

A Sunday with the Famine Orphans.

As many of the readers of the 'Northern Messenger' are interested in the girls and boys who have been saved from the famines in India they shall now have the pleasure of hearing how these children spend the Sunday in that far-away land, where so few of the people have even heard the name of Jesus.

A lady who was visiting in Dhar recently has written, telling us about a Sunday she spent there. She says, 'Early in the morning, before half-past seven, we were on our way to the preaching hall; on the road we passed the girls from the Victoria Orphanage in their blue skirts and bright red saris, those who could read carrying their New Testaments and hymn-books under their arms, all looking so bright and happy, and salaaming (bowing) profusely as the Miss Sahibas (lady missionaries) and the Padri Sahib (the Rev. F. Russell, the missionary) went by.

'Arrived at the hall, we found the Christian workers and the boys already there, and soon the girls came marching in, two by two, up to the front, where they squatted on the earthen floor in true native fashion. The singing was hearty, and joined in by all present. How they sang! The singing of those one hundred Bhil girls and twenty boys is one of the impressions of Dhar which will never fade from my mind, and the echo of those resounding voices will never die out of my ears. Their Padri Sahib loves music, and he has inspired them with something of his own enthusiasm, and they sing as though they loved it. As one listened, one felt that it was genuine praise from the heart. The sermon was a preparation for the Sunday-school lesson which was taught at the close of the church service. Then followed the Sunday-school. The order followed was that of the Canadian Sunday-schools, if we except the leading in prayer by one of the girls. These girls have no hesitation in praying publicly, though they have not been taught to pray in public meetings; they do so spontaneously. It was a great surprise to the missionaries the first time they heard one of the girls pray. The missionary asked for 'someone' to lead in prayer, and to his astonishment one of the girls responded. Since then it is quite a usual thing for one or another of them to thus take part in the public services.

'Sunday-school over, they returned to their home, the new Victoria Orphanage, which their own hands helped to build, for they did all the heavy work of carrying earth, bricks, water, etc.

'These Bhil lassies are taught to work, not only to do drawn threadwork and embroidery, but also to cook, grind, draw water, wash, bake, and when occasion requires, to do the rougher part of helping to put up buildings; they also learn to read and write and do simple arithmetic. After the missionaries' breakfast the girls and boys were invited to the house for more singing. They trooped into the drawing-room, which they soon filled to overflowing. The smaller ones wedged themselves in around the organ close to the Padri Sahib, whom they dearly love. For over an hour they sang; then Mr. Russell taught them to chant the Lord's Prayer, and it was remarkable how quickly

they picked up the tune, and how reverently beautiful it sounded as they softly sang it; when they had sung themselves and Mr. Russell hoarse, they went home, having been given a hymn to learn for their Sunday afternoon's work. At five o'clock we were all once more in the preaching hall, this time with a larger congregation, for many heathen occupied the back seats. The text was, 'Enter ye in at the strait gates; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.' It was a Gospel sermon. Christ's offer of pardon and life was proclaimed with no uncertain sound. Sunday after Sunday, as well as on Wednesdays, these heathens wander in from the city and the villages about, and listen to the Word faithfully and prayerfully preached. Just as the service ended a heavy shower came down, and lasted for over an hour. We stayed in the hall, and, of course, the organ was opened once more, and the hour was filled by more singing. How they did it I don't know. I think they must have been as hoarse as crows, but they kept on heartily and lustily just as long as the rain continued. A break in the downpour gave them a chance to get home, and they kilted up their skirts in Bhil fashion, and simply flew over the swampy, muddy roads, and not a moment too soon either, for before the laggards among the runners had reached the Orphanage, the rain came on again.

'Thus ended that Sunday in the Canadian mission circles in Dhar.'

The Victorian India Orphan Society commenced its work amongst these famine orphans six years ago, and the missionaries' faithful labors amongst the children have been most abundantly blessed. The majority of those now in the Orphanage are happy, consistent Christians; a number of the older girls have been married, five just recently, to Christian converts, and thus Christian homes are springing up to shed around them the light of the Gospel in that dense heathen darkness. Surely there must be many who would like to give a helping hand in this work of saving the little destitute outcasts of India for Christ; there are so many of them, and we should like to do so much more than we are now able. Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India, visited the Orphanage towards the close of last year, and was so much impressed by the work carried on there that he has since sent the Silver Medal of India to Dr. Margaret O'Hara, in recognition of the excellent work done among the famine sufferers, an honor rarely bestowed.

