

OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

THE CANADIAN MISSION AT INDORE.

MR. EDITOR, I fear not a few in Canada have the idea that because of Holkar's action in the past, all work in Indore city has been at a standstill. Such, however, is a very great mistake. Mr. Douglas's school was closed in May, 1880, by the police, but in no other school has this been done. Holkar, however, has again and again done what has amounted to the same thing. Policemen would come to the school, take down the names of the scholars, then go to the parents and say, "Your children are going to a Christian school; Holkar knows it; you had better take care." Result—next day no scholars appear and, therefore, no school.

This, however, only would lead us to seek out another spot for a school to begin again, or else to wait quietly for a month or two and re-start in the old spot. Of course it was very annoying to start school after school and have it broken up just when it was becoming encouraging, but little by little Christian truth was taught and friendships formed that prepare the way for better results in the future. Even although there has been such activity on the part of the police there are at the present time three schools under Miss McGregor's care, one under Miss Ross, and two under mine, that are flourishing in the city and doing good. The only two that I have been able to save are amongst the lowest castes, but they are very encouraging indeed. On Sabbath we have in each of them a Sabbath school where often forty (old and young) scholars are present to sing our Christian hymns and learn of Jesus. In one of these I, a few months ago, gave to between 200 and 300 people an exhibition by means of the sciopticon, kindly sent by the Guelph ladies when they sang out most lustily the Christian hymns as I would throw them on the screen; and then at its close invited me into the house of the head man. First I was decorated with garlands of flowers and then offered a variety of sweets and fruits. I thanked them for their kindness, expressing the joy it gave me to find them so friendly, but expressing also the hope that we should be so through eternity, through our all being saved by Jesus Christ. At once the headman said "We are all your children," "We do believe in Jesus Christ as the only true Saviour," etc., and on my saying to them that they then ought to come out as His open followers and receive the sign of such, at once at least half a dozen said "we are ready to be baptized now." These I have not yet admitted, but I believe that we shall have a large ingathering there before long. Being of a low caste the Brahmin despise our efforts amongst them and so let us alone.

Again, as to preaching, we have regularly gone into the city and preached in the squares around which the people of particular castes live; or in the evening we would go in with the sciopticon, have an exhibition of the life of Christ, etc., for perhaps two hours, and then be out of the city again before it was known to the authorities. In Raneepoor, where we had the first fight and where liberty was granted, we also have continued freely to preach. So in the camp, villages round about, etc.

Some may ask, "then why all the agitation?" To this we reply that what we now with difficulty do and with continued interruptions are enabled to do, we would soon not have been able to do at all. Holkar, before my coming out at all issued an order to stop all Christian work, and sought to carry out his order just as far as he could. Colporteurs were arrested, Mr. Douglas's school closed, all Christian preaching or teaching stopped here except such as was done privately in the houses. To such an extent was Holkar feared that when I came out I was told to keep very quiet and not show myself, lest Holkar on hearing it should cause the A. G. G. to drive not only me but the mission out of the camp.

In Raneepoor the fight was long and hard, but Sir Lepel Griffin forced them to let us alone. Then all over the city liberty was enjoyed by all for some months. On Sir Lepel changing front, however, a change became manifest all around, which ended in the police so seriously again interfering with our work that we had to appeal to the Viceroy.

To show you Holkar's feelings I may say that Col. Bannerman, the acting A. G. G., as the result of a communication from Holkar said it would be very

difficult for us to carry on any Christian work either in or out of our houses, and so much did he dread Holkar that he threatened to forbid my going into the city, and if that would not do to drive me out of the camp altogether. So strongly did he put it that I felt compelled to intimate that no order of that kind would stop my work—that only by forcibly carrying me out of the cantonment could he end it—a course which he would not think of.

Since my return from the hills in conversation two leading members of the Durbar stated that Holkar was determined to stop every form of work we might attempt that could possibly lead to conversions.

We have been allowed a few privileges therefore, simply because the matter was *sub judice*, and are only allowed these till such times as the question is settled in our favour by full liberty being granted, or in his favour when all Christian work will be absolutely stopped; and if stopped in Holkar's territories it will speedily be stopped in all the native territories of Central India, if not of India as a whole. The question of religious toleration has been here raised. The missionary bodies almost all over India feel the importance of this fight and are with us to do what they can, and I can only hope you in Canada will also do what you can to assist.

I thought the Viceroy's reply would have been sufficient even though very indefinite in its character, especially so as a very much milder statement from Sir Lepel Griffin two years before did stop all opposition. Holkar has, however, been encouraged in his policy of opposition by both Sir Lepel's after-action and by the criticisms of the English press, and especially the *Times of India*, which, I am sorry to say, is almost entirely anti Christian. On my return, therefore, I found that the opposition was as keen as ever. Most determined efforts had been made to drive us out of the houses we had rented, the poor landlord in one case being dragged out of his bed at midnight and carried to the gaol. Some of our schools had been visited with a view to frightening away the scholars, if not of closing them. The Bible Society colporteur was stopped in a village near by, and on our attempting to preach from our verandah facing a small piece of common, *i.e.*, away from the thoroughfares; the police, shaking their sticks in our faces, ordered us to stop, and on our refusing, drove away the people, gave us any amount of abuse, and sought to drive the people to worse measures. I called on the Chief Justice and Prime Minister, told them what had been done, that I was unwilling to carry it further if it could be avoided, but that we must do so, and that the missionary bodies were with us in it, if they persisted in such conduct. The result was more than a week's perfect freedom. Since then, however, more serious rows have taken place. One day I was struck, whilst the people were thrown on me by the police only, stones were thrown and the most insulting language used, and now the Hindoos have started preaching or rather abusing Christians a short distance from us on a roadway and are allowed to do so freely whilst even those who came into our house were beaten and ordered to go away from us.

