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A Dorcas Socceity among the Korean Christian Women

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We were needing bed-linen and clothing for the Hospital and it came to me like a dream - why should the Korean women not help their own sick sisters and brothers? At least there must be some among our own Christians who have enough of the love of Christ in their hearts to want to do this. So I had a talk with our Bible woman about it, asking her what she thought about it and telling her of our Dorcas Societies in America, what their object is, the good they accomplish, etc. She thought it would be a good thing so we organized our Society on January 5th and had eight women to begin with. I had sheets ready for them to make. They consisted of two breadths of unbleached muslin to be sewed (hemmed or top-sewed) through the middle and then the hems basted in afterwards. I gave each one a sheet to make, and after explaining the purpose for which we had met, telling of the numbers of such Societies we had at home and the good they were doing, I had the story of Dorcas read from the New Testament and then, knowing that, unlike the women of America, they had had little or no opportunity to read and improve their minds, instead of letting them just talk and gossip with each other, I had our girls' school teacher, who happened to be one our number and is a good reader, read Pilgrim's progress to the others as they sewed. They seemed to enjoy it greatly and when she was tired reading we sang together some of the hymns that all were familiar enough with to sing without books. The reader explained as she went along so all could understand, and answered questions, having arranged before hand that questions would be in order at any time as we wanted all to understand and enjoy the story. Before dispersing we had a cup of tea and a piece of cake. All seemed to thoroughly enjoy the afternoon and we hope to have many more such pleasant as well as profitable times together.

Our Bible woman first visits and talks with waiting patients who come to the dispensary every day, telling the same old story. Some listen well and invite her to their home to tell them more, which invitation she is always eager to accept and make good use of, and then others don't want to hear at all. The other day one woman said, after listening a while, "Well, according to your story, my parents and all my friends who have died are gone to hell. What pleasure would there be for me to go to heaven alone even though it be a good place? I want to go where they are even though it's ever so bad, if there is a place to go after we die." Another woman down by the big stream where she often goes to preach as there are many women gathered washing there, said, "Why! Have you died and come back or how do you know there is a place to go after we die? It is all nonsense; nobody knows and you are crazy.

We are just like a fire, when we die we go out after a little smoke and that is the end." Again, another woman, who had had her leg amputated at the Hospital and became a believer while here and was visited to see whether her faith was remaining steadfast, said that while she believed all right and had no desire to lose her faith she was being persecuted greatly on that account and could not help wishing that she could just die and go to that good place. "Yes, but," said the Bible woman, "don't you have a responsibility now as well as a privilege. You must not mind the persecution but bear it patiently for Jesus' sake who has borne much for you, and help bring your husband and family to believe this doctrine as you do, so they can go too this good place." She was delighted and greatly comforted to feel that there was something for her to live for. She cannot walk of course but she is a good reader and now that she is a believer may be the instrument of bringing many to the Savior, more, perhaps, because she cannot go about and do other things which would make her too busy to do this. She visited another woman from Chemulpo the same day, who was on a visit to her friends here. This woman said "Why, I have known of the Church in Chelmupo and that they had many believers but I supposed all could read who went there and as I could not read I did not go, supposing it was not for me." But when she heard that she could believe even though she could not read and that there was no rice to pay and that there was a good place to go after she died, she wept, the tears rolling down her cheeks, saying, "Was there ever such a love shown to anyone? Can it be true? And is it for me? I am so glad and so happy. From now on I shall believe this Jesus doctrine and try to learn more." Another woman in the same house had heard many times but as yet had not decided.

The Bible woman visits the inpatients individually every day, talking with them and teaching any who cannot read to do so and she visits them in their houses after they leave us, often going many miles to do so. She has visited many of the villages near here and is going from house to house entering every house outside the South Gate where possible; she has even been to the sorceress' places and visits the mountain streams and different places where the women are gathered washing. She is keeping a record of all who believe, all the visits she makes, all the tracts and books she distributes, and all who come to the dispensary from day to day, so her time is very full. She reports to me every day and as I am not privileged this year, on account of home duties, to go and do with her, it is a great comfort and pleasure to hear her reports and be able to direct her and help a little in that way from day to day. God is using her and I am sure we will have your prayers that she may be blessed and prospered in the good work He has put in her hand.