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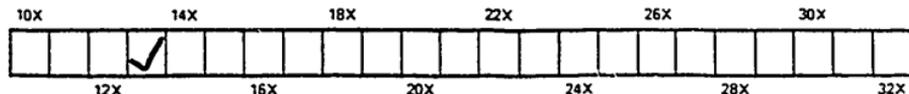
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# Monthly Letter Leaflet.

WOMAN'S FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA.  
(WESTERN DIVISION.)

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VOL. V. TORONTO, SEPTEMBER, 1888. No. 5.

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## SPECIAL MEETING.

The Vice-Presidents of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society—viz., Presidents of Presbyterial Societies, Auxiliaries and Mission Bands—are reminded of the intimation in the July LETTER LEAFLET concerning the Special Meeting of the Board, to be held in Knox Church, Toronto, on Thursday, 13th September, at two o'clock, to which they are cordially invited.

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## LETTERS FROM MISSION FIELDS.

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### Some Account of Work and Progress at Portage La Prairie School.

MISS BEST.—I very gladly comply with your request, and shall try, without entering too minutely into details, to give you some idea of the present condition of the work here. As you, perhaps, are aware, I have been here a little less than two months, yet long enough to become acquainted, in the ordinary sense of the word, with most of our Indians. Fresh characteristics continually revealing themselves make me doubtful that I shall ever become thoroughly acquainted with them.

About a mile north of the town on a level stretch of prairie, nine tepees have stood for some time, each containing a family, with, usually, a few aunts, cousins or grand-children thrown in. Within the past few weeks some wanderers have returned from Brandon vicinity, and now we see sixteen tepees picturesquely dotted over the prairie.

I only know what the Indians here have been through accounts from those most closely connected with the work, and I can say

the improvement is marvellous. Instead of looking upon the school, as I understand they did in its early stages, with suspicion and dislike, they manifest a desire to come and be taught, and some days we have as many as the school-room will accommodate (it is not very large). Patiently they apply themselves to their tasks, and, with few exceptions, their progress is good. One man I might mention in particular who came, bringing his two sons every day, and at the end of two weeks he could read any of the first eleven lessons in the primer and write quite neatly and legibly. Arithmetic interests them greatly, and they enjoy each other's mistakes in the multiplication table and laugh very heartily over them.

There is a marked improvement in their dress; and when some of them enter school in the morning with a white (?) shirt, high collar, long necktie *outside* the vest, coat and pants of black broad-cloth, one is left in doubt as to whether the Sioux has not been trying to caricature some of the elders of our church, particularly when he makes a grave and dignified bow and uncovers his head. Now that the days and nights are warm and the tepees so close at hand, it is difficult to induce the children, boys especially, to remain at the school all night, as they find their sleeping accommodation at the tepees cooler than ours. The squaws are manifesting an interest in the progress of their children, and after their day's washing in the town is done they "call," with their papooses on their back, to see that their little ones are all right. I hope I am not wearying you by giving particulars; what appear trifles to others are often of great moment to those engaged in the work. One thing I observe lately with regard to clothing, when the school was first organized and a child received a new suit of clothes for the school, he would disappear, and return perhaps at the end of a week as ragged as before to receive another supply. I was pleased to notice, in more than one case that when the children went home from the school the new garments were carefully laid away in a "trunk" until time to return to school the next day, when they were again substituted for the old ones. Clean hands and faces and nicely combed hair are frequently to be seen in the morning. It is encouraging to see that they *begin* to appreciate to some extent what has been done for them. Of course, there are many exceptions to this rule.

The "garden" (not Eden) surrounds the school and presents almost every variety of vegetable and a few flowers, though it is very small in its dimensions. It is carefully looked after by the Indians, who commenced to look for the result of their labour a

day or two after planting. They were assisted and directed in the work of planting and hoeing, etc., by a few of the never-forgotten supporters of the school. Louisa and Topsy, whom, I take for granted, you know, are making steady progress and becoming attached to their school-home so much that the comparisons they draw between school-life and tepee-life is not very flattering to the latter. Winona, a mild-dispositioned girl of about fifteen, is another boarder, and would vie with many white girls of her age in her "house-keeping." Since I commenced my letter they have asked me to go and see their rooms, that is, Louisa and Winona, and I was surprised at the picture of neatness those rooms presented. Another little boarder is "Annie," five years old, gentle and affectionate, whom we hope to have for a permanent boarder.

