

Latest Tidings from Our Mission Fields

October, 1915

Subject for Prayer—That the people from the old lands coming to the new may be imbued with such Christian ideals as to become a strength to the nation.

Subject for Study—“Along Old Mission Trails,” Chap. I, “The King’s Highway.”

Japan

Coming to the end of another year, one likes to look back upon the mile-posts as they stand out in one’s memory. The main impression left is the old wonder, ever new, how God sustains where human vision could not pierce the gloom, nor human wisdom solve the problem.

To us, to whom is intrusted the work in Kofu and the whole province, have come this year many encouragements.

We have had with us for a few days, for special evangelistic effort, Spirit-filled men, who have kindled afresh in the hearts of our Christians the flame of zeal for His cause, and also touched many who had been indifferent to the message before.

When Col. Yumamuro, the great Salvation Army leader of Japan, spoke on “The God of Love” in the Assembly Hall of the Provincial Parliament buildings, no less than seven hundred persons (mostly men—Normal School students, officials, etc.) attended, and of these one hundred persons responded to his invitation to remain afterward for special inquiry and instruction in the way of Life. Since that time we not infrequently meet people throughout the country who heard him then for the first time, and are eager to know more, or who had been wanderers and were constrained to seek again the Christian fellowship they had once enjoyed. Indeed, due largely we believe to these special efforts, as well as to the faithful regular monthly teaching which hundreds receive, there is evident a most earnest spirit of inquiry and a heart-hunger that proves how convincingly the Spirit is working.

I wish I could give you an adequate idea of a visit I made in the home of a little woman whose husband, a Government official and a non-Christian, asked that his wife might have a monthly Bible lesson. After introducing myself, we had a few minutes’ chat on commonplaces, and then as there was a bright-eyed child who said she went to Sunday School, I suggested that she sing me one of her hymns, which led to several others. The mother was so pleased that several times in between hymns she renewed the welcome she had at first given, “I’m so glad you came.” When I finally came to the Bible lesson to herself alone, she drank in the words with eagerness, asking me innumerable intelligent and searching questions. Her face glowed with the joy of simply knowing there was such a plan of salvation which was free for the believing, she had heard about it but had not understood. When I promised to come again the next month, she begged that it might be sooner. She bought a Bible and promised to read some portions I chose for her.

When I went, the second week afterward, she did not produce her Bible for the lesson, and when I hinted it would be a good plan to read and study from her own, she explained that her husband had become very interested in reading it, and in fact carried it to his office almost every day, reading as he walked along or in spare moments. A beautiful Christian neighbor to whom I related this encouraging incident, begged to be allowed to send in one of her “extra” Bibles. This was fitting, as I feel convinced that it was through the

prayers of this invalid saint that the home was opened for Christian teaching. Perhaps the bright-eyed child who sang so prettily the hymns she learned at Sunday School had something to do with it also, which reminds me of something in connection with our Kofu Sunday School of which I wish to tell you.

Kofu has a gratifyingly long list of names on her Street Sunday School roll, but I am particularly interested in the school held in our church, which has an average attendance of two hundred. These are divided into eight classes of which I have the privilege of teaching the most advanced. This class was given me two years ago with seven names on the list—all being girls in the fifth and sixth year of the Primary day school. It was Mr. Shiraishi’s hope that we might be able to hold them for the Sunday School until they had at least graduated from the Primary school, before which time most Sunday School pupils drop out.

The class has grown and now numbers twenty-seven, with an average attendance during the last month or two of over twenty. And though all have become High School students, being first, second, and even third year girls, there seems to be no thought of being “too big to come to Sunday School.”

A lending library of healthy books for young girls greatly adds to the service we are able to render in developing these girls at their most impressionable age.

It was at this Sunday School too, that I met a little woman in whose home I have since been able to make regular evangelistic visits. She had come to bring her one little child to the Sunday School. When I welcomed her she told me that she was an entire stranger in Kofu, and very lonely, and would I please come and see her. I went, and found her with considerable knowledge of Christianity and eager to hear more. The husband was a very earnest Buddhist and didn’t approve at all of Christianity. But he has been reading all the Christian literature I have taken to her, and some of it was purposely designed for him. Lately he has softened considerably in his opposition to Christianity, and his latest remark bearing on the subject reported to me by his delighted wife, was that he “hoped the child would grow up to be a real Christian.” The mother has real faith, and is earnestly seeking to “add to her faith, knowledge.”

Indian Work

Miss Isabel Clarke writes from Kitamaat, B.C.:

We spent a very pleasant time in camp and had with us eighteen children. The camping ground is ideal; near a river and surrounded by huge trees and mountains. Mr. and Mrs. Moore made everything very comfortable for us. Berrying, mountain climbing, fishing, swinging and croquet playing were freely indulged in. A few of our girls went fishing one evening and caught over sixty trout in about an hour. Modern fishing tackle is not easily procured in Kitamaat, but a safety pin, a piece of twine and any kind of a rod answers the purpose here. The children got lots of fresh air, sunshine and exercise.

Mr. Swann came one Sunday and in the afternoon we had an open-air service, attended by most of the settlers in the valley.

It is a pleasure to have Miss Clarke with us after her holiday.

