

Government Grants to Mission Schools in India.

BY MISS FLORA CLARKE

(Concluded.)

Next, Why do we take the heathen into our schools? Our doors are closed to none. We do not in any way seek to deceive or to decoy the heathen into attending our schools. If they come they come of their own free will. They know that the missionary has charge of the school and that the Bible is taught there and it is their option to come or stay as they please. They choose to come and we are glad to have them, glad to meet and to know them. We want to come in contact with as many as possible. And especially are we glad to have an opportunity of talking with them about the Saviour of the world. Are we anxious for their salvation? Oh, yes. Very gladly would we win them all for the Master if we could. Did we not desire to do so we would not be true to our profession; for every one educated child of God must be concerned about the salvation of those with whom he comes in contact or fail of his high calling. But we did not establish our schools for the heathen population and we are not seeking "under the guise of an education" to convert them.

Why do they come to our schools when they have schools of their own to attend? I really cannot say. In some cases the fees are less than they would have to pay in the regular Government schools. That probably draws some. Then again the teachers are anxious that their schools should be well spoken of and so they seek to get as many as they can to attend. Others again probably consider the schools better than the ordinary ones and so send their children. At any rate the sending of them is entirely their own affair and they can withdraw them whenever they please.

There is no underhand work about it, all is open and fair. The schools are established for regular work. Every year a number of children, Christian and heathen, receive a good education in our schools. We ask that the Government pay for this secular work. As manager of the school we claim the right to teach the Bible to the pupils assembled there. At some of our stations the lady missionary has, with the consent of the teachers of the Government schools, entered their schools and given regular instruction in the Bible; the same exactly as we do in our own schools. The only difference is that in the school of which we are managers we have the right to do so, while in the other schools it is a privilege which the teachers may grant or refuse at their pleasure. Now can we say that we have the right to teach religion in schools which are supported by the Government of the land?

I quote from the Grant-in-aid code under which all schools in India receiving Government grants are run. It reads as follows:—"Grants in aid of schools and other educational institutions shall be made with the object of extending and improving secular education and be given impartially and without reference to any religious instruction to all schools which impart sound secular education subject to the conditions hereinafter specified and with due consideration of the requirements of each locality and of each institution and the funds at the disposal of Government or of the local boards." Could anything be plainer than that? I have gone through the whole of the grant-in-aid code and this statement is nowhere modified. The Hindu teacher can teach his religion but we are not compelled to send our children to his school, neither is he compelled to send his to ours. It is entirely optional in both cases. The Christians as well as heathen are tax-payers and the Government seeks to deal impartially with all. We are at perfect liberty, according to the law of the land, to establish schools, teach religion in them and draw Government grants so long as we give a sound secular education. Can this be said to be similar to the state of affairs existing in England against which the non-conformists are so earnestly protesting?

According to the law the manager is required to sign a declaration to the effect that the rules laid down in the grant-in-aid code and in the Madras educational rules will be fully observed; that discipline will be enforced; the textbooks prescribed by Government used; and the school with its time-table, register, and trust accounts be submitted to inspection from time to time, and the returns required by the department furnished. Is this not exactly the position occupied by the Board of Trustees in the home land? The head master takes care of the register, makes out returns, etc., etc. The missionary simply has the oversight of affairs in general and tries to see that faithful work is done. It is not necessary for us to establish schools in order to instruct our Christian children in the faith. We have no difficulty in getting them together for religious instruction. Again—if these schools of ours are meant to be principally and primarily evangelizing agencies, it seems to me that the methods pursued are rather strange. Teachers are hired who are able to look after the secular work no matter what their faith is. Several of our teachers are Hindus because we have no Christians capable of filling the position. Four or five hours a day are spent in secular work and half an hour or an hour a day is given to religious instruction. If those schools are to be considered as evangelizing agencies in the highest

sense of the word, should not the order of things be somewhat revised? Teachers should be hired who would impart sound religious instruction regardless of their ability in secular work. Instead of giving half an hour to Biblical instruction and four or five hours to secular work the greater part of the time should be spent in teaching the Bible. Christian hymns and Bible verses should be learned and much time spent in prayer. Such a school could not, of course, take Government grant as it would not be established for secular work at all but for religious instruction. We know of no such schools in our Mission.