Music has a fascination for these Indians, and the men now join as well as they can with the children in singing the sweet Gospel hymns in Dacotah and English. The ladies of the town never forget us, and their attention to the wants of the school, their sympathy and their hearty co-operation, are, through God's blessing, making the work a grand success. I think Mrs. McLeod considers us a part of her own family, judging by the manner in which she daily looks after our interests and allows us to need for nothing that she can provide. Our boarders from Beulah have gone home for their vacation. They improved greatly while they were here, and not only learned to do various household duties nicely, but carried with them a knowledge of the Saviour's love.

I wish you could see Topsey doing her morning work, sweeping, dusting, etc. Miss Wight has been a most patient and painstaking teacher and the result of her labour is apparent. When "Miss Tops," as she styles herself, completes her work, she comes with a happy face and says, "Misha Besh, work done; me-a gather flowers now?" And the next moment she is on the prairie, as happy as a bird. We have some flowers in the windows, and these they carefully tend. A few evenings since, Peter and Matthew, two of our grown pupils, added to the collection of flowers some beautiful ferns, which they had collected and transplanted into cans. No rare hot-house bouquet was ever more gratefully received.

Now comes the part of my letter which affords me the greatest pleasure to write, and I know it will give you the most pleasure to read. For several months past, the gentlemen, two or three in number, have been holding services on Sabbath afternoons at the tepees. In April I spent my first Sabbath there, and we were exceedingly glad when we could get six or eight together in

a tepee to listen to the Gospel. One or two doubtful ones would stand at the door, and many would discreetly hide themselves in the surrounding shrubbery to see what would happen next. Now they come, squaws, children, men and boys, even some old and prejudiced "warriors" until one tent will hardly hold them, and they listen attentively to the glad tidings of Salvation. They ask the workers to return and some of them say, "We want to hear more about Jesus and what He did."

I know it is not curiosity brings them, any more than force of habit. God's Holy Spirit is working in their hearts, and slowly, but surely, the light is dawning on their souls. Oh, may the glorious light of the Sun of Righteousness shine through the mist of unbelief and ignorance which clouds their souls!

The statement you made that the ladies of Toronto are "deeply interested" in the work is sweet to hear, though we know they must be, for it is manifested in a way to leave us no doubt on the subject.

Now I have told you a little about the school, but to tell you about "myself" is a more difficult matter, for I know so very little. Though I expect my stay here to be very short, I enjoy the work, am deeply interested also in it, and will with God's help try to be *faithful* to the work for the sake of Him who endured so much for me, and for whose sake the work of rescuing the perishing is a labour of *love*, and all difficulties in connection with it seem to vanish in the sunshine of His presence, and nowhere I think, do we feel that Presence more than in a work of this kind. "In His presence is *fulfulness of joy!*"

We were sorry to hear of Mrs. Harvie's illness, and trust she will soon be restored to health. Now I must close, and I do so with a heart full of gratitude to God for having raised up so many kind friends for our school, and pray that God will give me strength and grace for the duties here, that souls may be won for Him, and His name be glorified.

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### Progress made by Children on Cote's Reserve.

REV. G. A. LAIRD.—We have reason to feel encouraged with the interest the children have taken in the school and with the progress made. A number of the scholars now understand English fairly well. The highest class is the fourth reading book, numbering five, three in the third, three in the second, and the balance in the first and second primers. The fourth and third classes have read daily

in the New Testament, reading the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, and part of John. They have also learned the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer. It is our intention now to add the Shorter Catechism as a daily lesson. Very satisfactory progress also has been made in writing, and a commencement has been made in arithmetic. A good deal of attention has been paid to singing. The children are now able to sing in English about thirty hymns. The girls and a number of the women have had regular instruction in knitting and sewing with very good results. The health of the children has been good, indeed we might say that there has been scarcely any sickness. Until the boxes of clothing came last autumn the children were in a destitute condition for proper clothing, but since then they have been comfortably clad. Let me say that the clothing has been a great boon to these poor people. I think they are now beginning to appreciate in some small degree the kindness shown them. The clothing was all suitable, but next year I would suggest that as much of it as possible be left unmade. Do not allow the ladies to make up any new garments for these reserves, but just send the materials, as the women here are very well able to make their own clothes. We would like also material for making patch-work quilts, remnants or bunches of patches, also a larger supply of cheap unbleached cotton, and cheap overalls for men and boys. We will need about as much clothing as was sent last year. I wish you to give me authority to get the people to work for their clothing when I see fit to do so. I mean to get them to do work about the boarding school, hauling and chopping wood, and anything else I may require, also to make improvements on the mission property. I wish to get a quantity of land under cultivation to help to defray the expenses of the children, keep some stock, etc. Besides indiscriminate giving is not good. It fosters laziness and a spirit of dependence. It is a shame for able bodied men and women to be idle half their time and depend on the church for their clothes. You will please then *clothe* me with authority to distribute on such terms as I may deem wise and just. Of course, we will give to the old people, the children of school age, and the small children as before, but the sooner we give the men and women to understand that work is required the better. They will improve much more rapidly.

