

# W. F. M. SOCIETY.

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FOREIGN LETTERS ISSUED SEPTEMBER, 1885.

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From Mrs. Wilkie.

CANADIAN MISSION,

INDORE, May 20th, 1885.

*My dear Mrs. Harvie:*

I am sure you will rejoice with us that at last Miss Rodger's Boarding School has been started. It is an affair of small beginnings, but it, if carried out as now thought of, will have very important bearings on the future mission work of Central India.

You will be pleased to know that it was the Christian congregation at Indore that specially gave it the start. For a long time it had been thought of, but for various reasons delayed, till the Christians, feeling very keenly the need, determined to give their monthly collections (about 50 Rupees or \$20) entirely for this purpose, if the Council would agree to it. It was again delayed for some time, as no suitable building could be obtained; so at last Miss Rodger, rather than disappoint or dishearten the Christians, resolved to begin it in their own home, even though their accommodation was so limited. Its necessity leads us to have great hopes in regard to it. It will meet a want long felt, and help us to take up a class of work as yet untouched. The scheme of the Church at Indore is much the same as that of which Miss Rodger wrote to you, and Mr. Wilkie wrote to Dr. Wardrope in August last.

First—It is intended to have in the Boarding School Christian girls, who will be educated and prepared for future usefulness. Even though these people have taken a step upward in becoming Christians, still it takes time to undo the influence of

bygone ages, especially as old habits and modes of life are so often transmitted from father to son. However, by separating them from their home associations, and bringing them up in harmony with our more civilized and Christian ideas, in one generation as much will be done as could otherwise be done in three or four.

So far, also, for teachers and Bible women we have been forced to depend on the partially educated, or take the cast-off materials of other missions; for, of course, when there is such a dearth of workers everywhere each mission keeps all those that it trains, especially if they are at all promising. In time, we hope the Boarding School will help to get over this difficulty.

Second—It is intended to receive, in a separate department from the Christian girls, those heathen girls that the parents and friends may wish to send. Already many heathen parents, although unwilling to become Christians, yet recognize the great moral force of Christianity, and are anxious to have their daughters come under its influence whilst receiving their education. The blessed results which will almost certainly follow such a training can scarcely be over-estimated.

Fees will be taken from both the Christian and heathen children. Some of the Christians will probably require help at first, yet the intention is to make all pay as nearly as possible the full cost. The Christians especially require to be taught habits of independence, and so the effort will be to make it a self-supporting institution.

Third—It is intended, in a third department shut off from the others, but all under the same management, to have a place for that sorely-trying class, the widows, especially those who lost their husbands before they ever lived with them, and who are too young to have fallen into the grosser forms of sin. By teaching them to work, they will at least be put in a way of earning a livelihood. This class will probably require more help than the others at first, and may be, as all such institutions in India have been, more or less trying. We shall only take up branch after branch of the work as the way is opened for it, and shall try to get those widows who at home would rather be thinking of their dolls than home duties, and thus hope to avoid failure.

The last time Mr. Wilkie was at Oojein he met a very interesting young widow, who is waiting for the opening of the

school. Her husband died before she saw him. Her natural brightness enabled her to defeat the restrictions placed on widows, and she was allowed to romp and play as she liked. She was the favorite of all, and especially her father. When Chanoo started a school in the mahalla in which she lives, she came there at first only for amusement, but soon as earnestly sought for knowledge as she had before for play, and so in a short time became the best scholar in the school. She at the same time drank in the sweet Bible stories, and so lost her faith in the heathen gods, and openly professed her faith in Christ. Once when taken by her parents to the temple to do poojah to the guru, or teacher, she refused, and said he was only a sinful creature like herself, and that she trusted only in Jesus. On the guru becoming angry at her—a woman, and a widow—daring to speak to him, she repeated one or two Sanscrit verses that Chanoo had taught her to show that what she said was true. This not only silenced the guru, but was the means of opening the eyes of her parents, who now also profess to believe in Jesus.

We think Miss Rodger is in every way suited for the work she has so heartily taken up, and if it is possible to carry on the Boarding School, I am sure she will succeed.

