

Mission Band Exercise on Africa.

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS.—The LINK for May contained much of interest about our Mission Bands, east and west. Our secretary tells of special work to be done, and three Bands report what their members are doing. This is what we want, to see results from the pleasant monthly meetings which we all enjoy so much.

I have just been reading a long Mission Band exercise on Africa. Our corner would not hold half of the questions and answers, but perhaps I can copy the facts for you in my own words. Africa is a large country, containing 12,256,000 square miles. For a long time it was called the Dark Continent, for three reasons: because the people living there were black; because so little was known about it or them; also because of the ignorance and cruelty of its people. Summer never leaves Africa. The trees wear their green dresses all the year, and beautiful flowers are in bloom all the time. Wise men think the people number about 110,000,000. Africa is two and a half times larger than North and South America together. Most of the people are heathen, and believe that all sickness, accidents and death are caused by witches, who are men or women with evil spirits. Witch doctors accuse these persons, and they are often tortured to make them confess themselves witches, then burned to death because of this confession. Sometimes the accused person is covered over with grease and carried to an ant-hill to be tormented by these stinging insects. These heathen also believe in an idol called Suku, thinking he made heaven and earth and all they contain. If people do not lie, steal or murder, or do any very great sins when they die Suku receives them where he is, but the wicked are shut out and wander in darkness. Others believe that the souls of the dead are all driven into the sea to sleep forever. In sailing over a river, presents of tobacco and gunpowder are thrown into the water so the boat will meet with no accident. The huts of the natives look like haystacks covered with grass, with a hole on one side large enough for a man to crawl in on his hands and knees. The men use a block of wood for a pillow, but the women and children just sleep on the earth. A kraal is a village built of such huts. A man is supposed to have as many huts as he has wives. Rain-makers often go around professing to make rain, which is much needed in that hot, thirsty land. The rain-maker stands on the top of a hill where he kindles fires and prepares strong medicine for the clouds; this he makes from the heart of a lion or the ear of a baboon. He stretches out his hands to the clouds and commands them to come near, shaking his spear at them if they disobey. Sometimes these rain-makers accuse the missionaries of keeping back the rain, saying the white faces and many prayers frighten away the clouds. Dr. Livingstone was a great missionary explorer in Africa. Cannot you take his life for a subject to study before your next Band meeting, and learn all you can about the work he did for this dark country?

One promise in God's word should encourage us about the people of Africa: "Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God." Let us pray for its speedy fulfilment.

SISTER BELLE.

480 Lewis St., Ottawa.

WHEN a man pulls out his penny and gives that when he is laying by dollars, I can only consider that he forms a pretty accurate measurement of the value of religion to him.

"Let me Ring the Bell."

A missionary far away,
Beyond the southern sea,
Was sitting in his home one day,
His Bible on his knee;
When suddenly he heard a rap
Upon the chamber door,
And opening it, there stood a boy
Of some ten years or more,
He was a bright and happy child,
With cheeks of ruddy hue,
And eyes that 'neath their lashes smiled
And glittered like the dew.

"Dear Sir," he said, in native tongue,
"I do so want to know
If something for the house of God
You'd kindly let me do."

"What can you do, my little boy?"
The missionary said;
And as he spoke, he laid his hand
Upon the youthful head:
When bashfully, as if afraid
His secret wish to tell,
The boy in eager accents said,
"Oh let me ring the bell!"

"Oh, please to let me ring the bell
For our dear house of prayer!
I'm sure I'll ring it loud and well,
And I'll be always there."

And gladly did he grant the boon—
The boy had pleaded well;
And to the eager child he said,
"Yes, you shall ring the bell."
He rang the bell; he went to school,
The Bible learned to read,
And in his youthful heart was sown
The gospel's precious seed.
And now to other heathen lands
He's gone, of Christ to tell;
And yet his first young mission was
To ring the Sabbath bell.

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Will the treasurer of Walkerton Circle kindly send her name to the General Treasurer?

JESSIE L. ELLIOTT, Treas.,

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