I am glad to tell you that there is no lessening of interest in our Sabbath and week evening services, but rather an increase. The people come regularly and attend closely. In the heathen portions of the reserves there is a work going on which we trust

will result in many of them embracing Christianity. The old superstitions and rites are gradually crumbling away. Nearly all the heathen Indians are now more or less under our influence, and we trust that in a few years this will be a Christian community. A number of those nominally Roman Catholics attend our services pretty regularly. But it takes time and patience to help these benighted people to see the light. The work of elevation is necessarily slow. We have faith, however, to believe that the good seed will in time bear fruit. We hope even among the rising generation there will be some enlightened Christians. We know that we have your sympathy and prayers. Don't forget to remember us often at the throne of grace. God has been very kind, and blessed us. He has helped us to overcome many difficulties, and He is our helper still.

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Extracts from Rev. W. S. Moore's.

BALGONIE, June 18th.

Attendance at our school has increased from fourteen in the past quarter to twenty-three in the present quarter, and during the coming winter we hope to double the number if we get suitable buildings erected during the present summer. As regards the children under our care, I might say that they are making good progress both in education and civilization, being able to read, write, sew and knit, as well as sing, both in Cree and English, our favourite hymns. A few of them can also play on the organ.

As to our mission work on the reserves I may state that, besides daily visitations, we speak to the Indians each Sabbath morning, taking each of the three bands in course. Sabbath School being held in the morning, conducted by the teacher, and service in the evening at the mission building after my return. Here, as in other mission fields, we meet with much opposition from Roman Catholics.

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Extracts from Mr. Anderson's.

STONY PLAIN RESERVE, April 3rd.

The scholars are all taught reading, writing, and arithmetic tables with figures. The girls are taught sewing and knitting,

and the boys carpentry. The forge being now in working order, some of the older boys will be taught blacksmith's work.

The children behave well, some in particular deserve very great praise for their attendance, coming regularly to school through very cold and stormy weather. In fact I have seen them here when white children would not attempt to come.

It is amusing to see some of them when clothed, they call each other "Moonias's," because they are like white folks.

When any of the Indians are in sickness they generally come for some tea, sugar and yeast bread, as they all bake bannocks. These I provide as far as I am able.

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### Extract from Rev. Hugh McKay's.

If I contrast the solitary tent pitched on the shore of Round Lake in June, 1884, and the splendid school buildings now occupying the same spot, I see there is progress. Our new buildings were opened on December 30, under favourable circumstances. We are not able to give a full description of the buildings, but we may say that the main building is 24 x 54 feet, with basement and two story above. In the basement we have cellars, furnace room and school room. To the main building there is a wing 24 x 32, on the one side, and the old buildings form a wing on the other side 30 x 42. On the first flat we have four bed rooms, two parlours, dining hall, girls' sewing room, store room, bath room, kitchen, pantry, wash room and two class rooms. On the upper flat we have bed rooms and dormitories, etc. The basement is stone-work, the upper park frame. The buildings are comfortable, and when the thermometer was forty-five below zero we found no trouble in keeping every part warm. We are now able to carry on our work with comfort, and we hope to be able to accomplish much good.

If you passed through our dormitories you would be surprised to see so many beautiful little beds on iron bedsteads, and if you enter our store room you might be still more surprised at seeing a good supply on reserve of quilts and blankets, sheets, pillow-slips, towels, etc.

Hayter Reed wished me to say to the Church, and especially to the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, that they do not know how much the Government appreciated their efforts in civilizing and Christianizing the Indians of our country. The

Commissioner watches with interest our school, and hopes to see results which shall justify a larger support, and also the establishment of other schools on the same principle among the Indians of the North-West.