The writer of the paper already referred to says: "The majority of those educated in our schools, well armed with weapons sharpened by a combination of Missionary's time, churches' money and Government grants, having lost faith in their own religion and not having accepted Christ are apparently drifting on a shoreless sea and the Missionary often finds them among his keenest opponents." We hardly understand just what this is meant to imply. Apart from the time the Missionary spends in teaching the Bible in these schools the amount of time given by him to the work is a mere nothing. The oversight of the school of which he is manager requires but a very small fraction of his time. Even if he should go into the school and teach secular subjects he is not likely to give more than two or three hours a week to it. If there are missionaries who devote their whole time to the teaching of secular subjects I know nothing whatever of them and am not referring to them at all. I am simply dealing with matters as they exist in our own Mission. If the words of the writer go to prove anything they surely prove that the Missionary has erred in teaching the Bible in his school as, apart from that, the instruction given in our schools is the same as that given in the Government schools. Again, please remember I am not referring to so-called Christian colleges. I know nothing about them nor how they are managed. I am speaking about the primary schools that are to be found at the various stations on our mission field, the object of which has been already explained and for which nearly all of our number are ready to receive Government grants. In so doing we cannot see that we have in any way departed from our calling as ambassadors of the Lord Jesus Christ nor become untrue to the principles which we as Baptists profess. We can, with a clear conscience, establish our schools, teach the Bible in them, take Government grants on secular instruction and ask God to bless the work done. We believe eternity alone will reveal just how many from among the number who gathered were led to give themselves to the Saviour.

It may be there are those who feel that when they have gone from street to street or from village to village and proclaimed the message of salvation to the people who gather around, that they have discharged their duty to these people in the sight of God and man; but, if so, the writer of this paper is not one of them. We are here for that, but oh we are here for more, far more than that. We are here to build up character, to train in ways of morality, to develop manliness and to teach these people the meaning and the hideousness of sin. Many of them are the veriest babes in knowledge, in understanding and in their ideas of right and wrong and in many cases the work of the missionary is but begun when they come to him and say, "We want to join your faith." Stewards of the mysteries of God! yes and shepherds of the flock and the latter position is harder and takes more out of the missionary than the former. It is easier to preach to the assembled multitude, than it is to train and guide and care for the flock. God help us to do both and to do it well.

Our sister in her paper dwells at length upon the fact some of the revenue of India is obtained from the manufacture and sale of opium and liquor. The proportion as given by the figures quoted by the writer is one tenth of the whole revenue. This is one tenth too much and we would that something could be done and that speedily to wipe out the evil not only from India but from Christian Canada and from Christian England and from every other nation on the face of the earth. At the same time we are utterly unable to see how we are going to hasten the day by paying some of the Government's honest debts for it. I presume it would not make any difference to it if all the mission schools in the land refused to let it pay for the education furnished to its boys and girls and instead educate them with the church money or with that of some generous friends.

In applying for Government grant we are not seeking to enrich our mission treasury with Government money. We have already shown that our schools are conducted in accordance with the laws of the land and that the Hindu is not in any way deceived or forced to attend. The Government grant is simply a fair return for honest work done. Its boys and girls are educated. It pays the teachers who did the work. In doing so it has not conferred any favor upon the missionary nor placed us under any obligation to it. We have not in any way become a party with it in the manufacture and sale of opium and liquor. The missionary who takes Government money and uses it to pay for the secular work done in the schools for a number of Indian children can speak out just as fearlessly as the missionary who takes the Lord's money and uses it in circular work—No matter what his object in so doing may be.