I believe the children have made fair progress in their studies. It is slow work, but we just keep right on. There have been some discouraging things, but there have been more encouragements. Our school is

attended by both Home and village children; the latter make poor progress, owing to irregular attendance and lack of interest on the part of the parents.

The Indian Department this year sent us a book to be given as a prize for good conduct and general proficiency to a deserving pupil. There were three girls about equal, and it was difficult to decide which to give it to. However, after some thought we decided in favor of Rebecca Nice, who during the year proved herself very worthy in every department of work. We feel sure that when she leaves the Home she will be a credit to the training she has received.

We expect to have some new members in our auxiliary, and there is the promise of two new life members. The Indian women who are members were all formerly Home girls.

Some weeks ago we had an auxiliary picnic, which was not altogether a success, due to weather conditions. It was a stormy day, but, most of the members were on hand at the appointed time. We had made up our mind to cross the inlet, and we did it, much to the discomfort of members subject to seasickness. We had a pleasant picnic programme at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Anderson, both formerly of the Mission staff. When home-going time arrived it was still stormy, and we decided to wait for the evening tide. But, the wind still blew, and only a few ventured home. Mrs. Anderson made the rest comfortable for the night, and next day (Sunday) we reached home. We now refer to it as the twenty-four-hour picnic.

China

Each session of the Annual Council was opened with devotional exercises conducted by different members of Council and were full of blessing to each one. At the close of the Tuesday afternoon meeting a quiet hour was arranged and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper administered.

The most interesting and inspiring session was held Saturday afternoon, when encouraging reports of work were read. From all the stations we heard of great blessings, fresh opportunities and a desire to extend the work if only we had workers. The following are some extracts from the reports:

Miss Estabrooke gave the report of the Union Normal School for Young Women as follows:

This Chengtu Union Normal School for Young Women is the first institution of its kind in West China. For some years it has been in the desire and prayerful plans of some of the missionaries of wide experience here. Now they see it an established fact. School opened in January and fourteen have completed the work of the first half year. The students now represent seven different boarding schools and six cities of the province. Each student is a Christian.

We believe that good beginnings have been made in all these points and that a sure foundation has been laid for the next half year. Each student has sought to give a whole-hearted character to her work and to know the invigoration thereof.

To God we give the praise for all, and in further development of the work we place our reliance in Him. Not by might nor by power but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.

Miss Steele reports: The old girls who were the inspiration of the school left with the opening of the Normal School and the responsibility of leadership was thus somewhat suddenly thrust upon the shoulders of the younger girls. In consequence, life has been rather strenuous for them. But this matter is gradually adjusting itself.

Last December the pupil teacher obtained her diploma, being the second of our girls as well as the second girl in the Educational Union to graduate

from the Middle School. When she left we were obliged to use one of the Junior girls to take up her work. "God has given me so much," she said, "I am glad to be able to do a little for Him."

During the winter the students themselves organized a campaign for the deepening of the spiritual life of the school. Emphasis was laid on private prayer and the daily study of the Bible. Students were urged to spend the first hour of each day alone with God. Each Saturday evening they had a meeting, at which they discussed their spiritual difficulties and prayed over them.

Miss Brimstin reports of the evangelistic work as follows:

During the past year thirty-five women have been with us for a shorter or longer period of time. Five of the women have completed the two years' course of study, successfully passed their examinations and received certificates. Four of them will become Bible-women.

Mrs. Hockin gave a very interesting account of an evangelistic campaign held in Kiating this spring. Invitations were first sent to the women of the official class, inviting them to a meeting in the new down town church. Then a series of meetings were held until all the women of the city have been invited. In this way some two thousand women were told the Gospel story and many more were reached by literature.

(Concluded in November number)

Suggestive Programme

For Auxiliaries and Mission Circles

November, 1915.

Subject for Prayer.

That those engaged in the Oriental Work in Canada may be enabled to inspire the women in their charge with the ideals of Christian womanhood.

Subject for Study.

Beginnings in India. Chapter II. "The King's Highway."

I. Opening exercises.

(a) Hymn—"From Greenland's Icy Mountains" No. 318 Canadian Hymnal.

(b) Prayer.

(c) Scripture Lesson. A Song of Praise, Psalm XCVI.

II. Minutes and business.

III. Watch Tower.

IV. Hymn—"I Love to Tell the Story." No. 296 Canadian Hymnal.

V. *Explain Rest Fund. Special Collection for Rest Fund.

VI. "Coming, Coming, Yes They Are!" A Study of Beginnings in India. Chapter II. "The King's Highway."

"India is at once the despair and the glory of Christian Missions."

I. Papers on (a) India the Despair of Christian Missions.

(b) India the Glory of Christian Missions.

WHY?

or

†2. A Table of Comparison.

VII. Closing Hymn—"O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing." No. 4 Canadian Hymnal, verses 1 and 2.

M. M. C. LAVELL.

*Free. One cent for postage.

†See Suggestive Programme Leaflet. Price 4 cents.

For those not studying the Text-book, we would suggest a study of what is being done for women through our Oriental Missions in British Columbia. See Annual Report 1913-14, pages XCVII-CIII.

Addresses.

Mrs. A. M. Phillips
Wesley Bldgs.
Toronto, Ont.

Mrs. H. N. J. Shaw,
209 Chestnut Street,
Winnipeg, Man.

Mrs. C. J. Stewart.
Box 97
Sackville, N.B.