

esting." If you have to teach a class of Sunday-school children or of older students, your instruction must, above all things else, be interesting. If you conduct an evangelistic service, your address must of course be weighty and wise; but weight and wisdom will go for nothing, unless you are interesting. If you preach to an ordinary congregation, your sermon may be sound in doctrine and spirit, its thought may be careful and vigorous, it may be full of instruction; but all will be lost, if it is not interesting. . . . Graphic portraiture, vivid touches of imaginative skill, winning appeals to the emotions, are in far higher request than mere solid qualities. It is not only in educational and religious circles that the demand to be interesting is made. We hear of it in connection with arts and sciences, and quite recently find another reference to it."

The above is an extract from a magazine published in London. Is there one woman in any or all of the woman's missionary societies who cannot "read between the lines" her own experience, as she plans and prepares lessons, topics, or exercises for her circle or band? Cultivated, consecrated women shrink from the responsibility of such leadership, because they know that many of those who attend the meetings will not bring with them hearts and minds in accord with the themes to be discussed and the prayers to be offered, but will sit and listen critically rather than sympathetically to the letters which have been written in far-off, lonely, heathen villages by women who have exiled themselves from their homes here, to help make Christian homes possible there. Such persons often call the reading of letters a bore, and say that the descriptions of the strange lands and peoples sound like geography lessons; and they demand something awfully startling, "to make it interesting." We question sometimes how far we should lend our efforts to minister to such a superficial taste,—how far we should seek to please and entertain those who need instruction. Can we do better than to attempt the remedy suggested by one who experiences our difficulty in another department?

Prof. Seelye says: "I am often told by those who, like myself, study the question how history should be taught, 'Oh! you must before all things make it interesting.'" I agree with them in a certain sense, but I give a different meaning to the word "interesting." By interesting, they mean romantic, poetical, surprising. I do not try to make history interesting in this sense, because it cannot be done without adulterating history and mixing it with falsehood. That is interesting in the proper sense which affects our interests, which closely concerns us, and is deeply important to us. The history of modern England from the beginning of the eighteenth century is interesting in this sense, because of the great results which will affect our own lives and those of our children, and the future greatness of our country. Make history interesting, indeed! When I meet one who does not find history interesting, it does not occur to me to alter history. I try to alter him."—*Helping Hand.*

Zenana Work.

[An address by Mrs. Churchill at the London Meeting.]

MY DEAR SISTERS,—Ever since I received the kind pressing invitation of your President to be present and speak at your Convention, my time has been completely occupied in visiting societies, and attending missionary meetings, so that I have to come before you to-day with only a few thoughts on Zenana work, jotted down as I travelled in the cars, and which I have scarcely had time even to copy.

The term Zenana is a Bengali word, from zen, a woman, and an; a place; a Zenana therefore is the place or room or house in which the women of India are secluded. In these Zenanas the women live from childhood to old age, or until death. If allowed to visit their relatives they must go in a shut up palanquin or bandy. They are never permitted to walk abroad through the streets or fields or gardens and enjoy the beauties of nature as we are. They just see the four walls of their home and what transpires within them and in the high walled yards of their dwellings. And these homes are not beautiful as ours are, with fine pictures and paintings, fancy work and nice furniture: simply the bare walls, or these hung around with hideous pictures of their gods, about which the filthiest stories are told, and the floors bare or covered with a coarse mat. A cot, or mat, rolled up in one corner, a box or so in which clothes or jewels are kept, a few brass utensils for cooking, or bringing water with, and some brass plates, complete the furniture of their apartments. In many instances these rooms are very dark. I recall to mind one that I visited in Bobbili, a large room with no window in it, and only one door opening from the back verandah. Coming in from the bright sunlight without, it was some time before you could distinguish anything. Here the mother and daughters, the former a very sad-faced woman, and the latter a very pretty girl, spent their days and nights, except when out in the little cook house in the back yard the mud walls of which were so high that no one could see over them, preparing the food for husband and brothers, waiting on them while they ate, and taking for themselves what was left after these "lords of creation" were served. In some of these houses that I have visited they had one room nicely fitted up with English furniture, but this was not for the use of the women. If the husband invited or permitted an English lady to call, he would show her into this room, and then allow his women, all decked in their jewels, to come in to be seen; but they might not sit down in his presence, and in some castes the wife must not be seen in the presence of her husband, or other males. Often when I have been talking to the Yellama women, sitting down on their verandah with them, all at once there would be a rush into the house, and looking up to enquire what this meant, I would see the husband just entering the yard.

The rooms the men use are generally larger, lighter, and brighter than those occupied by the women.

But—do all the women of India live in these Zenanas? Not by any means, the lower caste and pariah women, for the most part, go out as freely as we do, but if a man of the lower caste has a good salary, a good position under government, or is rich, he will shut up the women of his household; as it is considered more respectable than to allow them to go out freely. Some castes always shut them up, such as the Yellama caste, a division of the Soudra. We have many of these in Bobbili, our Rajah belongs to this caste; and among these women I have visited a great deal. They are allowed more freedom than some others.

The Rajah or warrior caste, the next to the Brahmins, always shut up their women, and in some parts of India the Brahmin women are shut up in their zenanas. In our part of the country they seem to have more freedom, often walking in the streets; but always accompanied by an old grandmother to watch over the young ones. Then the Mahommedans always seclude their women, and it was from circumstances connected with their conquest of the country, that the better classes of Hindoos were induced also to shut up their women in the zenanas.

How do the zenana women employ their time? In