

The Woman's Missionary Society

[This Department is in the interests of the W. M. Society. All communications for it should be addressed to Mrs. Jos. McLeod, Fredericton.]

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THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

(The following is the address of the President of the W. M. Society, given at the annual meeting.)

SISTERS AND FRIENDS,—

I am glad to be with you on this occasion. But in none of the duties assigned to me am I more painfully conscious of my own limitations than when face to face with the responsibility of addressing you in annual meeting, but still it is a pleasure to me to greet you in the name of our Free Baptist Missionary Society, and I thank God that we are again permitted to meet in annual session, and I feel we have great reason to gratefully acknowledge his loving care and tender mercies during the past months.

I shall not attempt to talk of our home or foreign work. We have with us our corresponding secretary, Mrs. Weyman, who will tell us of the foreign field, and the work as carried on during the year. Our home secretary, Mrs. Hartt, will give us the home work in its various departments throughout the districts.

The year has been an eventful one, and one which has furnished exceptionally strong reasons for gratitude to God for his abounding goodness, alike to the nations, and to all missionary societies, and Christian organizations. Since we last met we have rejoiced, in common with the rest of the Christian world, and especially with all missionary societies, in the centenary of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Christians of every communion joined in this celebration, from the head of our British Empire down to the humblest member of Christ's church. It is said that this great "national institution" has had a greater influence on the spread of Christianity than all other branches of the church's work. It has served as the great storehouse from which all British foreign missions must draw their indispensable supplies, and to it all missionary societies owe a lasting debt.

When we met in last annual meeting the dark clouds of war were gathering in the Far East, and soon war was announced between Russia and Japan. We are anxiously hoping for the close of hostilities, and may the Land of the Rising Sun become more and more assimilated to Christian nations, and this, in a great measure, will be through the influence of modern missions. It is said that it was impossible to foresee what religious developments may take place in Japan in the near future, as Christian ideas are taking possession of her people, and they are putting on Christian civilization with a rapidity that astonishes the world—and there can be no doubt whatever but this is to be ascribed in a great measure to Christian missions.

While we have deplored the great loss of life in the Far East, our hearts have been saddened by the many disasters and loss of life in other lands.

Fresh in our memory to-day, the

foundering of that North Pacific steamer, within sight, and, I may say, sound, of our own beautiful Canadian City Victoria. Then the Chicago theatre disaster, with all its horror; yet again the burning of the General Slocum in view of thousands, who could not render saving assistance. Her victims had scarcely been carried from the morgue when news came from across the sea of the foundering of the ocean bound steamer on the Irish coast.

How our hearts were stirred, and how the tears of sympathy trickled down our cheeks, as we read of these disasters, and the many, many heart-rending scenes. Then we do not forget that in our own province many homes have been overshadowed by sorrow during the past year. But we praise God to-day that he can give comfort and sustaining grace in time of sorrow and trial.

In far-away India the death angel has claimed two of our workers in whom we were particularly interested, Dr. Burkholder and Mrs. Rae. They have been called to a higher service. God works in a way we cannot understand; when one is removed, he rises up another to go forward in the work.

Christ is Lord of all. He sits on the throne of the universe, and wields the sceptre of universal dominion. He commands; it is our duty to obey. Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all nations. *That is Christ's command. That is our work.* We have no choice in the matter, as long as we acknowledge Jesus Christ to be Lord of all.

Our responsibility is plain and pointed; what he said to the twelve, or to the one hundred and twenty, or to the five hundred brethren at once, was for the instruction of after ages as well as their own.

As Christ's disciples, we are to be witnesses, testifying to what we have felt and known of the gospel as the power of God unto salvation. It is our duty to evangelize the world, because we owe all people the gospel. We have a knowledge of Jesus Christ, and to have this is to incur a responsibility toward all people who have it not. Christ tasted death for every man, irrespective of color or nationality. In every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteous, is accepted of him. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might have eternal life." His provision is ample for the world's conversion, and his Word is suited to all peoples. On God's part the equipment is complete. But the responsibility of carrying out this work falls upon us. The opportunities are varied, and we know their need, and we must go forward, if we would worthily occupy the place and power given us by our Lord.

"The love of Christ constraineth us." Paul was the prince of missionaries, and in this one passage we have the secret of his power and influence as a missionary. Without the love of Christ he could have done nothing. With the love of Christ filling his heart he could do all things.

"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Sisters, let us dwell on this glorious fact, Christ with us every day, every hour, and every minute of the day. It is the will of Christ. Let us seek to arouse the churches to greater work, and strengthen our own hearts for new and nobler achievements.

The two-fold aim of all mission workers should be the conversion of the whole church to a vital interest in missions and the conversion of the whole world to Christ. No more important work is before us than the seeking to interest the indifferent members in our home churches to active effort for the salvation of all who are out of Christ. But the attainment of such an ideal

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can only grow out of a deep sense of personal responsibility to Christ to obey his command.

Dear friends, let us remember, personal responsibility cannot be transferred to a church or a society. Each one of us has an individual relationship to God and to the coming of his kingdom.

From the reports of the Districts we have learned that the societies have had a measure of success during the past year. Success is sweet and inspiring; but we find we have often to work without success, and sometimes in spite of failure. It is said that Carey had to toil on for seven years before baptizing his first convert.

Judson worked hard amid the most discouraging surroundings in India, yet he did not falter for a single moment. Month after month he celebrated the Lord's Supper with his devoted companion, and it is said that on one occasion, after consecrating the sacred emblems of the broken body, and shed blood of the Saviour of the world, he gave the bread and cup to his wife, and reverently said, "Wife, we are the church of God in India!" He labored on, and what do we see to-day—the glorious fruits of this heroic man of God.

Our Master never was discouraged. There were many things in his life which calculated to dishearten him, but through them all he moved with sublime courage. He endured the cross with joy, despising the same, because he knew that the cross led to glory and blessing. He is the Prince of our faith, and we are to follow him.

Sisters, may God grant us grace to go forward into the new year with strong and holy purpose, and may we, as never before, lay aside every weight—all indifference—and with our might take up cheerfully whatever our hands find to do.

SUSSEX BRANCH,

Having been helped and cheered so many times by reading about other Mission Bands, I thought perhaps they would like to hear from ours. Our Band numbers about fifty, including the Cradle Roll members. We meet the first Sunday of every month at three o'clock, as that is most convenient for all of us. Our programme for each meeting consists of the regular opening exercises, with special recitations, readings and songs, and a talk by some adult on the great needs of missionary work.

At our meeting last April, the Band voted to support a Bible woman in India. In order to raise money for this purpose

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the leaders decided to give each of the children a cent, and let them make as much out of it as possible during the summer vacation. Some of the children increased their pennies by making ice cream, candy, etc., for which they found ready sale. Others, who had to work during the holidays, gave almost a tenth of their earnings. Is not that a lesson to some of us older ones? The leaders, in order to encourage the children, and also to help in the grand work of sending the gospel to their less favored sisters, also took a penny. One made bread, and gave the profits from the sale of that to the work. Mr. George Wallace had a ten cent supper on her lawn and cleared two dollars and twenty-five cents. The children brought in their money at our meeting in September, and we found that twenty pennies had increased to eighteen dollars and twenty-two cents (\$18.22).

If you want a Mission Band to be interested and to prosper, let the leaders be intensely in earnest; let them love the children sincerely, and be very appreciative of all that they do; and let them pray much over the work. God bless the Mission Bands is my prayer. COM.

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