

THE PALM BRANCH.

had formed an island, made up of the sand continually being brought down the river. Now this island has become a peninsula of the main land, and has a busy village built upon it. Many boats ply up and down, and when a stiff breeze blows the Japanese junks come hurrying in, turning their open sterns away from the wind. They lie close together in the mouth of the river till the wind subsides, when they take up work again. Across the entrance to the harbor lie the stone forts, built during the few months Commodore Perry gave the Japanese to consider whether or not they would make a peaceable treaty with the United States. They are almost covered at high tide, and have never been made of use. Yet they could, at any time, easily be made defensive points, and that they have stood the wear of the flowing river and rising tide, proves the skill of the builders under such conditions, and that the spirit of the people, at that time, was anything but peaceful toward the "foreign barbarian."

The Extinction of the Liquor, Opium and Slave Trades, and all Covetous Hindrances to Christianity.

How proud we are of our fair Canada, with her mighty rivers, majestic lakes, snow-capped mountains, broad plains and rolling prairies, reaching from ocean to ocean! Yet within her breast there is a canker, which if not removed, and that speedily, will consume her very life-blood, and bring this beautiful country to premature decay. This curse is the liquor traffic, and until this evil is removed from our land we cannot expect the national prosperity promised to that people whose God is the Lord. Canada's drink bill each year is nearly \$10,000,000, this amount being spent directly for strong drink. Besides this we have the money spent in keeping up our jails, &c., and that used for misdirected labor, and so the money lost to the country through this terrible traffic is \$143,258,716 each year. True, by the plebescite vote, taken last autumn, a majority of the people in all the provinces but one declared themselves in favor of prohibition, but our government declares that the majority was not sufficiently large and nothing can be done to abolish the evil which is doing so much to curse our boys and blight the lives of our girls.

This traffic is doing a great deal to hinder the advance of Christianity among the Indians of British Columbia, where the hearts of our missionaries are often wrung to see the ruin brought to the Indians through this traffic.

We are proud of our position as British subjects, and sing lustily

"Rule Britannia, Britannia rules the waves,
Britons never will be slaves."

But alas! this government of which we are so proud, licenses traffics, yes, forces traffics upon poor, helpless people which make them slaves, body and soul. This

is the opium traffic in India and China, which is completely under the control of the British government. How sad the testimony of a Chinaman: "China has been a hell ever since you brought opium to us." So great are the evils resulting from this traffic that our missionaries confess they are ashamed to call themselves British subjects.

Africa is cursed by two great evils, the liquor traffic and the slave trade. Great quantities of liquor are imported every year by the government of Great Britain, the United States and Holland, and so much evil is wrought thereby that much of the good that our missionaries could otherwise accomplish is rendered impossible. The slave trade is also a great curse; this traffic in humanity being carried on to a very large extent. Steps have, however, been taken to restrict this great evil, and many Asiatic powers, Turkey and Persia among the number, have pledged themselves to prohibit the importation of slaves.

All these traffics are covetous hindrances to Christianity; that is, they are resorted to for selfish gain, without regard to the harm resulting therefrom. Men are afraid they will lose in their business if they oppose the liquor traffic, and so this terrible curse continues to exist. The British government reaps vast harvests every year from the opium traffic, and so fails to abolish it. But the people make the governments which control these things, and we hope and pray that when our Mission Band boys are old enough to vote, they will see to it that such men will compose our parliaments that this condition of affairs will no longer be possible; and all such selfish greed of gain will be unheard of.

But while we condemn others, let us look deep into our own hearts and see whether there lurks therein any form of selfishness, which hinders us from doing all we can to forward the progress of Christianity throughout the world.

Ont.

A. C. W.

BAND WORK.

It was decided in one Branch that the best way to keep the interest of the children in Band work is to interest the mothers—who are supposed to be Auxiliary members. Take the Auxiliary to the Band, and the Band to the Auxiliary until they feel like mother and daughter.

The most successful Band spoken of was one that continually used the blackboard—maps also are great helps—use both eye and ear avenue.

Suggested Programme for Mission Bands.—December.

1. Opening Hymn.
2. An appropriate verse of Scripture in concert, selected beforehand.
3. Short Prayer for Mission Band work, and your Band in particular.
4. One verse—"See heathen nations bending."
5. Roll Call—responded to by one line of a hymn.
6. Regular Business and Appointments.
7. Field Study—Questions and Answers.
8. Solo or Recitation by Band member.
9. A few words from Leader and the Mizpah Benediction.