

Report of the work for Mussulmen women & girls,  
Oroomiah, 1886.

The work for Mussulmen women & girls was commenced last fall after my return from America, by the opening of an Industrial Class. We met two afternoons every week, from two to four o'clock. The first half hour was devoted to a Bible lesson, with the memorizing of verses, & in this way nearly all the girls learned the Ten Commandments & many Bible stories. The remainder of the time was given to needlework, in which we were assisted during part of the winter by Mrs Coan. The class commenced with four girls, but in two months the number had increased to thirty five, some of them from distant parts of the city. But the coming & going of so many, attracted attention, & the Kullah of our neighborhood visited the families of his flock, threatening to fine them if their daughters continued to come. This had the desired effect, & all left but seven. We then admitted ten or fifteen Nestorian girls for a nucleus, & gradually, as the fears of the people subsided, the others began to return, until, when we closed, about the middle of June, there were thirty in the class, fifteen Nestorian & fifteen Mussulmen girls. It has been interesting to watch the change in some of the members of this class. Two in particular, when they first came seemed to take special pains to be inattentive during the Bible lessons, showing by every look & action that they only wished to learn the fancy work, but were determined to harden their hearts against any religious impression. These two were among

the first to return after the fright caused by the threats of the Kullah, & when we closed, they were as attentive & interested as any in the class. Soon after the formation of the Industrial class, the mothers of some of the girls requested that their daughters be taught to read. They purchased books at half price, & six little girls came every morning, remaining until nearly noon. During the disturbances, three of them left but the others came in spite of their fears, & when the little school closed, the last of June, two of them had finished the Tract Primer, & were beginning to read in the Testament. The first half hour of each morning was devoted to a lesson from the Testament. Then they read an hour & a half with a Katorian teacher, after which they came to me for sewing, singing, & various other exercises until noon. A few of the dresses which went from our Sunday schools here to China, were contributed by these little girls. They earned the money with their needle. It was beautiful to see the joy with which they gave it in the language of one, they said; "We are so glad to give something to God." During the winter year there has been a Sunday Bible class & Friday afternoon prayer meeting for Moslem women. The Bible class was open to all who wished to come, & while the attendance was small, perhaps never more than nine or ten, & more generally only five or six, it has been encouraging to meet the same ones from week to week, & to know that they came because they wished to learn, & not for mere curiosity. The prayer meeting has been only for Christian women, that they might be free to talk & pray without fear.

the beginning of the year there were only three of these, but now there are two others whose husbands are church members & who are so far interested that the Christian sisters feel assured in their presence, & still another who hopes that she has been converted, & who has already begun to take an active part in this little meeting. Her husband was baptized in the fall & she very soon became interested. She came several times to talk with the wife of our Kirge, who is an earnest Christian, & once they spent most of the night in prayer & discussion, but she could not be convinced that her own faith was wrong. In the week of prayer, she requested that they might spend another night in the same manner, so she & two other women met with this Christian sister in one house, while their husbands, all of whom were Christians, met in another house, & passed the night in prayer. God heard their prayers, & that night she renounced her faith in Mohammed. Since then she has seemed to be growing Christian, & is asking for baptism. A new feature of the work this year, has been an effort to do something for Jewish women. This was commenced about the first of April. A Bible reader was employed to visit among their houses twice a week, & through her, an arrangement was made for a general meeting every Saturday morning, which I always attended. There were usually from twenty to thirty women present. Everywhere we have been warmly welcomed, & their constant request is that we will open among them a school for girls. It is evident that there is a growing feeling among them that it is not only possible for them to learn as well as the men, but that they have a right to be educated. H. K. Van Duzee.