Contributions can be sent to the Secretary-Treasurer, Mrs. Crichton, 142 Langside street, Winnipeg, to whom all questions should be addressed. Membership fee of the Society, \$1.00 a year; entire maintenance and training of a child, \$17 a year.

Subscriptions from 'Northern Messenger' readers not previously reported:—Presbyterian S.S. Extension, British Columbia, \$15; Y.P.M.S., La Riviere, Man., \$9; Mrs. Hobman, \$1; Junior C.E. Society, Tara, Ont., \$17; Mrs. A. McKinnon and her son, \$5; Presbyterian S.S., Sidney, Man., \$8.50; Mrs. M. Henderson, \$1; A Friend, Orillia, \$1; Mrs. J. W. Symington, \$2; 'Prosperity' Y.P.S.C.E., \$2; Friend, Melita, Man., \$18; A. P., Cramahe, Ont.,

\$2; A Friend, St. Eugene, Ont., \$17; Mrs. J. Dewar, \$1; Gibson Mission Band, \$9; Mrs. Sparks, \$1; Mrs. H. Jicklings, \$1; Mrs. McElrea, \$1; Outremont Sunday-school, Montreal, \$20.

A Missionary's Escape.

Since the death of Captain Allen Gardiner and his companions in 1851, no more remarkable event has occurred in connection with the South American Missionary Society than the almost miraculous escape and preservation of Mr. W. Barbrooke Grubb from a sudden or lingering death, which occurred just at Christmas, in the far distant region of the Paraguayan Chaco, where seven missionaries of this Society are living amidst thousands of savage Indians, 'enduring hardness' as well as perils as 'good soldiers of Jesus Christ.'

An Indian, called Poet, very intelligent, and to whom special kindness had been shown, was suspected and accused of dishonesty. He denied the charge, and appealed for proof to his own tribe. Mr. Grubb set out for their 'toldo' with him. They had to walk many miles, and as they were passing through a wood Poet lingered a little behind and shot an arrow at Mr. Grubb, which wounded him in the back and severely injured a rib and part of the lung. Poet then fled with the stores and left Mr. Grubb to die. With great difficulty the latter was able to crawl slowly along to the bank of the river, where he was recognized by a passing Indian and carried to a toldo near at hand, where he was kindly cared for during the next three or four days, while a messenger was sent a hundred miles to the mission station to bring help. This arrived as speedily as possible, and not too soon, as Mr. Grubb would have sunk from weakness; but Mr. Graham, our medical missionary, and his helper brought their wounded chief home by easy stages on horseback, and found at every toldo good Indian Samaritans ready to help the Indians' friend. Mr. Grubb is recovering that health and strength which he has for seven years expended in the cause of Christ and his Gospel, not only without stint, but with the most exemplary self-abnegation and devotion.—'Christian.'

Postal Crusade.

For papers to India, acknowledged with thanks; \$5 from Mrs. McEwan; \$1.50 from A Lover of Missions; \$1 from A Tenth River, Cowansville; \$1 from Mrs. David Killam; \$1 from Mrs. J. N. Wisner; \$1 from Mrs. Utting.

A letter has just come with an order for the paper, 'Post-Office Crusade,' but the thirty cents has been abstracted. I cannot be responsible for anything but postal notes or post-office orders. It has been a surprise to me that money hitherto has come as safely as it has. Sometimes fifty cents in silver is sent in an envelope. During the year, from April to April, 1902-1903, \$157.00 has been sent in.

A friend of mine, a treasurer of a mission circle in Westmount, lately had \$15 lost, sent to her by registered letter. Another received a letter with a bank cheque for missions. The envelope had been slit across the top. My friends please be careful to send money as safely as possible.

M. E. COLE.

112 Irvine avenue, Westmount, Que.