

Copy of letter from Mrs Osborne. Trevandrum. Travancore. Oct. 5. 96.

My dear Mrs Bailey,

It is now six months since I returned from the hills. All the time I have been thinking of my duty and promise to send you an account of money spent during the first half of the year, but overwhelming duties have prevented me. I am sure I need make no apology to you who know so much about missionary life, with all its manifold duties crowding in upon one. You will be pleased to know that I have returned quite well and strong, and am happy beyond measure to be once more in my loved work, while I am intensely gratified to see how it has progressed during my absence. If only all the dear helpers could see how richly the work is being blessed of Him, they would indeed be more than repaid for any self-sacrifice or denial on their part.

On the 15th of September my husband and I, together with our helpers, went to the Leper Hospital and had a most touching entertainment with our new magic lantern. I must leave you to imagine the delight of these poor souls, for no words can portray it. We also distributed a large number of Bibles and Lyric books, partly as rewards to those who had learned to read and were anxious to possess the Word of God, and for general good behaviour. The gratitude of each recipient was most real and touching.

I am pleased to tell you that the little Home is now in course of erection, one room having been put up first, with a small room. Now four children are there with the matron, and one I have here in the hospital now ill with fever; as soon as she is better, which I hope will be in a few days, I intend taking her and another little boy we have in our Home, to their own little Home. We are building it on some of our own mission land a few miles from here, and hope to build it for the sum you granted me; but hope to be able to enlarge it after a year or two, as the need arises. One of the little ones is with one of the Bible women. It is nice to see how attached she and the child have grown to each other. It seems quite a pity to separate them, and I am thinking of writing to your sister Mrs Bailey (who supports the one Mary) to ask if she is willing for the child to remain with her adopted native mother, or course allowing her money for her support. And certainly I think it would be better all round; she has taken such good care of the child, and

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brings her up so nicely. Another woman has similar charge of another wee girlie, and I should advise the same thing in her case. They bring them constantly to see me, so that I have all control over them. Two more are attending one of our Mission Schools. For a little time I think the matron will be able to teach all in the Home, and as they grow old enough they can attend one of our schools.

I have made out estimate of expenditure from Jan. to June '96 which you see is considerably in excess of grant. But I would plead with your Committee to grant it if possible. The growth of the work is simply marvellous; we can only see and wonder at the way the Master is working in the midst of these poor afflicted souls. I am enclosing you one extract from Bible womens' report, also one from the teacher. The one who was an inmate having gone away for private treatment, one of our own Christians offered to carry on his work, and has indeed proved himself a zealous worker. Now he can only give part of his time; but I would ask your Committee if they could possibly make the \$6 now granted for teacher into \$10, then we could employ him as Catechist, when he could spend all his time there. He now conducts service there every Sunday afternoon, and very blessed these are proving. After the meeting is over, there are requests from all sides for both him and the Bible women to go and pray with various inmates, that now the women are coming to me and asking what they are to do, as now it is very late in the evenings for them to be out, and yet they cannot get away earlier. This is a difficulty we can only bless God for, and pray for very many more such; to this you too will "Amen" I am quite sure.

Now in conclusion let me thank you for all your kind letters, and I do indeed trust some friend will come forward with the necessary money for lantern, and shall be glad to receive pictures.

With our united good wishes,

Yours in His precious service,

Bessie G. Osborne.

Extracts from Dr Hutchison's letter dated 14.12.96. Chamba. Panjab.

There is not much to tell you, but one thing will interest you. You will remember the woman Drobtí, who asked for baptism when you were here and then drew back. Well, she did not say anything more about it all summer, but in the beginning of October she was taken very ill, and one evening on my going to the Asylum Gamnu came to me to say that she (Drobtí) felt that she was dying, and wished to have the Inshan (sign) before passing away. It so happened that a missionary friend was with me - indeed I had taken him out to see the Asylum - so he administered the rite there and then. She was in great agony but quite sensible, and made a beautiful confession of her faith. She passed away the next morning and was buried in the evening. She was much comforted by the thought that she had made a profession of her faith and been numbered among Christ's redeemed. I had no doubt that it was some of the others who kept her back on the former occasion, for she had always been an attentive hearer. She was a quiet gentle woman who said little. Gamnu was very kind and attentive to her. Hers is the only death there has been in the Asylum this year.

There are - as you will see from the return - sixteen leper inmates, but there are two children not lepers.

The flooring has been put down in the church, and it adds greatly to the comfort of the poor people at this time of year. The Superintendent of Works has promised to repair the building, put glass in the windows, and have it white-washed at State expense; and also to put in a chair, table and almirah (moveable cupboard).

The others are all pretty well, though often ailing, and some of them suffering a good deal. Gamnu is wonderfully well, and is much pleased with a pair of the spectacles you sent. She was not able to see without them, and now she can get on nicely; she reads in Gurmukli and Hindi. Rody goes out regularly, and also Sucheta one of our young men. I think this is all the news about the Asylum.
