

Mission Bands.

A Mission Band, as many of our readers know, is a Foreign Missionary Circle composed of children.

Children, like their elders, are happier for having something to do. It is a rare thing to find them doing nothing; their minds and hands are all the time full of some kind of work, which they call play. One of the first duties of parents, elder sisters and brothers, then, is to guide the activities of the young. Children like to feel they are of use, and will work very zealously to prove their usefulness. This natural tendency is healthful and judicious. Parents and friends will do well to guide and cultivate instead of repress it. Their sympathies, too, are quick and active, and they are easily induced to work to alleviate the miseries of the needy and suffering. They may not always work from the best of motives, they may be, like some of their elders sometimes, a little too fond of looking for praise and honor; but this motive in itself is not a bad one, and if they are working in the right direction is that not one step nearer the Throne?

Parents are, as a rule, too lax in regard to the amusement of their children. If their girls or boys are not troubling them by making too much noise, by going too far away from home, by reading forbidden books, they are left pretty much to their own devices for amusement.

Now, a Mission Band, such an one as they have in Port Hope, is an excellent way of amusing and educating children; it teaches them to think of and help others. The following is an extract from a letter from Mrs. Craig, of Port Hope:

"Last winter our Mission Band was started. The meetings are held once a month, on Saturday afternoon. They are very interesting, and carried on with apparently little trouble. Miss Jackson is president; the other officials are quite young people. Mrs. McDiarmid, our minister's wife, attends to the programme and gives a short lesson on the geography and customs of India. With the exception of this, the time is altogether taken up with readings, recitations and singing by the children. They like to attend the meetings; they seem to think they are their own, and enter into the exercises with the enthusiasm of youth. One Saturday it rained so hard Miss Jackson and Mrs. McDiarmid did not go; they thought, of course, not any of the children would be out on such a day. There were *thirty* there, and a delegation of six little girls waited upon Mrs. McDiarmid, for her to attend. They contribute what they like; they generally give five cents. There is a treasurer for the girls and one for the boys. What each one gives is marked down. The collection nearly always amounts to over \$2.00.

"Now, might not the hearts of some young friends be stirred to start Mission Bands in places where they do not already exist? In towns and villages where there is no Mission Circle there may be two or three young people so fired with a love to Christ that they are longing to use their talents for Him, who could gather the children together, have interesting meetings for them, and at the same time instruct them about the dark places of the earth and their need of the Gospel."

How Much do you Owe?

Write it, then, on every bond you accumulate, on every profit you acquire,—“That I may have to give to him that needeth.” Write it on your daily earnings and on your weekly pay,—“That I may have to give to him that

needeth.” Write it on your investments and on your income, the great amount or the little amount,—“That I may have to give to him that needeth.” Write it on your safes and on your ledgers, on your workman's tools, on your seamstress's spools and needle-case,—“That I may have to give to him that needeth.” Here is the end of toil and labor. Make self the end, and you will kill yourself spiritually, as certainly as one would kill himself by closing the pores of the skin to prevent evaporation.

And then sacredly pledge yourself in a solemn bargain to God what you will do, if he shall enable you. I do not approve of pledges generally; but here is one where you will have every pressure and every reminder brought to bear on you to keep it. Human nature cannot be trusted to carry out its generous impulses. If I should succeed in winding any one up to the determination to do generous things, you would run down again before next Sunday, unless your resolution is fastened by a ratchet. That is what a solemn promise to pay, made to God, amounts to,—a ratchet to hold one up to the pitch which we have brought him to at the beginning of the year. Talk as much as we please about leaving every one to give according to his religious impulses, experience has proved how little men will give on that plan. Human nature is given to cheating the Lord. If it were not so he would never have asked that startling question, “What, will a man rob God?” and then answered with the charge, “But ye have robbed me in tithes and offerings.”

I believe in dealing with the Lord on systematic principles. What if you should say to your grocer or your market-man, “Please don't put me down on your books. I do not like to pledge myself to pay my bills; I like to do it voluntarily.” He would probably advise you to trade somewhere else, then. But I believe you are just as much bound to pay your debts to God as to man. And the church that keeps His treasury has a right, as a faithful steward, to ask your name on her account-books; then, if in the absence of the steward, or by detention from church, you fail to make your offering, she may send the Lord's bill to you for payment. And now, how much do you owe? REV. A. J. GORDON, D.D.

Christ's Legacy to Us.

A paper with the above heading was read by a young lady at a Girl's Missionary Meeting, when she knew that indifference was felt towards the cause because the meetings were not supposed to be sufficiently “interesting.” The thought deserves consideration by our sisters every where.

When a dear friend leaves this world and sends us a parting message, is it not treasured most affectionately, and any directions contained in it most carefully complied with? Indeed it is. And if we feel thus bound by a last message of an earthly friend, how must we be affected by the farewell words of Christ, our dear Master: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.” This is our legacy—definite work to do for His sake. Girls, have you not often said, “Oh, if I could only do something for Christ? My opportunities are small, but I would love to work if I only knew what to do?” Here is just the work you can do. “Foreign mission work at home?” Yes; our part of the work is *the duty of upholding* those who are sent abroad over the world. Our part may not be as close to the letter of the command as that of directly working with the unchristianized nations, but is it not truly after its spirit? Yes girls, this is a duty, and we should feel it moreover a pleasure to be thus allowed to aid in carrying on the cause.