



EVEN OUR FAITH."

Monthly Letter.

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Subjects for Prayer and Study for the Month:

"Our Homes and Schools."

The Indian Work.

From Miss Long, Kit-a-maat, B.C., February 11th, 1901.

THE first quarter of another year has passed, and we are hoping to have a chance to send mail out soon, so I thought I would write of the progress and plans for the work here.

We were glad to settle down to our regular routine of work after the holidays. The village school closed for two weeks at Christmas, so we had the girls home all the time, but did not find them troublesome, as it was easy to keep them employed, some at housework, others sewing and knitting, and some helping Mr. Raley in the mission room to print *Nanakwa*. With a little play-time between, they spent their holidays pleasantly, but were quite ready to go back to school again.

Some of the people were disappointed because we did not take in the boys this year when they went away to their camps, but we feel we can accomplish so much more for the girls by having them alone; it is still a trial to us that they have to be together in school. At present nearly all the people have gone to their camps and taken the boys with them. It is such a relief to us that it makes us wish for the time when we can keep them entirely separate.

We began the year with nineteen girls, this is all in the village who are of school age but three, and they are rather delicate, so I have not urged them to come this year. Later we had three from Hartley Bay, so our family numbers twenty-two. We are expecting some from Kitlope as soon as they return from the camps; we are hoping from these two places to have the Home filled in the near future.

We have started and are trying to get all the parents to sign an agreement that they will let their girls remain in the Home until they are eighteen, up to the present only five have signed.

One girl from Hartley Bay, who came at the beginning of the year, has been and still is a great anxiety to us. She is not a bad girl, but thoroughly wild, and it is hard to make her obey. Her father was here a week ago and was so pleased with the improvement in her that he signed the paper willingly. I fear it will be hard to get the parents of the older girls to sign, as most of them are promised in marriage already, but we will do our utmost to keep them as long as we can.

You will have noticed in *Nanakwa* that the Home will not close this year on the 15th of June. The girls are all willing to stay, but I am afraid I shall have difficulty with the parents, as all the older girls earn money at the cannery. I do not think there would be much trouble if we could supply them with boots. They buy them dresses, handkerchiefs and shawls, but boots seem hard to get; half the time they do not wear them when they are at home; it is nothing unusual to see the women going about barefoot in the snow in the middle of winter.

When talking about not having holidays, Flora described the Indian character to perfection when she said: "In the morning when we see the people go away to the cannery we shall feel very sorry, in the afternoon we shall feel a little better, by the next morning we shall have forgotten all about it, and be as happy as ever." To one girl who wanted to go, Flora said, "I should not think you would want to go there among all the evil."

The school will be closed during July and August, but I shall try and arrange the work so as to teach the girls half a day myself. I am enclosing a note I received from the Council with regard to the girls learning music. I answered it by saying I would send it on to you. It is rather a difficult problem to solve, as I am afraid there would be jealousy, and it would be impossible to teach even all the big girls. It would be a great help if one or two of the girls could play the organ. I have taken particular pains in teaching them to sing; they are very musical and never happier than when they are singing. I feel it is more benefit to them than playing, but am willing to do anything in my power for their advancement. I talked to the girls about it and had no difficulty in making them understand that other things were much more important than music and that they could grow up to be good and useful women without learning to play.

When I answered the Council's note I took the opportunity of again asking them how much wood they could supply this year; about a week after the men cut wood for two days, getting us seven cords.

Mr. Raley is drawing a plan for the woodshed with a store-room above for native food, which is badly needed.

I sometimes wonder how I got along at all before Miss Jackson came; it is indeed a comfort to have her to talk and plan with as well as to assist; you could not have sent anybody who would have fitted better into every corner. Another thing I find a great help, that is to be able to have one afternoon in the week to rest, and every other night off duty, which gives my nerves a chance to relax.

Since Miss Jackson came we have started a little meeting with the girls every Saturday night, we all enjoy them, and it is an opportunity to give them some very plain talks. I am thankful to be able to tell you the girls have all had good health this year (with the exception of Flora), not one has been in bed for a day. I am also encouraged with the efforts they are making to do right and to improve, though sometimes grieved by their disobedience, but I feel through all that no work done "In His Name can be in vain."

From Miss Jackson, Kit-a-maat, B.C., February 11th.

Miss Long has written of the weightier matters pertaining to the work of the Home; I thought I would have a chat about our family, the sewing-room, which is my particular work, and other little matters which may be of interest.

You are acquainted with some of the older girls who have been here for some time, Flora in particular, who has been in the Home the longest. She is giving us a great deal of anxiety regarding her health; ever since the winter set in she has had such a cough, it is most distressing to hear her. We have done what we could for her, but it still lingers, we fear if she has even a slight hemorrhage (to which they are all subject) she will not live long. She is bright and cheerful, and has not kept her bed a day on account of it. It is sad, as she is engaged to the native teacher at Kitlope, an earnest Christian man. As Flora is striving to live a Christian life they would be such a help to each other and to their people. Flora is good in English, and could help him to interpret the Bible, with which she is familiar, but if her health does not improve her marriage can hardly be sanctioned.

I was rather amused at the short courtship before their engagement. Early one Monday Robert came up to the Home and asked to see Flora. Miss Long showed him into the sitting-room and called Flora (who was deep in the wash tub). She came in and stood by the door at one side of the room, and he sat in the rocking chair on the other side, while Miss Long was present to do the proprieties. They talked in Kit-a-maat about ten minutes, when Flora bounded from the room as though she was glad to escape from such an ordeal. Then Robert had to get Miss Long's consent, which was only granted on the condition that he wait one year to see if Flora's health improved. He was willing to wait, so the engagement was consummated. It is the law here that an engaged couple shall not talk with each other until they are married, and I believe so far Flora and Robert have kept the law.

We have three little ones from six to seven years old, they are such interesting children, and are real good, giving us very little trouble, only to keep them quiet after they go to bed. It is surprising how quickly they have picked up English; already they understand almost everything we say to them, and will repeat messages nicely. I wish we could always have the girls come to the Home as young as these little ones, they do not know so much of the evil of their surroundings and learn much quicker. I have them in the sewing-room about two hours a day, and they