

book would allow a letter to every Band member; but oh, what hundreds that would take! Hence we thank the editor of the "Link" for this page where we may have a pen-chat with all the Bands. Won't you take this letter as a very personal one?

The very spirit of Christmas is giving, not getting. The Father gave the Son; the Christ child became the man, Christ Jesus, who gave His life for the world. Through Him we receive all the blessings that make life worth living. But if receiving is the selfish motive, which controls us, we have failed to catch the true meaning of God's wondrous gift, which this date commemorates.

The very air seems full of secrets, and there are forbidden corners in many a household. It takes real study, doesn't it, boys and girls? We must not go beyond our means. We must spread our littles over a large territory, and our gifts must be simple, appropriate and mean something of ourselves for "the gift without the giver is bare." Love gifts are the precious ones. Of whom are we especially thinking? One says, "Our own family, of course." Others say, "I must give X something for she remembered me last year; 'I must give Y. a handsome gift for he is so rich, and always gives such fine things himself.'" "I must not forget Z. for he'll give me a good gift in return." Thus our giving becomes a burden, a nuisance, and the sweet Christmas spirit of love, and joy, and peace is lost in needless worry. Right principles of giving should rule now as at other seasons—give according to ability, unselfishly, lovingly, thoughtfully, not only our own, but other's own, should be thought about. "There are lonely hearts to cherish;" they are in every community, strangers in a strange land, far from home, or lonely because of the bitter losses which the year has brought; often such wee things, a sprig of holly, a flower, a message. A letter, can make more bearable the weary days. Then, "the poor ye have with you always and whenever ye will, ye may do them good." It was Jesus who said it, and he assures us that in ministering to the needy, we minister unto Him.

Then what are you going to give and save that will help along the great cause for which our Mission Bands exist? Some are sending packages of Sundav School cards, lesson picture rolls, and little prizes for school children in India. Some are packing boxes for Home Mission stations. Wouldn't we like to peep behind the scenes and see the joy which our work brings to many? Why not use plenty

of our picture postcards of India scenes? They are 8c per 100, for postage and they sell at the rate of two for five cents. There is room on each for your own Christmas message and a little word regarding the myriads of Christless souls to whom Christmas is unknown. The Board has a new supply of cards, sufficient to fill all your orders and no card album ought to be without them. You serve thus a double purpose and net a nice sum for your Mission Band's Foreign Mission Department. A present that lasts all the year is a good investment. Send the "Link" and the "Visitor" to some friends who have never enjoyed their pages. And are you going to give a book? There is nothing better than the missionary books, true, inspiring, and full of intense interest. What family under the evening lamp, would fail to enjoy a reading aloud from "Canoe and Dog Train," "The Cobra's Den," "In the Tiger Jungle," "The Life of John G. Paton," or sketches of noble women, such as Pundita Ramabai, the wives of Judson, Fidelia Fiske, and many others. Send to Mrs. Dancy at the Bureau and to the Baptist Book Room for suggestions. And maybe, somebody wants to give your Mission Band a present. Tell them how you would like some books for circulation and for reference, also some maps and wall charts. And while we feast, do we forget that thousands are hungry? In India, famine prices prevail and a greater stress and strain is put upon Mission Boards? Why not forego some pleasure you crave, and help to feed the starving?

Don't forget our missionaries. A wide, wide waste of waters flows between them and home. The distance, perhaps, seems greater and the loneliness keener at Christmas time. Let our Bands send letters, not prosy, preachy letters, but happy, homey, cheery letters that will not expect an answer. A missionary in Burma watched eagerly for the incoming mail. She had been on the field eleven years; no letters came, and as the younger worker sat down to "devour" her budget, she said with tears in eyes and in voice: "The longer I am on the field, the fewer letters do I receive. After my long absence, home friends must have forgotten me." Remember the new workers who are just becoming used to the peculiar sights and sounds of this strange country, but never neglect those missionaries who for years have had such desperate things to see, and such hard things to do.

"Somebody did a golden deed,  
Proving himself a friend in need,  
Somebody sang a cheerful song  
Brightening the skies the whole day long.  
Was that somebody you?"

May the rejoicing that comes from loving, helpful doing be abundantly yours this Christmastide.

Your affectionate Secretary,  
SARAH STUART BARBER.

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