men gathered there, which with other speeches, singing and prayer made up a very profitable evening. On Tuesday evening Mr.

McCann gave a lecture to another crowded audience on India and Norway, illustrated by the magic lantern. This room will be, I hope, the special work-room of our Christian students in which they will specially seek to bring their Hindoo fellow students to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. It will be divided by screens into three divisions. The first will be the reading-room, in which are already papers, secular and sacred; the second will be a room for conversation and social gatherings of a small kind—a room to which the Christian student can take their companions for a talk, etc., and if possible a room to which the Hindoos and others will gather when they have leisure; whilst the third will be a more private room for the secretary and Christians only, for more direct Christian dealing with those seeking spiritual help. When necessary the whole can be thrown into one, as for example on the Tuesday evening when the evangelistic prayer meeting of the young men is held, just at the close of the college. At this meeting a choir of young men upstairs will engage in singing hymns till the crowd are gathered, whilst others down stairs invite the students to their meeting upstairs. On Friday there will be a literary meeting, and on Sabbath evening after the Hindoo service a meeting when an address to the educated natives on some religious subject will be given. This room will be, I hope, the most important room in the college work proper. May there often be much joy in heaven over repenting souls there. One of the young men has been led to look forward to more directly engaging in this special work here, and as he is one of the first of our own trained students to thus engage in the Master's work in the mission his efforts will be specially pleasing. Over one-fourth of our students are Christian, and if they are faithful cannot but be a very powerful influence in the college life. This we hope the Association will greatly help. The Christians in helping others cannot but help themselves.

In addition at Indore are hundreds of young men, educated in a measure to understand English, dissatisfied with their home surroundings and religion, but without any recognized means of recreation or amusement, with no chance for either moral or intellectual improvement, excepting the school debating club. No wonder so many of them fall into vicious evil habits, when we consider their circumstances. These we hope to reach, as we have not been able to thus far, by means of the Association. They are not reached by the ordinary evangelistic work, and except they are in our college they never hear of the Gospel, except, it may be, with contempt. As these represent the highest classes in the community the effect will be all the greater if we can lead them to know Him who is the truth. The experiment is at least worth trying, and I know there are hearts that will bleed for us that we may be able to use all the opportunities granted to the full for the glory of Jesus.

Last night we were cheered by the baptism of two Chamars—the first break in that caste at Indore. Often before they seemed about to come out, yet something always seemed to stop them. We hope these are but the first of a rich ingathering. Still more cheering is the fact that these were led to look to Jesus by some of those who a year ago were called Mangs. Two other castes seem also to be deeply moved, but of this we cannot yet say anything, save that we are hopeful. The new Christians are now feeling the need of a church building in the city, and are taking steps to get the land for this; but let no one at home rise in alarm at this prospect, as they will themselves, with the help obtainable here undertake the work—building one large enough to accommodate at least 200 if it is done at all. Our present church is too far for the women and children to come even when willing, and has not any attraction for those not Christian, who live at the other end of the city. The new building would be thus an evangelistic hall for them or their special work-room.

Ten were baptized the Sabbath before last, making 61 in all that have been baptized in the last nine months here. Our hearts rejoice at the great things the Lord hath wrought for us.

Yours etc., J. WILKIE.

Mexican Missions.

DEAR REVIEW,—Our annual Missionary Conference, held this year in Mexico city, was one of unusual interest. About twenty-five persons were in attendance. The oft-repeated appeal of the mission for a representation from the Foreign Mission Board was at last responded to in the persons of Rev. Dr. Richards and Mr. Robert E. Speer who previous to the meeting, visited many of the mission stations. We had the privilege of cultivating the acquaintance of Mrs. Speer. We shall cherish fond memories of this visit knowing it has been and will be a means of blessing to the cause in Mexico. The earnest prayer of the board and the mission for the presence of the Holy Spirit has surely been answered and we hope for manifestations of His power. The spirit of unity and prayer prevailed through the entire proceedings. Very perplexing problems seemed to be disposed of with comparative ease. Decided steps were taken in the direction of self-support which means a saving of thousands of dollars to the Board. It seems well nigh impossible in Roman Catholic countries to induce the people to contribute. Coming from a church which is extremely extortionate in demands they quite naturally and agreeably to human nature swing to the opposite extreme, giving nothing for the support of ordinances. Although with many "Free Gospel" is taken literally enough to include free money there are encouraging indications. We regret that our consulting officer, Dr. Richards, was, in the midst of the week's work, obliged to return home owing to the dangerous illness of his mother. Papers on appropriate practical subjects were read by the different missionaries. Business was occasionally suspended for special devotional exercises. The work of the whole field was carefully reviewed and discussed. Owing to discouraging reports from "Girls schools" in other mission fields some seemed skeptical as to the supposed value of this educational work, but after critical examination of work done in the schools, the effect on the lives of the girls in the schools and their influence and work in after life all were convinced that whatever may be true of other schools these are doing an excellent work. Girls go out from these schools with substantial Christian characters and lead useful lives. Many of them go to teach the Scriptures in which they have been trained in the school. We had the privilege of seeing the school in Mexico in active work and were delighted.

The unanimous testimony of the mission was that our work suffers from lack of proper missionary oversight. Think of native pastors and congregations being left without a visit from a missionary for three years. Some are so far away that even a hurried visit from the nearest missionary means several weeks of wearisome travelling and several hundred dollars expense. Considering the isolation, persecution, discouraging surroundings and lack of early Christian training it is not surprising to hear of some growing cold and even falling by the way. Our people at home can scarcely realize the severity of such a test. We may conscientiously join in the common cry for more men. Even with new arrivals Rev. C. D. Campbell and wife, Rev. O. O. Miller and ourselves it will be impossible to do justice to the work now in operation to say nothing of reaching out to new places. To give some idea of opportunities for reaching out I may mention the city of Leon, next in population to Mexico, and located in one of the most fertile districts of the republic, with large towns in every direction. I earnestly desired to locate there for a time at least, but members of our board and mission say—don't dwell wisely—"We have more work now than we can attend to properly and without any new. Think of a city within five hours by railroad from Zacatecas having probably 250,000 of population and not a Protestant missionary of any denomination or even a native pastor. We trust a new and brighter day is dawning, and that our brethren at home by their prayers will bring blessing. Imagine yourself in a strange and wicked land surrounded by strange people, prejudices and customs, and forced to use a new and strange language, and you will be in some measure