Mr. and Mrs. Builder and Miss Ross are at the hills, and seem to be gaining strength there. All the rest of the mission staff are very well, considering the trying "hot season" we are having. Instead of the usual three months of unbroken hot winds, we have been getting occasional showers, which, although cooling the air, make it very unhealthy, especially as we have also had a large mela at Oojein, which only occurs every twelve years, and so is considered particularly holy. From great distances numbers of people flocked there, and soon there was produced, by crowding, filthy water, and a perfect disregard of all sanitary laws, a violent outbreak of cholera. Over five thousand died there, and hundreds, who, feeling the disease coming on, or in dread of it, fled, died on their homeward journey or carried back to their villages and towns the terrible scourge. In Mhow, in one week, it is said over seven hundred died, and at Indore, and indeed everywhere, large numbers were cut off. At Oojein, Chanoo and Nuroyan remained at their post, giving medicine whilst it lasted, but Chanoo was seized with the disease, and their supply of medicine exhausted,

so they fled too, and have been with us at Indore all this month. Chanoo got quite better after coming here, and the rest of our staff were saved from it. At Mhow three of the Christians were seized, of whom one died. It is now, however, dying out, and we are hoping to escape the usual outbreak of it at the beginning of the monsoon.

Trusting that you will excuse my long delay in writing, as we have four little children now, and the greater part of my time is taken up caring for them. I shall, however, try and do better in future. Were I more directly engaged in the work, and meeting with the women in whom I know you are most interested, I should be pleased to write very much more frequently.

My dear Mrs. Harvie,

Believe me,

Yours very sincerely,

A. W. WILKIE.

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**From Miss Baker.**

PRESBYTERIAN MISSION,  
PRINCE ALBERT, July 15th, 1885.

*My Dear Mrs. Harvie:*

After so long a silence, I am at length seated to reply to your two very kind, thoughtful and sympathizing letters, for which I feel extremely grateful and thankful, although from appearances you may justly feel inclined to judge to the contrary. When I received the first, I had not the slightest intention of allowing so long a time to elapse without replying. The great difficulty was that at the time of its receipt two very important changes regarding the educational interests of our settlement were in contemplation, and to make any alteration in my work before they were decided would not have been wise or practicable. The answering of your questions depended entirely upon the shape school matters would assume after those changes were made. Had I had the slightest idea that so long a time would be consumed before things could be legally carried into effect, I would have written and explained. Last September the people began to agitate for a public school, and petitioned the North-West Coun-

cil to grant them power to erect our settlement into school districts, but it was February before all legal matters were settled, and the mission proclaimed a public school district. In March, three trustees, duly elected, assumed control, and the mission school virtually ceased. As the trustees desired me to continue school until the close of the year, I agreed to do so, giving them time to procure a public school teacher for next year. I wrote Dr. McLaren, giving him a statement of things in general here, and sent him a few numbers of our local paper. I mentioned that I would write you soon, but we were immediately after that thrown into a state of wild confusion, better imagined than described, and cut off from the outside world for months by the outbreak of the rebellion.

The second great change was the anticipated establishment of a high school here. I thought probably the authorities of that institution might see fit to equip it in such a manner as to make all necessary provision to educate our children in the North-West seeking a higher education within the pale of our own Church, and *more especially* so as to keep our Protestant girls, as very many of them now are, from being placed under Jesuitical influences, many of their parents being in communion with our own Church. Here we have what to me is a sad spectacle—a convent placed in the midst of an old Presbyterian mission, supported entirely by Protestants; this, too, in a country where the future of a great nation is being moulded, cannot but have a very disastrous effect. It is cheering to know that you are praying for us; it strengthens and comforts when one feels lonely and depressed. It is a cause of much rejoicing to read of the interest taken in the evangelization of the Indian, but no less zeal should be put forth for bringing into the Shepherd's fold the children of the settlers who will be brought more or less into contact with them; neither can we afford to leave undone. Were all connected with the Indian Department Christians, what a power for good they might be. Take, for instance, the Indian instructor's family; if Christians, what an auxiliary to the missionary.

