

Youths' Department.

A FAIR IN INDIA.

MOST of the boys and girls who read this paper will have been at a fair this month.

September is noted for the best things grown during the summer being exhibited by the owners. If you were with our missionaries in India you might attend a fair every year, but rather different from the ones held in Canada.

These are used both for religious and trading purposes. For some weeks before the fair in India, messengers are sent out through the country to urge the poor people to go. Advertising some temple or holy place they must be sure not to pass without a gift to the gods living there. So this fair or *mela* as they call it, is talked about in every home or field. Groups of men and boys smoke the news over their pipes. The priests urge the claims of the shrine they are most interested in. Shop-keepers pack up their goods to sell at the fair, hoping to gain a great many rupees, annas, and pice, (for these are the names of money in India.) Policemen have to be there just as they do in Canada to see that people are protected. Our missionaries go with their tents hoping for a chance to sell or give away their Bibles and tracts or to talk with the crowds of natives about Jesus. All along the roads near the fair people are selling food, grass or grain, others have idols of every kind or price, while others are ready to change money as we do in our banks. Other peddlars walk up and down the narrow streets calling out the goods they have to sell in a loud voice.

Beggars are everywhere, from the poor, lame, blind, cripples, or real sufferers, to the holy men who cry "Give! Give! Give!" and make their living out of the poor people who have been taught to worship these impostors.

You might see people cooking their rice wherever they can find an empty place, or sitting on the ground eating or drink from brass dishes or bowls. Crowds of snake-charmers and jugglers abound, ready to do wonderful things for the sake of a few small coins. Drums are being beaten, tomtoms, bugles, horns, cymbals and many musical instruments, we do not know the names of, are adding to the general din until one feels unable to think quietly. Dancing girls

dressed in bright colors, with faces painted and hair oiled, laden with jewels of every description, are ready to dance if people are willing to pay for such a performance.

Then after two or three days people pack up and go home ready to tell their friends and neighbors all the wonderful things they have seen and heard at the fair. The missionaries go back to their compounds sad at the sights and sounds of heathen rites and feasts, but glad the Lord has sent them to that far off land to tell of Jesus and His love. Now, boys and girls, for a piece of good news: The Mission Band of Ottawa, so dear to me for many years, has had its prayers answered. One of its old officers, who, years ago gave the Band its name of "Light-Holder", and who has done faithful work at home, sails next month for India to spend his life as a missionary of the Lord Jesus Christ. We ask you all to pray for this member of McPhail Memorial Mission Band that the Lord may richly bless D. A. McGregor and make him a great blessing in India.

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A BOHEMIAN THANKSGIVING

IT was the last Saturday before Thanksgiving. Sewing school, in the Bohemian settlement, was over for the morning, and the children came rushing out of the little mission and scattered in merry groups.

Mary Reha, a brown-eyed, bare-headed little girl of six, went skipping along in advance of the others, singing earnestly the song they had just been learning—

"Give, said the little stream,
Give, O, give! Give, O, give!
Give, said the little stream,
As it hurried down the hill."

When she had sung thus far she became more thoughtful, and bringing her foot down with a little stamp she sang:

"I, I am going to give,
Going to give, going to give,
I, I am going to give,
To give every bit I can."