One of our number who is strongly opposed to the mis-

sionary taking Government grant for the school of which he is manager is talking of making the following change: At present the management of the school is in the missionary's name. The head master is a Hindu, his salary is paid by the people at home. Our friend proposes to hand over the school to him, transfer the management to his name and allow him to take Government grants and get his salary the best way he can. He will have to see to the salaries of the other teachers. The missionary will not furnish a cent of money nor will the school be in his name. He will claim the right though to teach the Bible as of old. The mission accomplished by this school will be exactly the same as it ever was. The Christian children will be educated for the same purpose and with the same object in view as they always have been. The Hindus will get the gospel and the school be as much an evangelizing agent as before. The missionary will retain his place as Biblical instructor and the work will be as much in the interests of the denomination as of old but it will all be done at the expense of the state. The only difference, as far as the taking of the money is concerned, will be that the Government grant instead of being paid directly to the missionary and by him paid to the teachers, will be paid directly to the teachers themselves. The missionary will not henceforth be recognized by Government as Manager, but inasmuch as he claims the right to go into that school and teach the Bible, he is to that extent manager of it and we doubt if the missionary would hand over his school to the Hindu teacher without first having it understood that the Bible is to be taught the same as ours. The majority of us prefer to keep the management in our own name and be openly known to Government and to everyone else as the manager. By so doing we will not be at the mercy of any heathen teacher but will have a right to teach the Bible. Those of us who were teachers in the home land did not allow the Bible to be ignored in any school with which we were connected and we certainly will not do so in India. Till we have Christians who are capable of looking after the management of the schools, etc., for themselves, we claim the right to act for them.

The missionary is in the midst of an incapable, and to a great extent, untrustworthy people and he has to fill several positions. He often has to spend a good deal of time in overseeing the building of Mission houses or allow the denomination to be cheated out of a good deal of money. In the same way there is a good deal of work that he is called upon to see to that would never fall to the lot of the minister in the home land. Circumstances here are not the same as there and the same rules that apply here will not there.

We have sought to go into this subject of Government grants as fully as we could and to look at it from an unbiased standpoint. At least two-thirds of our number believe firmly in the Government paying for the secular education of its boys and girls and have declared themselves to be in favor of our schools receiving Government grant. In doing so we cannot feel that we have in any way departed from the faith or become untrue to our calling. We are simply trying to make the best use we can of the Lord's money as sent to us by the brothers and sisters at home and we feel that it could be used to better purpose than to expend a good deal of it in giving a secular education to a number of India's children who will never in any way make the work or the denomination any return for it. We will pray for and work for the salvation of the children who attend our schools just as earnestly as the missionaries who refuse Government grant but we do not propose to pay the bills of the Government. Whether our methods be exactly the same or not we earnestly crave His blessing upon one and all of our number and upon the work as a whole.

Tekkali.

Inspiration Again.

Mr. Editor.—Rev. R. O. Morse, M. A., still continues his charge against Rev. Dr. Saunders of discussing irrelevant subjects in his ten articles on "The Inspiration of the Bible." I do not see that he makes his contention good. It is quite true that Dr. Saunders has not followed the well beaten path along which most writers on that subject have gone. As he says he has written for a different class of readers. Scientific treatises on this great subject prepared for the most advanced thinkers and scholars will always be needed. But I quite agree with the writer of these timely articles that the need of the hour in our churches is not such treatises, but just such a discussion as we have had. The faith of many is becoming undermined in the divine authority of the Bible. To such those doctrines which have from time immemorial been considered as fundamental in the Christian systems are becoming obscured. Their influence to mould the lives of men is being weakened. Theories concerning inspiration that, to say the least, are not those of the great majority of the leaders in evangelical Christianity either past or present, are being heralded abroad from many quarters. The public ear is catching them from various sources. In some cases these are given publicly from pulpit and press by those who claim to represent the denomination. Review articles, newspaper comments and much of the teachings of modern fiction are helping to destroy faith in the divine origin of the old Book. To me