M. de Cazes said that this institution would be of more use to the country than one hundred policemen.

Mr. McRae is much pleased with our plans and with results which he has already seen, and expects to see our institution grow.

Mr. McKitrie was glad to see the flag of Britannia fluttering in the storm, and hoped that by the power of the Gospel this poor degraded people may be raised so that they may no longer be as a spot upon that flag, a burden to our country and a stain upon the Church.

A large number of Indians were present, and many were delighted at the privilege of having a school to which to send their children. Our new buildings have cost \$4,000, and are now free of debt. I trust we have spent the money given to us by the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society to good purpose, and that they may look with pleasure from time to time upon the results of their investment. You have been sowing gold and silver, may you gather souls on which are written immortality. You have been scattering the dust that glitters and becomes dim, may you gather jewels which shall sparkle forever.

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### Sabbath and Day Schools.

#### W. COAST, DEMERARA, B. GUIANA.

MRS. GIBSON.—Thanks for the report which you sent. I have read it with pleasure and, through it, am becoming quite familiar with the names of Canadian places and people and the great work the W. F. M. S. is doing. We intend visiting Canada as soon as it is necessary for us to have a change, and then hope to see the work in operation. I have also to thank you for your kind offer to send some prizes and gifts for our school children; these will encourage them greatly, and help us in our work. The Sabbath School at Nitolugt has been well attended during the year. Already there are 263 names on the roll, and some of them have been most regular in their attendance. There is a marked improvement in this respect since last year. There has been a slight falling off in the day school, but this is owing to press of work on the estates. I have often seen as many as 100 children with a driver on the road carrying burnt earth in small baskets

on their heads, to repair the roads; for this they get 8c., 12c. or 16c. per day, according to their ages. Coolies are so fond of money they will not allow their children to go to school if they can get work, but I am glad to say they come to Sabbath School, and are becoming more deeply interested in it. I am sure you would be delighted if you could see our school full of these little brown children (who a short time ago had never heard the name of Jesus) and hear them repeat the Lord's Prayer, the Creed and the Ten Commandments, and singing sweetly the hymn,

“ With humble heart and tongue,  
To Thee, my God, I pray;  
Oh, lead me now, while I am young,  
To Christ, the living way.”

They sing a number of Hindi hymns very correctly.

Maulla and Somera, of whom I wrote to Mrs. Harvie, are still at school and doing well.

The Hague day and Sabbath schools have been well attended during the year. There are about eighty children on the roll. At the last examination, several boys were able to repeat the “Golden Texts” for the previous half year. The school is situated quite close to the Coolie ranges, and the attendance of the children is much more easily secured than at Nitolut, where the school is a mile from the estates buildings. In rainy weather, such as we have here, it would be quite impossible for little half-naked children to go to school such a distance.

We have just passed through the rainy season, which was an unusually long and severe one. Our schools kept up pretty well through it all.

I presume you will have heard, before this reaches you, that we have lost by death, this year, one of the best supporters of the mission in Demerara, the Hon. W. Russell. He provided us with schools and teachers, and contributed £100 a year towards Mr. Gibson's salary. We hope his partner will continue to do as he did, if not, it will be a heavy blow to the mission, the funds of which are very low.

The ladies of the W. Coast are very busy preparing for a bazaar to be held in September, at the house of Mr. Minty (Mr. Russell's successor), in aid of the Coolie Mission. Mrs. Minty has very kindly undertaken all the responsibility in connection with it, which is a great deal. I hope it may be a success, as much depends on it. We have made and collected a lot of useful and fancy articles, if we can only get them disposed of. Mrs.

Slater is having a bazaar in town, for the same purpose, about the end of the year. There is a special effort being made to clear off the debt, and have a little on hand at the beginning of the year.

Mr. Gibson went out this afternoon to visit some of the estates hospitals. The patients are always pleased to see him, and pay great attention while he talks to them of the true God. While out he had an open air sermon. There were about 100 Coolies present, many of whom had never heard the Gospel before. They are apparently interested when the message is brought to their doors, and make many promises to come to church, but they are not always carried out.

Mr. Gibson joins me in kindest regards to you and the ladies interested in our work.

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### Sailing of Missionaries.

