

WORK AMONG THE INDIANS.

To the Editor *Presbyterian Review*.

DEAR SIR.—In sending you a part of a letter from our faithful and intrepid missionary to the Indians on Barclay Sound—Mr. M. Swartout—it is not with a view to the giving of information to your readers about the wreck of which it chiefly speaks, for that sad and thrilling tale, together with the rescue of two of the three boats with the remnants of their crews, after such suffering as seems impossible for men to have outlived, has been fully told with all the detail and accuracy that the splendid enterprise and equipment of the modern press make possible. But I send Mr. Swartout's letter that your readers may get a glimpse through an undesigned ray of narrated experience—not intended for the public eye—into some of the varied forms and conditions of missionary activity; and the quality of the material upon which he bestows unremitting and virile toil.

It demands a Titan's courage to endure with unmurmuring patience the hardships, and with unconscious heroism to brave the dangers of that ravening rocky coast and most treacherous sea—especially for one in a small boat alone and for days together. To some one who perchance has taken a short pleasure sail in company on some of our inland waters and narrates by the fireside some hair-breadth escape in passing cats-paw, the foregoing sentence may seem exaggerated language. But methinks if the boldest among those fireside-sailors who think such courage and endurance not worth speaking about, were only *once* to be out alone on an angry sea on this coast, drenched by the blinding spray and the pelting rain; chilled and benumbed by the piercing wind, and sometimes belated and far from any Cove into which they could run for safety, and at best the brightest hope possible to reach an Indian rancherie where he might pass the night in its single room with twenty or thirty Indians—under such conditions beating in the teeth of a biting "south-easter" methinks his courage would be as rigid as his fingers stiffened with the unrelaxed grasp of sheet-ropes and tiller for hours together; and his vow would be made after the most irrevocable form, never again to venture on this terrible deep where the great whales sport, the hurricane drives, and the hoisterous billows roll.

I think, so far as I can remember, this is the first time I have publicly spoken about hardships endured, or dangers braved by missionaries. This incident I lift into view for two reasons, viz:—(1) In the hope that not a few who are called by the holy name of Christ, and contrary to the spirit and command of Him who redeemed them with His own blood, are adding dollar to dollar, house to house, comfort to comfort, luxury to luxury with never a thought, or a hint of sacrifice of comfort or money, or time or strength or sympathy, for those who are being lost—that these may see what others are doing and may pause and ponder and remember that it is written "Deliver them that are carried away unto death, and those that are tottering to the slaughter, forbear thou not to deliver. If thou sayest, Behold, we know not this: Doth not He that weigheth the hearts consider it? And He that keepeth *thy soul*, doth not He know it? And shall not He render to every man according to his work?" (11.) That the physical endurance and perils are as nothing to the missionary; but the battling against the powers of darkness in ceaseless and strenuous struggle; the incessant fight with the sins of the poor bedarkened carnal Indians, or with the vices with which more depraved whites seek to ensnare their pitiful prey; the soul travail for those in whom the good work seems begun, and the loneliness of realizing oneself at one of the extremities of the Church-body where the heart pulses beat feebly—these constitute the struggle, a greater than battling with the elements, which merits the overflow of the Church's warm sympathy and demands her prayers and sufficient help on behalf of her missionary servants. Not all missionaries are enduring severe physical strain, or are in jeopardy of limb or life, but every true missionary is engaged in a spiritual contest, the fearful brunt of which only those know who have thrown themselves, under the constraining love of Christ, against the bossed bucklers of heathendom. And can it be that the Church which lacks not gold and is faring sumptuously every day, will compel her noble servants to relinquish the

ground so hardily won, and to look on in painful helplessness while formerly exercised spirits return unhindered in seven-fold force to re-establish their hellish carnival of vice and destruction more firmly than before? And all this because a large number of church members are inexcusably blind to their responsibility to the perishing, or are appallingly disobedient to their Lord's plain and inescapable command. Is it not a time for humiliation, prayer and self-examination on the part of ministers of our beloved Church when for the work, the doing of which in loving obedience is the chief reason for her existence, one cent a week per communicant is given?—exclusive of mission stations, which if reckoned would reduce the average. And if the amount contributed by the W.F.M.S. be deducted, it would make the *average communicants weekly sacrifice less than half a cent*. But this takes no account of a considerable number of believing adherents many of whom contribute. God grant that the faithful ones may so pray and toil and sacrifice as to lead the multitudes who have hitherto in no manner "Come to the help of the Lord against the mighty" to assist and redeem the time and improve the unique opportunities of this hour, ere it be too late. "Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste? Now, therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways."—Haggai.

Mr. Editor, I had no intention of writing at this length, and pressure of time forbids either revision or condensation. Use just as much of it as you think may do any good.

Yours in Christ Jesus,
Victoria, B.C., Dec. 30th, 1897. A. B. WINCHESTER.

Ucluelet, B.C., Dec. 16th 1897.

DEAR BRO. WINCHESTER:—We have had a wonderful period of storms—not that the wind was stronger than "ever was known" etc., but there has been such a constant succession of gales for a long period as I have not before seen.

I left home on Nov. 30th for a tour of the Sound, alone, in my snug little boat. On Monday Dec. 6th I was ready to return—being then at Ecoal 25 miles from Ucluelet. For four days it blew and rained so much that I thought.

He who stays and doesn't go
Will live to see another blow!

Knowing as I did, from the movements of the clouds that a storm was raging outside, yet I hoped (on the 5th day) I might get home, so I started across the centre passage—of the Sound, dragging a small canoe behind my boat. At Bird Rocks—as you know about half way over, the gale that had been blowing outside all night and morning reached me. In a few minutes I was in the midst of a raging sea and was tearing through the water with my boat on her side and the little canoe full of water behind me. With one hand on the tiller and one on the sheet I kept a sharp look out for the waves, turning to meet the worst as they came, and slacking the sail sheet when the boat seemed ready to go over. She worked beautifully and rode the waves like a duck, jumping out of the sea sometimes, and taking a slide down the opposite side of the big waves in the best form—not taking a drop of water except the spray that leaped over us.

But the little canoe did not fare so well. I had to let her go—I have not seen her since. I kept full sail on, the wind being on my beam, until I thought, again, safety called for a change and I pulled down the jib. But I kept the main sail up through it all. I ran into *Tash-win* (the middle of the way, so the Indians call it) a place I think you will remember the location of, a harbor I have before proved in a gale and here all was quiet. I stayed for a while with my Indian friends, but now being among the islands, and the wind again shifting in direction, but not in force, I set out for a harbor nearer home. I reached the big iron mine known as Anderson's Camp, and ran in there for the night.

Next day there was a succession of Westerly gales, into which I could not go, so I waited. About 11 p.m., Saturday an Indian came and said a big steamer was on the rocks two or three miles beyond. We were just retiring, so I told the man to tell the Indians not to take anything, and if they had done so to guard it carefully and I would go over at daylight. This I thought was all that was necessary as the Indian said a white man was in possession and claimed the vessel. About 4 a.m. this white man and another came in to the camp in a state of excite-