A Family Comes Back to Worship.

Another man who has not attended church for years began to come this winter, and is now, with his family, attending regularly. He is one of the steadiest and most industrious men at Oxford, and would make a very useful man in the church. In other ways, too, the Lord has revealed His working, but I cannot relate them now. For all of these I am devoutly thankful. These incidents may seem trifling in themselves, but to me they are very precious. In work like this, where there is so much to discourage and wear out one's spirit, such evidences of God's nearness and interest are most refreshing.

Miss Armstrong's Good Work.

Miss Armstrong is doing excellent work in the school, evidence of which may be seen, not only in progress the children have made in their studies, but also in their more cleanly appearance, and their better behaviour outside of school.

We ask the continuation of your prayers.

Your co-worker,

A. McNEILL.

REV. S. S. OSTERHOUT, PH.D.,
Indian Work, B.C.
Supported by Epworth Leagues of Brampton District.

PORT SIMPSON, B.C.,

March 10th, 1903.

My Dear Epworth Leaguers, —It seems only a few days since I wrote you my last letter, but I guess it must be some time, for I am in receipt of a letter from your good President, saying that you are looking for another.

We have had a very busy winter, and have been struggling hard against deeply-rooted and long-established customs which impede the progress of the

Gospel among the Tsimsheans. Our motto, however, is "no compromise," for, as with you, we find that the religion of Christ is incompatible with everything that wounds the conscience of the weakest Christian. We have often presented that gem of the Pauline doctrine, "If meat make my brother to offend, I shall eat no meat as long as the world standeth." Feasting is the Indian's besetting sin, and during the winter we have had more than the usual amount of feasting, owing to the unusual number of weddings. The old Indian customs demanded the giving of a feast in order to make sure and binding the marriage contract, and anyone who was married without feasting the whole community was under a ban of disgrace, and had been married, so to speak, in the corner or behind the door, and the world knew nothing of it. Even to this day it is impossible for the majority of the Indians to see that the marriage is just as binding without the feast as it is with it, and consequently it is very hard to root out the practice. However, victory is always ultimately with the right, and so we persevere in the strength of the Master. We are constantly reminded of the struggles of the Apostle Paul with the worshippers of the goddess Diana of the Ephesians. As the cause of the Master triumphed there over all who were actuated by self-interest, sensuality and subtlety, so we believe everywhere the victory is to "the true and the faithful." Not only among the poor Indians of the north-west coast, but among those of our own race, are there those who are ever buying the little images and shrines of Diana and secretly setting them in their hearts or their homes as the objects of their worship, and that to the exclusion of Christ. May the Holy Spirit cleanse all our hearts and homes from all secret sins that we may be the more useful as servants of the Master.

The Old Heathen Customs. The Marriage Feast.

Maple Sugar Days, but no Sugar Maples.

To-day we are having the first appearance of spring. The day reminds me of the old sugar-making days of Ontario. I should like to go out and "tap" a few trees, "boil

down" and "sugar off," but such is an impossibility in this country, for there is not a single maple on the whole coast. We have an abundance of pine, spruce, cedar and hemlock, but none of the Eastern beech and maple. Of course, our timber has a great commercial value, and timber forms one of the great resources of the country. We have an abundance of timber, fish and mineral, so that the future of British Columbia is assured. The trouble is that there are too many unoccupied lands to the east of us, and also that the climate is very bad, being so wet. In Port Simpson we have no less than 100 inches of rainfall in twelve months. If you will compare this with the wettest season you ever have in Ontario, you will have some idea of the downpour we have here the year round.

"Oolachan," or Candle-fish, of Great Value.

Just now our people are scattering for the Oolachan fishing at Naas River. It is from this little fish they derive nearly all the grease which forms a principal article of diet, and they gather them in great numbers for a few weeks, for the "run" of "small fish" lasts only a few weeks at most. But while they do run they come in great quantities and are caught in purse nets by the bushel. The Oolachan is sometimes called the "candle-fish," for it is so full of oil that when dried it burns like a candle, but with considerable more smoke. Besides the oil they extract by boiling, they also dry great quantities of them in the sun on upright racks, strung on ropes of native manufacture. They also prepare some by salting and smoking, and they do not look unlike smoked herring, except that they are about an inch shorter. They taste somewhat similar also, but are more expensive, marketing at about ten cents per pound. As a rule I go up to the Naas myself about Easter, and remain with them at the fishery for a week or so, and they seem to appreciate it very much after being left a few weeks without a missionary. In the meantime the services are kept up by a native whom we have chosen and to whom we have given a paper of authority, for the paper is indispensable to the Indian. He is invariably ready for

A Native Worker at the Fisheries.

labor as soon as he gets his paper, and in fact there is hardly an active Indian in the Church but would be pleased to take charge and do his best. The paper settles everything. We try to get the best man we can and one who is trying to live the Christ-life, laying more stress on this than other qualifications.

