



Devoted to the interests of the Mission Circles and Bands of the Woman's Missionary Society, Methodist Church, Canada.

VOL. VIII.

ST. JOHN, N. B., AUGUST SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Nos. 8 and 9.

COULD NOT SING.

"**T**HANKS, I do not sing," and the politely offered hymn-book was declined.

Ella Talbott was but a young girl, absorbed in her school work, scarcely bestowing a thought upon the use she was to make of her talents and acquirements. Some years afterwards she found herself a missionary across the waters needing all the ability of a well-trained mind, but constantly called upon for knowledge of simple, practical affairs she used to consider trivial. And of all things, she was expected to sing! Not merely to play the tiny organ in the chapel, but to sing a hymn, solo fashion. The preacher who asked this of her saw refusal in her eye.

"Although the door stands open, and we wait here ready to teach, you see the people are passing. If you should begin to sing, I believe they would come flocking in; then we might have a chance to offer them the message of salvation." Ella turned over the leaves of her hymn-book, printed in a foreign tongue,

She saw "Jesus, I my cross have taken," and at once she took up this new cross bravely.

"No wonder the people came trooping in," she said afterwards, "for you know I have no voice at all; but they,



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poor things, though nature may have given them voices, could sing no better than I -- indeed, many had never heard a song. Such a hubbub as they raised! And when I stopped, they would have crowded out, but Mr. Harris promised that when he was through speaking I would sing again. He told of Jesus, our Friend, and I sang, 'What a friend we have in Jesus! They were perfectly quiet, and must have understood the simple words. Since then I have never refused to do what I was once sure I could not do.'

How many gifts are there among our readers? Did you ever ask one to consecrate her talents to the Lord's service? Why are you taking lessons in music year after year? If some one should ask you to

choose a song or start the tune at the next mission ary meeting, would you refuse?

—Selected.