

## A BAND VACATION.

“WELL girls, we won't have any meeting next month, as so many will be out of the city; but I don't want you to take a vacation in missionary work.”

The speaker was the leader of the C. street Mission Band.

The group of girls gathered round her looked puzzled, but each eager to find out, “what Miss Lane meant now.”

“Why, how can we help it? There won't be two of us together except Eve and Amy!”

“Isn't it possible for you to do anything except as a band? I thought you each had a separate existence. Let me help you a little,” as they looked doubtful, “What is the first object of our Band?”

“The object of Mission Bands shall be primarily to develop a missionary spirit,” the girls answered in a chorus.

“I'm going to take my mite box with me,” said Etta Ray, a shy, timid girl, younger than the others.

“Yes, Etta, a mite box will speak for its owner. Its a help in introducing the subject of missions to people who are not interested. When you have explained the meaning of the little blue box you've given quite a missionary talk. I always take mine with me.”

“I could take some leaflets, but I'm afraid people wouldn't read them.”

“Don't be afraid, Mazie. Ask the Lord to bless them. Such seed-sowing is never in vain.”

“We are going to a large boarding house in the country. There is nothing to read on Sunday except what we take ourselves. I have my PALM BRANCHES sewn together. I'll take those with me.”

“I'm going to visit my cousin in L—. Their Mission Band is given up!”

“Then you have the best chance of any of us, Nell. Just put that band in running order again,” said Mazie.

“Oh, you have no idea how discouraged they are.”

By this time nearly every girl in the room had a suggestion.

“Help the Epworth League get up a missionary meeting,” “Teach a class in Sunday school.” I've often been asked to, but their Sunday school is so funny, I didn't want to.” “I could help with the singing,” are a few of the many offered.

“One at a time,” said Miss Lane, “It does me good to set you thinking. It takes more courage to work alone. Let it lead us to depend more on Christ. I will expect a report from every one.”

“Edith you didn't say a word,” said Nell to her friend, Edith Davis, as they walked home. “I wish I had a chance to do something. I think it's a lovely thought. I'm going up to grandma's, and there aren't any young people there. It's too far to go to Sunday school and church both.”

Edith enjoyed the days at the old farm house on the river, the free outdoor life, the wonderful sunsets, when every tint in the sky was reflected in the river, also the unlimited petting from grandma, uncle Ben and aunt Harriet, who appreciated the fact that this

dainty niece preferred to come to the old place, year after year, instead of going with young friends. One rainy day uncle Ben came from the mail with two letters for Edith, the home letter and a letter from Nell, telling how they turned a party, her cousin was giving for her, into a Mission Band reunion. Edith shared both letters with aunt Hattie, explaining about the girls' plans.

“What's the use of Mission Bands any way?” said her aunt. “What good do they do? Instead of sending off money to try and convert people on the other side of the world, you might better be looking after the ignorant, neglected folk in the city. I'm sure I see heathen enough to judge by their looks. Our minister's wife wanted to start one here. I told her when the people around here were the sort of Christians they ought to be, I'd think about it.”

“Oh, auntie, I think you are mistaken. I'm sure the Band has helped me. In fact I wouldn't be any 'sort of a Christian' without it.”

“Why, child, you came out last winter when the Evangelists were there. What did the Band have to do with them?”

“It prepared the way for them with most of the girls, but it was the Japanese girls that led me to decide. I used to pride myself on being better than some of the girls who were members of the church. I never missed Sunday school, nearly always went to League and Band, but meant to dance, though, as much as mother would let me, and go to the Opera by-and-bye, and some other things that I couldn't see any harm in, and yet knew if I were a Christian I must give up. I used to go to the meetings sometimes with my mind settled to wait a long time. We had studied Japan from different sides, just as we would a subject in school, and that month we took up the life of a Christian girl in Japan. Miss Lane tells things in such a vivid way you can fairly see what she is talking about. We followed them in their school life, going out and gathering dirty children into Sunday school, working in their spare time to earn money to clothe the little orphans. These girls, many of them with heathen fathers and mothers who would hardly agree to their being baptized, some of whom when they went home were not allowed to read their Bibles, still are faithful. All at once it flashed on me what a contrast I was in every way. They were working for love of Christ and I was doing everything to please myself. My father and mother had prayed for me and taught me ever since I was born. Two of these girls had taught their mothers how to pray. I had so much, they had so little. I felt so mean I hated myself. I began to pray though. I've never told anyone all about it before, aunt Hattie, but I date my conversion from that Band meeting.”

When the C— street Band met again the reports of holiday work were full of interest. Etta Kay's mite-box had come home much heavier. Mazie's leaflets had supplied reading aloud for a rainy Sunday. The L— Band had gained courage to try again.

“Edith, haven't you anything to tell?” asked Miss Lane.

“I hadn't much chance. I was with older people,