

tropical climate amid unbearable heats, wasting malaria, liable to cholera, and smallpox; where he must see his wife grow pale and his children pine; this is a trial the missionary must endure. But, perhaps, worse than climate is the moral miasma and disease. Surrounded with a very atmosphere which seems full of all that is vile—lying, theft, abuse, intemperance, impurity, selfishness, cruelty—witnessing horrible customs and rites and ceremonies, followed in the name of religion. These things help to depress and drag down and injure and try the missionary, for “he also is a man.” His work also is constantly among those who cannot elevate, but must tend to depress him. They are ignorant, poor, degraded; often stupid, ungrateful and selfish; and the missionary is expected to, must bear with all their weaknesses and frailties, and “hold them up and push them along.” This takes a lot of strength of character, and adds to the missionary’s trial. Often weary, often in trouble, sick, discouraged, he must—like his Lord—go on in his good work, helping others. Can he be forgiven if sometimes he thinks of “home,” of the chances and opportunities at home, of his friends who are high up now, pastors of the “First Churches,” while he is teaching naked children in a mud hut; of how his children might be at school in a good climate, morally as well as physically; his wife well and strong, and he himself rid of the malaria that has been fastened upon him for the past fifteen years?

A missionary does not always live in “clover.” He has his trials. But he will not complain, he dare not! Brethren, pray for us.

MUTRA, INDIA.

A Peculiar Indian Custom.

[From the Nanaimo *Free Press*.]

REV. A. E. GREEN, Methodist minister of Wellington, has recently returned from a visit to the Cape Mudge Indians, near Seymour Narrows, B.C. He gave a *Free Press* representative the following description of a revival of the old “Copper” custom for the payment of antiquated debts, for the Indians have not yet adopted the white man’s principle of a six-year outlawry like their pale-faced brethren. On Sunday morning about 1,000 Indians assembled in separate sections, each section being about sixty feet apart. For about two hours a most excitable and spirited “wawa” took place among the Indians, in regard to a number of pot-latch debts of from forty to fifty years standing which had not been yet finally adjusted. Among the early days the article of most power and value to the Indians is what is called by them “a copper.” It is held to be equal in value to \$800 in money or merchandise, and was, and apparently still is, used in the payment of old debts. This “copper” is in fact a flat piece of soft copper, about $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch thick, $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet in length, 12 inches in width at the bottom and tapering to 8 inches at the upper end. On the surface of this sheet of copper the Indians execute some most elaborate carving, and a straight and prominent line is drawn across the centre. The result of the palaver was that honor and justice prevailed, a six-year outlawing of debts was spurned with contempt, and “a copper” was brought out and placed in the open space between the sections. Then a great silence fell upon the multitude and all eyes were turned towards the door of an adjacent house. After a few minutes of this stoical silence the door opened and out rushed a large grizzly bear, and made straight for the “copper,” which he picked up in his forepaws, and then, bear-like, gave it a long, strong hug, until the flat sheet of copper was bent nearly double. As the ends of the copper came together the chiefs of the tribes rose to their feet, and at once took the “bended copper” from the bear, while several of the strong men took hold of bruin and marched him back from whence he came. Then the silence was broken and the hum of many voices could be heard, while the chief proceeded to cut the copper into strips of about an inch in width by four inches in length. These were handed around, and thus the old debts were paid, the financial and social crisis was averted, and peace and contentment again predominated. The memory of the dead had been respected, and the ceremony closed.

The “make-up” of the grizzly bear would have made Barnum green with envy, for many of those present, who did not know what the ceremony meant, took it to be a real wild grizzly, which had stalked into their midst uninvited and unsolicited. That some were scared is to put it mild.

Mr. Green says there is now much better order in the camp, the native constables carrying out Mr. Vowell’s instructions not to allow white men to stay in the camp at night. This prevents much of the liquor selling.

The Indians have arranged for Mr. Galloway, the Methodist missionary, to take up his residence near the village, giving a beautiful site for church and school near the village. The lumber for the mission will be taken up from Grant’s saw-mill shortly. The young people of the tribe are quite anxious for the establishment of the school.

Assa, the chief, and his friends have deposited “a copper” with Mr. Galloway as a security or bail that they will appear before the court when called upon, in regard to the recent liquor troubles.

Mr. Green says that, owing to Cape Mudge being a central and objective point where all classes congregate, it would be advisable for the Dominion to station a police office there. Mr. Pidcock, the Indian Agent, is very energetic, but it is impossible for him to be at Cape Mudge all the time.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
FIELD NOTES. By the Editor	17

EDITORIAL AND CONTRIBUTED:—

Editorial Notes	18
Another Self-Denial Object	19
The Divine Plan	19
Conference of Missionary Secretaries	19
Joy and Sorrow in Japan	19
The Fire at Wolf Creek	20
Answers to Correspondents	20
The French Institute	20
Among the Indians	20
Correction	20
How to Increase Interest in Missions	20

ALONG THE LINE:—

The Indian Work—Notes from the Log-book of the “Glad Tidings”	21
“ “ Letter from Rev. J. W. Galloway	22
“ “ Letter from Rev. Thos. Crosby	22
“ “ Letter from Rev. J. A. McLachlan	23
The Japan Work—Letter from Rev. J. G. Dunlop, B.A.	23

OUR YOUNG FOLK:—

Gough and the Cigars	24
A Beautiful Legend	24
What is Praying?	24
Snake Catching in India	24

WOMAN’S MISSIONARY SOCIETY:—

Our Monthly Reunion, Prayer Topic—Chats with the Editor—Current Coins—Selections—From the Cor- responding Secretary—London District—In Memo- riam—Correspondence—What can I do for my Band?—Words from Workers	25-31
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MISSIONARY READINGS:—

Missionary Trials and Hardships	31
A Peculiar Indian Custom	32

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