Which is Greater, Christ or the Sabbath Day?

The young man who came teaching the doctrines of Seventh Day Adventism is still here, but as near as I can learn he has made only two disciples, a man and his wife, who have been more or less restless for years, and who for years have been at the head of the Band of Workers' Movement, a band which has been trying secretly to secede from the Methodist Church and take with them several of our well-tried and faithful members of long standing. This attempt has not been as successful as he had anticipated, and so he is willing to try something else. I am pleased with the way the Indians are themselves able to refute the false teaching, and also with the way they trust their missionary as their guide and spiritual adviser. One old chief said to the Adventist, "You need not talk with us about the Seventh Day Sabbath question, for we are but passengers on board the ship; the missionary is at the helm, go and talk the matter over with him, and if you can persuade him that we are on the wrong course he will doubtless turn the rudder over and steer into the proper Sabbath Day run. Don't talk to us about it, but if you are afraid we will shipwreck, run straight to the pilot; he is responsible." I need hardly say he never came. Another silenced him by asking him the question, "Which is greater, Christ or the Sabbath Day?" He answered, "Christ." The Indian replied, "We've got Him, never mind your Sabbath."

I suppose this will be my last letter to you from Port Simpson this season, for you doubtless are aware that I have permission to take a trip to the East this season. Dr. Stephenson is placing me for a part in the Summer School

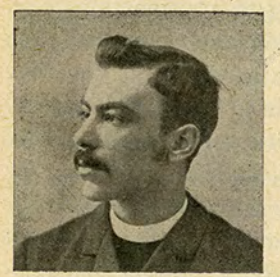
at Toronto, and probably I shall meet some of the Brampton Leaguers there. I shall also try to visit the District if the way opens.

Trusting that you are all anxiously striving for the Master and endeavoring to bring "your associates to Christ," I remain, as ever,

Yours in the Master's vineyard,

S. S. OSTERHOUT.

(This is Mr. Osterhout's last letter as a missionary to the Leaguers of the Brampton District. At Conference he was appointed to a church in Victoria.)



REV. G. H. RALEY,

Supported by the Epworth Leagues of Wingham District.

KITAMAAT, B.C.,
June, 1903.

Dear Epworth Leaguers,—The prominent feature of the work has been its steady continuance.

The work is not of a sentimental character; there is none of the halo and romance which imagination associates with mission work; it is intensely practical in its nature and cannot be advanced by unusual and startling methods.

Indian Mission Work not Sentimental.

It is true that such methods could easily arouse the native mind, but sudden outbursts of enthusiasm are apt to be followed by a decided depression. Every-day plodding is telling.

We have lost a few members by death. Among the number was "Bill Cross," an interesting old man, well-versed in the legends of his tribe; formerly he

An Old Man's Christian Death.

was prominent in the ranks of heathenism, latterly a zealous Christian according to his knowledge.

A few days before his death, though a confirmed invalid, frail for months, he rose from his couch, went to church and asked to be allowed to pray in the public worship before he joined the church above.

Jeremiah Morrison, one of the first Home boys and successor to the head chief of the Kitamaats, gave evidence during a long illness of faith in the Saviour.

Illustrations that the natives die in the faith triumphant and without fear might be multiplied; let these suffice for the encouragement of those who rejoice to know of the workings of the mighty power of God.

The Girls' Home and its Good Work.

The Girls' Home is in a most prosperous condition. The girls are earnestly trying to do what is right. The six oldest, with the approval of the matron, Miss Jackson, who knows their daily life, partook of the Sacrament early in May for the first time; this is certainly a cause for thanksgiving.

Both day school and Sunday School have been faithfully carried on. I doubt if there can be found in any Methodist Sunday School in the Dominion of Canada children who can more perfectly answer the questions found in the Catechism of our Church. Amongst the older people the potlatch has retarded religious progress, but we pray the end of such practices may be at hand.

Yours in the work,

G. H. RALEY.