On my way home from Darjeeling I met with most of the missionary bodies of Northern India, and on informing them fully of the facts found them prepared to act heartily with us. We do not wish to carry it home if it can be settled here, but I fear from present appearances much more decided action will yet have to be taken ere we are allowed to work freely.

I am glad to say that though we have so many difficulties we still have much to encourage, the number of inquirers being greater than ever before. Three weeks ago I baptized three adults and one child. One of those a converted Mahomedan, who had a short time before returned from Mecca, only was permitted to sojourn with us one week after baptism, being called home the following Sabbath. So amidst much that is very trying to the flesh we have much to encourage. God is for and so who can be against us.

J. WILKIE.

SOME NOTABLE HINDU WOMEN OF TO-DAY.

III.—THE BOSE SISTERS.

The heredity of superior mental power is, I think, undisputed, often climaxing in one distinguished remnant of the line which may again sink to a mediocrity further on. In the case of the Bose ladies, of Calcutta, the culmination of a long line of clever ancestry seems

to be doubled, and we find Kadambini Bose and Chunder Meekhi Bose standing before the world of Indian public opinion, equal in ability, culture, refinement and modest grace.

At the convocation of the Calcutta University, held at the Senate House, March 18th, 1883, amidst again and again repeated applause from the brilliant assemblage, European and Native, gathered there, the degree of "Bachelor of Arts" was conferred upon them, the first time Native ladies in Bengal have ever obtained this distinction.

Kadambini Bose has received her entire collegiate education at the Bethune school for native ladies, which, under the fostering care of Sir Ashley Eden had been converted from an infant's day-school into a collegiate and boarding establishment. It is ably presided over by a European lady, Miss Lipscombe, as superintendent. Under her is a select staff of male and female teachers.

Since her graduation, Kadambini has become the wife of Babu Dwaraknath Ganguli, a prominent literary gentleman of Calcutta (June 14th).

Chunder Mukhi Bose received her early literary education at the Free Church Normal School, and there passed successfully her first "Arts" examination. Afterwards she joined the Bethune School, and from there took her B.A. degree.

In view of the high standard of proficiency required by the Calcutta University, it is a matter for congratulation that it is now proven beyond dispute that Indian ladies are capable of a high degree of mental culture. Not only have these ladies passed in the regular college curriculum, the test of written examinations in every way being made equal with the male candidates, but the graces and refinements of life have not been neglected. They have both given careful attention to music, vocal and instrumental. On the occasion of the close of the Bethune School for the term, each lady rendered some fine selections, both in English and Bengali, with taste and spirit before a mixed audience. The Bethune school sent out from the same class also two very promising pupils, Miss Ellen D'Abren and Miss Abala Das to study medicine in the Madras Medical College.

How painfully different from all this is the condition of the Mohammedan women of India. Secluded, ignorant and hopeless of relief, they sit in their zenanas, confined by custom, prejudice and timidity. Too often is their bondage self-imposed, being as frequently due to their own intense conservatism as to the tyranny of the men.

The usage of centuries cannot, however, be laid aside in a day. Lasting change in national habits will not be brought to an end by any sudden convulsive movement, but slowly, even as the grey dawn melts into the perfect day. We trust, however, that the time for awakening draws near to the daughters of Islam as faintly from the depths of the zenana, from behind the veil, comes to us the murmur of rebellion against the iron bands which custom, stagnant and unyielding, has welded about living human souls.

May I insert here an extract from an essay by a Mohammedan lady, Bibi Tahrian Nisa, of Bodah, Julpigori district in Bengal. It may help us the better to appreciate the lights and shadows of Native life in India to-day, in this division of its people. She says: "The present condition of the Mohammedan women in India, in consequence of the lack of education, is deplorable beyond description. They have neither the teachings of religion, nor the light of knowledge requisite to dispel the darkness of their minds and to lead them to better and higher aims. They know nothing whatever of public affairs as they should do, in order to take their position in society, and are incapable of understanding the most trivial affairs of every-day life. They are like caged birds, debarred from the refinements and the enjoyments of social life.

It is grievous to think that they have no opportunity of obtaining even a rudimentary education, for they are given in marriage very early in order that their parents may be relieved of the burden of their maintenance.

Among the Hindus, European education, as well as their own has made great progress. We find some of their women even holding the degrees of L.A. and B.A., and in their own language, *Pundita*, etc., but as for the Mohammedan men, they are not even well educated in their own Arabic and Persian languages. While they are in such a degraded state, how is it possible for their women to obtain opportunities of acquiring education? Men can acquire some knowledge by