

Canadian Missionary Link.

VOL. XXII. |

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER, 1899.

| No. 1

Editorial.

BAND LESSONS.—We give our young people two lessons this month, to make up for none in August.

The Reports of several Associations reached us too late for July number. We presume they have been printed in the *Baptist*, so will no longer be new to our readers.

Miss Baskerville, and Dr. and Mrs. McLaurin reached Canada early in July. We hope that many of our readers will have the opportunity of giving them a hand of welcome to the home land.

Miss Baskerville has had a much longer term in India than missionaries usually can stand before returning.

THE Annual Convention of the Woman's Baptist Home and Foreign Missionary Societies of Eastern Ontario and Quebec will be held in Ottawa on Tuesday and Wednesday, October 3rd and 4th.

The twenty-third annual meeting of the Foreign Society will be held on Wednesday, October 4th. A union platform meeting will be held the same evening.

An attractive programme is in preparation and it is earnestly hoped that a large number of delegates will attend. Each circle shall have the right to appoint delegates. For a membership of twenty or less, two delegates; for each additional twenty, one delegate. These delegates must be full members of the Society—that is, either life members or contributors of at least one dollar a year. Each Band shall have the right to send one delegate over 15 years of age.

BILLETING.—Delegates desiring billets are requested to send their names to Mrs. A. K. Blackadar, 266 Lisgar Street, Ottawa.

THE WRONGS OF INDIAN WOMANHOOD.

INTRODUCTION:

I.

For four hundred years Ouba, Porto Rico and the Philippines bore an iron yoke of Spanish mis-rule and priestly oppression. For years the inhabitants have revolted, and these fair islands have known nothing but

rebellion and suffering in their vain attempts to throw off this galling yoke.

Days went by, new moons came and waned, suffering remained as real and deliverance seemed as far off as ever. Men saw their homes destroyed, loved ones wronged, starved and killed. Would freedom never come? Was Cuba Libre an idle dream and jest?

It was last February. The day had dawned like other days, and was filled with woe and suffering as other days had been. There seemed no end to such days. Hope had almost died in many hearts. Out in the bay, an American warship lay riding at anchor. The waters of the bay lapped and curled against its sides as idly as ever. Suddenly there was an awful noise and the *Maine* had sunk as a wreck. Again the waters of the bay lapped and curled, but this time above the grave of over two hundred men.

This disaster, sudden and awful, was the cloud "no bigger than a man's hand" that rose that day, the forerunner of the heavy war cloud that soon hung over the islands. And when it broke away, the brilliant "bow of promise" of freedom spanned its dark shadows.

It was an awful disaster, but it set in motion forces that broke forever the yoke of oppression over the people. The world, now that the strain of sympathy is broken, says they are not ready for freedom and are only children. Their right was freedom, and let time work their problems for them.

What has this story to do with the wrongs of Indian womanhood? Nothing, save that it gave us courage and hope. An Indian lady had given us a manuscript book to read concerning the wrongs of Indian women, saying, "I do not know that it can be published, but I feel these things ought to be known." We thought we had known much before, but this book was like a book of horrors to us. We almost wish we had never read it, and hid our faces to shut out the scenes it had depicted. What can be done to help? we repeated over and over.

Child marriage, enforced widowhood, the *Zonana*, the *Muralis* and the *Devadasis* (temple women) seem to flourish as deeply rooted as ever. Women suffer on the same. Only now and then does the public hear an agonized shriek of the sufferings of some child-wife. Now and then the public reads a paragraph in some paper of the suicide of a girl widow, with no hint of the tragedy behind it at all.

It has not been many years since *Rakhmabai* made her brave fight for her rights. She won in a way. The law forbids her to marry. Perhaps her struggle did more for women than we know. The miracle was that she ever had the courage to make it all.

Then came the tragic suffering and death of *Phulmani Dasi* in Calcutta, which aroused the public and Government, until they raised the age of consent to twelve. The story of *Phulmani Dasi* is repeated over and over