

July/84 - 3<sup>rd</sup> print

## W. F. M. SOCIETY.

---

The following action which has been taken by other W. F. M. Societies with regard to "Child Marriage in India," and which we have ascertained since our annual meeting, will perhaps account for the non-presentation of our memorial to the Queen.

The Philadelphia Board of the W. F. M. Society of the Pres. Ch., also prepared and sent a memorial, but it was not presented, the friends who had charge of it being advised "that the movement must first come from the natives of India themselves." "That they were coming to understand this and preparing to take ground against the custom." The Congregational, Baptist, and Methodist societies also prepared memorials, but before sending, wrote to the "Society for Promoting Female Education in the East," asking counsel in the matter, that Society replied "That they did not see any step that would be likely to meet the gigantic evil." "That the matter was a *social* one with which the Government could not interfere" "That the case of Suttee was different, as that was murder." Lord Shaftesbury also wrote with regard to child marriage and enforced widowhood, "Nothing but the diffusion of the Christian religion can abolish or even moderate these abominations." These Societies therefore did not present their memorials. It

seems there are five societies in India who have these subjects under consideration. Strong protests are being made by the leading native newspapers, and by enlightened men who have a warm interest in the welfare and progress of their countrywomen. They speak "of the terrible calamities which this custom inflicts on its victims, both male and female." Early marriages of boys resulting "in his destruction morally, physically and intellectually." That "early marriages means the physical ruin of the people." That "the minimum age should be 15 or 16." That "marriage at 9 or 10 is nothing less than an outrage on womanhood." Such expressions as these shew that the native mind is at last awakened to the evil, and we may hope the remedy is not far distant. Widowhood is *not enforced by law*. It too, is a *social custom* resulting from *Suttee* having been abolished.

---

Miss Beattie, who has taken a full course and graduated in medicine, has been accepted by the Foreign Mission Committee for mission work in Central India. She was present at the last meeting of the W. F. M. S. Board

---

Mrs. J. Fraser Campbell, of Mhow, addressed a large meeting of ladies in Central Church school-room, Toronto, on the 10th inst., on Mission Work among the women and children. She described it as being carried on chiefly by personal intercourse, schools and house to house visitation.

---

NOTE.—Another auxiliary has been formed in Brussels, Ont.

TAMSUI, March 25th, 1884.

DEAR MRS HARVIE,—I wrote when Dr. McKay and Mrs. M. were away South ; before return they went North. So I have finished visiting all the chapels. Praise God for so many and good news from each ! On Monday night we met in Oxford College for thanksgiving.

Last Sabbath we were at the opening of a new chapel in Bang-kah city, where, you will remember, the first was torn down only to be replaced by another on the same spot ; we were in the second, and also saw the street where Dr. M. and his students preached to an angry mob of over four thousand. The new church—large and handsome—is quite near the old one, and into it the people crowded to hear of the burning bush ; the lily among thorns ; the vessel safe because Christ is in it ; to be told of the worthlessness of Buddhism, Tanism, and Confucianism for a hungry soul, and of “ the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.” To see an idol dashed to pieces on the floor, and, with the proof before their eyes, hear that the church *must* prosper because Christ is in it. Some converts walked twelve hours to be present. It encourages the people sometimes to have a large gathering that they may see their strength. But oh, the thousands round us in that crowded city who know or care nothing about Jesus !

The girls are making good progress in writing, and look much brighter and more intelligent than when they came to us. The students are all taught to be neat and clean and taste is cultivated as far as possible—a much needed reform you would say, could you see the smoky, dirty houses and ragged children round the doors. We

must do what we can to raise at least some of these poor women from being bought and sold, to be somebody's wife, confined to the house by little feet, and knowing absolutely nothing but how to cook rice, dress in gay colors, and paint your face ! Such is the lot of a Chinese woman.

Sin-tiam chapel—a few miles beyond Bang-kah, has been under repair, and (D.V.) will be opened next Sabbath.

Thank God, the last convert is now out of prison, Dr. M. says, "Gone home above—faithful to the end."

News of the death of Dr. McKay's father has made the end seem near to us all. May God help us to work with it ever in view.

Faithfully yours, ANNIE JAMIESON.

INDORE, April 30th, 1884.

MY DEAR MRS. HARVIE,—Your letter of February 14th was duly received. There has been a very good attendance at school since I last wrote, until lately, and there are now fewer on account of the heat and sickness. The children do not feel inclined to study as they did in the cold season, but the school is kept open during the hot season. Many of the girls were at school two years ago, and they have improved greatly in appearance since that time. Six of the larger girls were formed into a class, but shortly afterwards one of the six left, now there are five in the class. The mother of the girl that left school got her daughter married to one of the gods, which means sold into a life of wickedness, and she will not return. She was making rapid progress in learning to read, and is possessed of an excellent memory; none of the girls could repeat the Commandments as correctly as she could. She has been away from home for a few weeks learning to dance; in future she will be often engaged in dancing, for no respectable woman in India dances, and there are both dancing and singing at their marriages and other festivals. A girl has been brought here to attend school from Diwas, a state twenty miles distant; she lives with some relatives, and she is quite at home now, although at first she was very much afraid to come into the room. She told the man that brought her the first day that she would not come for I would cut off her ears. For several days she remained in one corner of the room and would not be persuaded to leave it, but she has lost her fears now entirely. Najoo, the wife of one of the native Christians, has taught the children

to sing several bhajans (hymns), and when two of the girls were singing one of these hymns in their own house, their mother wished to know what their mothers-in-law would say if they heard them singing these same hymns. The fear of the mothers-in-law seems constantly before the mind of some of them. Another mother asked me to let her daughter leave early as she had to cook when she came back, adding that her mother-in-law would beat her if she could not cook when she went to her. I did not expect to have so many of my former girls, as some of them must be in their eleventh year. When Sandar's grandmother was telling me about one of their festivals, she often asked Sandar if she were telling it correctly, for when I was Sandar's age, she said, I was not allowed to go out to see it for myself as she does. Teaching them to knit has brought out several that would not have come otherwise. Since the weather has become warmer I have been teaching them wool-work on canvass instead of knitting. Sa'wa has returned from her country unmarried, the pundits consulted about the time could not agree. Since her return she has had small-pox badly; when she is well again she intends to come back to school. Sometimes the girls ask to take their reading books home, so that they may let their parents know what progress they are making. They do not ask for holidays as often as formerly, and the parents have shown much more interest also. The excuses they used to make for not sending the girls to school are seldom now heard. Nearly all the girls are Hindus, but three Mahomedan girls attend very regularly. They are very bright and more difficult to manage, but they learn more quickly than Hindu girls. As a rule one of them often brings a handful of grain in her chaddar to eat during school hours, as

they generally come before eating anything in the morning. My time is fully occupied with the school in the morning, and just now it is too hot to go out during the day. The evening is now the time to visit the women in their own homes, and they are always glad to see me, and often ask me to read to them from the Scriptures.

A building is just now being put up in the Mission Compound for a school. It is very near to the place where my school has always been, and opens out into the Bazaar, so that the children can come in that way. It is to be ready before the rains, the foundations are laid and the walls will be begun to-day. When it is finished I will write you more about it. With kindest remembrances, your affectionate

MARGARET RODGER.