

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 NARROWS MISSION BAND

Some time ago the members of the Mission Band made a motion that I should write a letter for the INTELLIGENCER, that other mission bands might know how we are getting on. As this is my first attempt at writing a letter to be published, I hardly know how to begin, but I will do the best I can, and if you think any part of it worth publishing you can do so. Perhaps some time I will be able to do better.

Our Band was organized in September, 1903, by Rev. J. N. Barnes and wife. There were 15 members at that time; it has increased to 26; but since then three of our members have moved from the place, and three have outgrown the Band. Now we have a membership of twenty, between the ages of five and fourteen. One of our members, is a little girl not six years old, who has never missed a meeting since the Band was organized, and has always answered to the roll call with a text of Scripture the same as the other members. Can any of the Bands beat that? We hold our meetings every other Saturday at 2 o'clock at the home of our Superintendent, Mrs. Brander. Our assistant superintendent has not been with us for some time, as she is away teaching a public school, but we have in her place an associate member, Mrs. Thos. Todd, who attends nearly every meeting and helps to make them interesting. We enjoy the Band meetings very much. After the routine of business we entertain with readings and recitations, and we have a Question Box. We try to have useful and instructive questions.

The Saturday before Christmas was our regular Band meeting, but we held it in the evening instead of in the afternoon as formerly. There were eighteen members present and a few visitors, among whom was Deacon Chas. L. Belyea. It was our meeting for election of officers and the following were elected: Lewis S. Akerley, President; Gertie McKim, Vice-president; Harry M. Akerley, Secretary; Maggie M. Todd, Treasurer; Jennie E. Fowler, organist. After the business was over we had some recitations, and then the order of the meeting was changed. Mrs. Thos. Todd and the Superintendent had provided for us a treat consisting of fruit, nuts, candy and cake. It was a surprise, and we enjoyed it very much and spent a very pleasant hour. At the close there was another surprise, but this time it was for our Superintendent,

Mrs. Thos. Todd, on behalf of the Band, gave her a pretty picture, framed and ready to hang on the wall. The Superintendent replied in suitable terms thanking the Band heartily. The visitors expressed themselves well pleased with our work, and encouraged us to go steadily on. We then closed, each one seeming pleased with the evening's entertainment. I have written quite enough for this time and will close.

Yours respectfully,

HARRY M. AKERLEY,
 Secretary.

Narrows, N. B., Jan. 17th.

A BOY'S LETTER.

The letter on this page from the boy secretary of the Narrows Mission Band is a good account of the Band's doings, and is interesting. We hope it may encourage other Band secretaries to report their work. The Narrows Band is evidently getting along well, and the Superintendent and assistants, as well as the children, deserve commendation. The work amongst the children is sure to bear much fruit.

PROGRESS IN INDIA.

In the *Missionary Review* for December is a remarkable article from the pen of an Englishman, Lord Radstock. He is a man widely known for aggressive Christian work, and has visited India five times. This article was written during his last visit, and was published in the leading British newspaper, the *London Times*. He says that he showed it to twenty persons in different parts of India before it was sent for publication, and all agreed that it was a fair presentation of the state of things in India today. Surely, no fair-minded reader can believe that Christianity is a failure in India, after reading Lord Radstock's testimony.

Probably few readers of this paper will have opportunity to see the article, and for their benefit I will reproduce some of his most striking statements. Here is one:

"A lecture was given on the Bible to some one hundred and fifty native gentlemen (non-Christians). At the close of the meeting a Brahman professor of the Presidency College gave a most beautiful tribute to the Bible as the source not merely of enlightenment, but of peace and comfort, more especially as it revealed the character of Jesus. He was followed by an orthodox Hindu editor, who spoke of the benefits conferred by British rule, but said the greatest benefit was the introduction of the Bible."

I may explain that the Presidency College referred to is the leading non-Christian college in Bengal, if not in India.

Lord Radstock gives a number of other examples to the same effect. The following is significant:

"Another remarkable witness is coming on the scene, Swami Dharmananda, one of the most remarkable Hindu ascetics in Bengal. He had a large number of disciples from among the highest classes, including magistrates, lawyers,

and judges. Seventeen years ago he heard, in an address by an Englishman in Delhi, the inspired words, 'I am the true vine,' and it seemed to give him a faint glimmer of a communicated life. He learned Hebrew and Greek in order to read the Bible in the original. He learned Arabic to read the Koran, has travelled in Europe, spent a long time in Rome, went to Armenia, Constantinople, and from thence to Mecca, China and Japan. After seventeen years' study of Buddhism, Mohammedanism, and Christianity, he has now avowed his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and has written a book to show that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Saviour and Messiah, the only Redeemer for now and all ages. He expressed to me his opinion that India owed her civilization and her education to the missionaries."

I wish to add that this last sentence is true as far as it goes. We ought to remember, however, that every one who helps by prayer and contributions has a share in the work.

The following is a striking testimony to the growing power of our Lord over the people of India. Lord Radstock says:

"Yesterday the town hall (in Calcutta, I think) was filled with a stormy meeting, discussing some administrative changes in Bengal. Today we had one thousand, eight hundred Christians—English, Eurasians, Bengalis, from the Lieutenant Governor to the humblest native Christians—all united in a praise meeting, where the same hymns were sung in English and Bengali, and all joined in the Lord's Prayer and silent worship, closing with the hymn, 'All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name.' In a prominent place was a Swami, whose nickname had been 'Hater of Christ,' and who was the editor of a paper called the *Anti-Christian*, but who came there to 'own Jesus as his Lord and Redeemer.' Race distinctions and denominational diversity of method were all forgotten and merged as they sat under the banner, 'Ye are all one in Christ.'"

Calcutta is only seventy-five miles from Midnapore, and one hundred and fifty miles from Balasore, and our field

shares in the blessed advance of which the above is an indication.

Lord Radstock is a firm believer in the efficacy of the Bible, and has been the chief promoter of a scheme to have the Christians of England present Bibles to the people of India. The following statement from his pen may partly explain the ground of his faith and works:

"From many quarters we hear that leaders of Hindu thought are wishing that the Bible should be introduced into the educational system as the highest standard of moral teaching."

What a rebuke such men are to so many professed followers of Christ, who are afraid to have the Bible in our public schools!

I must not take space to introduce further quotations from Lord Radstock. Read his article if you can get hold of the magazine. And read another on "The Problem of Reform in India," by Rev. William B. Boggs, D. D., missionary of the American Baptist Union, to the Telugus. I will close by quoting his last paragraph, which gives one of his two "principal conclusions":

"India now presents one of the grandest opportunities for influencing the thought and molding the character of a great people. Now that the stagnation of ages is past, and unrest and inquiry are prevailing so widely in the midst of the failure of so many experiments, and encouraged by so many indications that 'the fulness of the time' has come for India's speedy evangelization, an opportunity presents itself there worthy to enlist multitudes of the strongest characters and vastly multiplied resources."

The italics are mine. Who will join us in putting money, time, life, into this noble work now. The field promises as speedy and glorious a harvest as any in India. We can double our contributions and thereby quadruple our work easily. Men and women want to go, and hold back only because there is no money to send them. Come, let us wipe out the deficit, and move on to gather in the waiting, dying multitudes.—Rev. G. H. Hamden, in *Star*.

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