You very kindly, in your last, offered to send clothing to our Indians. The Crees, with the exception of a mere handful, have gone to their reserve, and the greatest kindness we can do them is to use our influence to induce them to follow. We still have quite a number of Sioux, who are, as you know, heathen. I am sorry to say many of them joined Riel. We are scarcely

settled enough to know how many Indians we will have camped around us this winter. The settlers here are kind to any suffering ones, and I think those among us can be provided for; however, should we require assistance, I will let you know. Many thanks for your kind remembrance of us. I know that all you can provide will be most useful at the different reserves—warm woollen dresses, stockings, mitts, shirts and blankets are the principal things required; in fact, anything plain and warm—clothing that men, women, boys and girls can wear. The Rev. Messrs. McWilliam and Sinclair opened a high school class in March, but of course it was broken up by the rebellion. They resumed it in the middle of June, and closed on 1st July. Rev. Mr. Sinclair, with family, left Prince Albert for Ontario last week; he will visit Toronto; is a graduate of Knox College. I wish so much that you could see him, as he has labored here most faithfully for three years. He knows all about the work here, the needs of the place, and the surrounding Indian reserves; he can give you a detailed account regarding cost, and ways and means of transporting to any of the different points. We are all very sorry to part with him and his family; he is an earnest Christian worker, thoroughly devoted to his Master's work.

As to my work, I have made no change since I last wrote you. I have had two girl boarders this last year. One is the daughter of an Indian instructor who lives eighty miles west of us, entirely among the Indians; she has been with me two years, and is a clever girl of fourteen years of age; the other is the sister of Joseph McKay, the Government Indian interpreter, of Duck Lake fame.

And now a few words about our situation during the rebellion. Great, great should be our thankfulness, that though threatened by so many dangers, no evil befel us. After the battle of Duck Lake the police and volunteers retreated to Prince Albert and fortified it. All the settlers within a radius of twenty miles rushed for their lives into the mission. Every house was crowded with women and children; the manse was turned into a fort, and thus for nearly three months we dragged out a weary existence, with constant alarms, etc., etc. I live directly opposite the manse; I gave my house for a hospital, and devoted all my time to cooking for the sick and wounded; it is only a few days since the last were moved from my house. I

opened my school three weeks ago, and closed last week ; it was thought best to do so. And now I am sure you will understand why I have not written sooner. I feel worn out, and long for a rest. I wrote Dr. McLaren to that effect, and think I will be compelled to do so. I do not know what arrangements were made about the high school at General Assembly, but suppose we will soon hear who is to succeed Mr. Sinclair.

I am, ever yours,

Most sincerely,

L. M. BAKER.

#### **Miss Bell's Health.**

From recent intelligence received from Miss Bell, we learn with regret that the weak state of her health will prevent her from accompanying Rev. J. F. Campbell and Mrs. Campbell to India in the autumn.

#### **The Box for India**

Was forwarded to the Rev. J. Fraser Campbell from Ottawa at the appointed time, the following societies contributing, viz. : Gananoque, Ottawa, Vankleek Hill, Kenyon, Roxboro', Indian Lands, Glen Gordon, Lochiel, Lancaster, Kingston, London (private donation) ; W.M.S., Montreal ; Mrs. Watson's Juvenile M.B., Hamilton ; "Home Circle" M. B., Hamilton ; Mrs. Steele's class, Dundas ; Miss G. Oliver's class, Avonbank ; "Seed Sowers" M.B., Toronto ; Peterboro' M.B. ; "Mission Bees," Pembroke ; "Faithful Workers" M.B., Dalkeith ; Stratford (Knox Church) M.B.

#### **Clothing for Indians.**

We infer, from the number of Auxiliaries now preparing boxes for our North-West Mission, that the supply for this year is sufficient.

A careful inquiry as to where they are needed is now being made, and will be made known to the Secretaries as soon as possible.

NOTE.—Treasurers of Auxiliaries or Mission Boards may forward contributions to Presbyterian Treasurers quarterly, in order that all moneys may be deposited in a chartered bank at interest. Where Presbyterian Societies do not exist, Treasurers of Auxiliaries may forward direct to General Treasurer (address, Mrs. McLennan, Murray Street, Toronto). In case it is inconvenient for Presbyterian Treasurers to bank, they may forward to General Treasurer quarterly.

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The **Estimates** for the present year, and a detailed account of the expenditure for the past year, will appear in the October leaflet. The amount needed for this year will probably reach \$15,000. Our God, who is so greatly blessing and extending our work, will, without doubt, send us what is necessary.

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#### **New Auxillaries.**

Ingersoll Auxiliary—In Paris Presbyterian Society. Organized.

Thames Road Auxiliary—In Huron Presbyterian Society. Organized.

Aurora Auxiliary—In Toronto Presbyterian Society. Organized by Mrs. Harvie.

Waterdown Auxiliary—Reorganized by Mesdames Steele and Grant.

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NOTE.—The reprinting of the Missionary Letters is reserved by the Board of Management.