The S. S. "Parthia," having Dr. and Mrs. Smith, and Miss Sutherland on board, sailed from Vancouver on the 1st August.

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### INCREASE.

The Presbyterial Society of Bruce was organized, at a meeting held for the purpose, in Walkerton, on July 12th. Delegates were present from all the Auxiliaries in the Presbytery. The following Officers were elected, viz. : Mrs. Wardrope, Teeswater, President ; Mrs. Gourlay, Port Elgin, Mrs. Johnston, Paisley, and Mrs. Hunter, Underwood, Vice-Presidents ; Mrs. McGillivray, Paisley, Treasurer ; Miss James, Walkerton, Secretary.

Lanark and Renfrew Presbyterial Society—A Mission Band at Pakenham, on July 26, by Mrs. Neilson and Miss Russell.

Lindsay Presbyterial Society—An Auxiliary at Sonya, June 18, and Mission Band at Cannington, June 19 by Mrs. Cockburn.

Toronto Presbyterial Society—A Mission Band, united under the name of Everstey and Temperanceville.

In London Presbyterial Society—An Auxiliary at Komoka, July 17, by Mrs. Roger, and on same date an Auxiliary at Hyde Park by Mrs. Ball.

Saugeen Presbyterial Society—An Auxiliary on July 4, at

Fairbairn, by Rev. P. Straith; and in May, a Mission Band was organized in connection with Knox Church, Harriston.

Brandon Presbyterian Society—On July 4, an Auxiliary at Douglas; and on July 20, an Auxiliary at Virden, by Mrs. MacTavish.

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## LIBERALITY OF NATIVE CHURCHES.

In the last annual report of The London Missionary Society, we find that the native churches under the care of that Society had contributed during the year to the general fund for the spread of the Gospel the sum of £17,000 sterling.

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## NOTICES.

The Board of Management meets on the first Tuesday of every month, at three o'clock p.m., in the Managers' Room, Knox Church, Toronto. Members of Auxiliary Societies, or other ladies interested in the work and desiring information, being introduced by a member of the Board, are cordially invited to attend.

Letters concerning the organization of Societies, and all matters pertaining to Home work, are to be addressed to Mrs. Hugh Campbell, 194 Richmond Street West, Toronto. The Home Secretary should be notified *at once* when an Auxiliary or Mission Band is formed.

Letters asking information about missionaries, or any questions concerning the Foreign field, as to Bible readers, teachers or children in the various Mission Schools, should be addressed to Mrs. Harvie, Wilcocks Street, Toronto.

Letters containing remittances of money for the W.F.M.S. may be addressed to Mrs. James MacLennan, Treasurer, 10 Murray Street, Toronto. In Mrs. MacLennan's absence, till 1st September, address Mrs. Ewart, Rossin House.

All requests for literature may be sent to Mrs. Telfer, 72 St. Albans Street, Toronto.

Certificates of life membership can be issued at any time, if the Home Secretary be notified.

LITERATURE.

*12 cents per doz.*

- No. 20. Our Mission Fields.  
" 18. Five Cents in a Tea-cup.  
" 13. Thanksgiving Ann.  
" 10. For His Sake.  
" 9. Pitchers and Lamps.  
" 8. Life of Kashibai.  
" 7. Mrs. Pickett's Missionary Box.  
" 3. Voices of the Women.

*8 cents per doz.*

- No. 17. Why we should keep up our Auxiliaries.  
" 12. What is in thy Hand?  
" 11. Preparation for the Master's Work.  
" 4. The Importance of Prayer.  
" 2. Giving, and Giving Up.

*Free.*

- No. 1. Self-Questioning.  
" 5. Questions Answered.  
" 6. Two Cents a Week.  
" 14. Suggestions for holding Missionary Meetings.  
" 15. The Missionary Mite Box.  
" 16. How to Organize an Auxiliary or Mission Band.  
" 19. Our Plan of Work.  
Prayer Cards.  
Envelopes to Auxiliaries formed since Annual Meeting.

Mite Boxes, 1 cent each.

Envelopes, one large, containing 12 small, 1½ cents each.

Map of North-West, with Indian Reserves marked, \$1.

All postage prepaid.

For above apply to Mrs. Telfer, 72 St. Albans Street, Toronto.

Applications for "The Monthly Letter Leaflet" (extra copies one cent each), and Annual Reports, to be made to the Home Secretary, Mrs. Campbell.