

was with considerable apprehension that I heard of my appointment to the vice-presidency of a Boys' Band. I had enjoyed work for some time with the girls and the change was not a welcome one. Now after five years' work in our band let me say to the credit of a few of those dreadful boys, that the step taken in fear and trembling has never been regretted, *never*, nay, I glory in it, and am thankful to my Master for the privilege of working among those bright, energetic young souls, and there is nothing I am prouder, gladder of to-day, than the fact that I am President of a Boys' Mission Band. You will pardon this personal reference for the sake of the many who ask how I manage "those boys," and to whom I would give all the encouragement I can to persevere: keep on! for in due time ye shall *surely* reap.

Our band at Bloo-st started some eight years ago with boys and girls together, Saturday afternoons, and one of the first things we found was that we must separate boys from girls. We found we could have two bands each as large as the united, more easily managed and readier for work. We started meeting fortnightly, but at the children's request changed to weekly, which plan we have followed for years with the greatest success. Nothing would induce us to meet less often. Of course it is harder for the leaders but it pays, the children take more interest and come more regularly. Perhaps one of the most important lessons our leaders have learnt is, that the more work the children do the better will be the band. Of the four meetings held during the month, one belongs entirely to the boys. This is named "boys' night," and is in their estimation the *best*. During the week the boys come to my home for practising music, recitations, readings and dialogues, all strictly missionary. The treasurer's and secretary's reports have been seen to and we are ready for an enjoyable evening. We open, of course, with spiritual exercises, and in *all* these the children must take part. Sometimes after a hearty sung hymn we each repeat a verse, or together a familiar psalm, concluding with the Lord's prayer in concert. If you are sitting beside me I am sure you will notice two boys who sit very straight and important, looking as if something were weighing heavily on their youthful minds. Allow me to introduce you to my treasurer and secretary, who have reports to read presently. These reports I am proud of. The secretary's contains a synopsis of the month's work. Notes what subject was taken up each night, which was the most orderly and best attended meeting, and regretfully alludes to any boy who has been sent out for misdeemeanor during the month.

The treasurer's report gives the sum total collection for the month, that for each night and the average, and then compares with it the corresponding month's collection for the preceding year, that we may see in how far we have progressed, for of course we must do better each year.

And now we are ready for our programme. The leader will have made it out carefully and interestingly.

As a rule we have a kindly attentive and appreciative audience, and the applause is ever hearty for any effort however feeble. The little men especially are loudly applauded, and often encored. Some may question the wisdom of such a proceeding, querying if it be wise to sacrifice an evening of instruction to one of pleasure and questionable good. But we maintain that apart from pleasing we *instruct* the children. I have found again and again that a touching reading or recitation has done more to impress a simple truth on some little

heart, than a whole evening's discourse on my part. For instance on one particular "boys' night" there was to be a recitation on "Giving," by a small lad. He had practised it studiously and he said it well. A few minutes before opening he came to me looking so troubled that I said "Why, what's the matter, little man, you are not afraid of your piece are you? I am sure you will say it nicely." "It's not that, Miss Stark," was the doleful reply, "I forgot and spent my five cents in candy and how can I get up and tell the other fellows they shouldn't spend pennies on candy and bats and balls?" With an end in view I persuaded him to say it. The piece concluded with a short soliloquy on the many, *many* pennies spent for self, the *very few* for Jesus and I was not wrong in submitting for it the serious, grieved rendering the repentant little fellow gave.

Now a word about our officers. We have all we can. At present our staff consists of treasurer, corresponding and recording secretaries and a chairman of a lookout committee. We can as a rule depend on our officers for helpful attention. If we think they are shirking their responsibility this notice is given out. The officers of band will please remain after meeting to consult on business matters. And then, as with equal partners in the work, we ask them what they think of this or that scheme. Moralize on the behaviour of the boys, ask them to sit among some unruly members and help us keep order. Give a word of praise to the secretaries, talk figures to the treasurer, get out last year's book and compare '91 with '92's collections, gravely shake our heads over deficits and be busterously happy over increased collections. And we do this *often*, try to never let them forget that it is *their* band, we want to run things to please them and if they are not satisfied, it is their business to come and tell us.

On one occasion when the order for some time had not been up to the mark, I thought it wise to give them a pretty sharp speech, the substance of which was that I was sensible of the honor conferred in electing me as their president. That as *their* president I was going to do my best to make theirs the best band in the Dominion of Canada, but I could *not* do this without their help. Of late things had not been as they should, something was wrong, either they or I were not doing our duty. If the evil lay at my door I was only too willing to try and remedy it. If they thought best I would give up the presidency, hard as that sacrifice would be. For one of those boys were speechless, but when they did find their tongues it was to acknowledge the fault was theirs, and to make promises for the future, so well kept that we had ideal meetings for some time. We try to do everything in a business-like manner. Our officers are always elected by ballot, minutes approved and signed, if correct, vote beside the secretary if they are not reports adopted and filled. The boys enjoy this and we find it most helpful in keeping order. Of one of my officers I have purposely omitted speaking until now, that I might give him more attention. The chairman of the Lookout Committee, a helpful innovation to our band. Have you a large roll and but little time to look out absentees? then get a lookout committee with a good chairman. I simply chat with the latter, supply him with pad, postals and absentees to look out. If he is too busy to make a personal call I bid him write a postal. When I instructed our chairman to sign himself chairman of the lookout committee he halted on one foot and said something about the other fellows laughing. But I looked incredulous and asked him how else they would