

MISSION BAND WORK.

I am not a Band Leader, and therefore have no practical knowledge of the work, but have some reason to be interested in it.

I see the danger, of which E. E. C. wrote to you last month, that the children will only get a confused idea of all the mission fields and missionaries if they are constantly skipping about from place to place. Yet I can see, too, the disadvantage of staying long in any one country. It seems to be the old question whether, in this short life, it is better to learn a great deal of one thing or a little of the many?

The facts in the mission fields, and, indeed, the missionaries themselves, are subject to change, so that one can never be quite sure of one's ground. If they dwell long on one country they may keep abreast of the times there, but will certainly lose the freshest points in all the rest, so that it will be an old story when they get it.

One thing I will advocate, and that is a uniformity of method and lesson for all mission bands, whatever it may be, so that the study which helps one shall help all.

N. B.

X. Y.

Suggested Programme for Mission Bands—March.

- i.—Opening Hymn.
- ii.—Announce subject for Study and Prayer—French Canadian Missions and Papal Countries.
- iii.—Read together Luke 1st, 46-47, and St. John 2nd and 5, and show briefly that Mary, herself, was subject unto Him.
- iv.—Short, earnest prayer for those who have not the light of God's word to guide them.
- v.—Roll call (if thought best).
- vi.—Regular business (written reports).
- vii.—Questions on French-Canadian Missions.*
- viii.—Hymn, solo or chorus.
- ix.—Short, bright talk by Leader on F. Canadian customs, manners and religions.**
- x.—One verse of "Work for the Night is Coming" (standing).
- xi.—Questions on Papal Countries.***
- xii.—Lord's Prayer (together), Doxology or Benediction.

*Field Study in this number.

**Our work—No. VI.—Room 20 or Depots.—3 cts. (postpaid).

***Field Study, in this number.

THE CORAL WORKERS.

(Recitation.)

Where amid Pacific's billows
Now the Coral Isles appear,
Once, they tell us, there was nothing
But a waste of waters drear.

And the floating nuts and acorns,
Seeking for a spot to rest,
Sought in vain, but ever onward
Floated on the ocean's breast.

So the Master Builder pondered—
"If some islands I could rear,
Rising high above the waters,
Trees and fruit might flourish here."

Who should undertake the labour?
For no small task it would be
Thus to build from ocean's bottom
High above the restless sea!

Well He knew that skill was needed,
Yet He chose the corals small
From the millions of His creatures;
Much they wondered at the call.

"We!" they cried. "Why we could
never
Even one small island make.
Can't you ask the whales to do it?"
But the Master Builder spake:

"To the whales their work I've given—
Work which no one else could do.
To the other creatures likewise;
And thus work I give to you."

"But we don't know how to shape
them;

We can never do them well."
Quoth the Master: "All I ask you
Is that each build one small cell."

So they wrought with care and
patience,
Till at last—oh! blissful sight—
High above the foaming waters
Gleamed their island in the light!

So they fashioned many islands,
Fashioned each with nicest care;
Placed around the ragged edges
Fringe of tinted coral rare.

Then with joy the little workers
Watched the waves, whose ceaseless
flow
Brought the soil from other countries,
Brought the nuts and seeds to grow.

Now these islands, green and verdant,
Give to man and beast a home;
While upon their wave-washed beaches
Happy children love to roam!

All the work of tiny insects,
Building slowly cell on cell;
Doing each what he was able,
Doing each his small task well.

Do you grasp the thought, dear chil-
dren,

That this little tale would teach?
How the Master in His vineyard
Has some little work for each.

All the world must hear the story
Of the Saviour's wondrous love;
Nations sitting now in darkness
See the Light dawn from above.

And in this great work the smallest
Has some part which he can do;
With his tiny hands may scatter
Seed which evermore shall grow;

And the fruit thereof we know not
Till that happy day shall come,
With its mystic, grand revealings;
Happy, happy, "Harvest Home."

—E. V., (St. Stephen).