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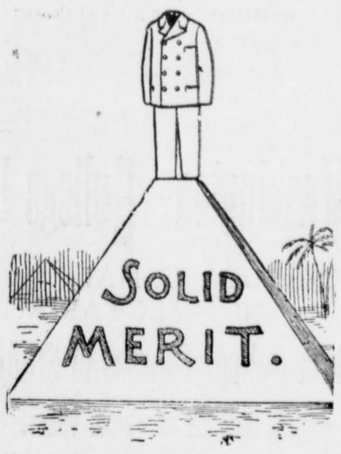

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INTERESTING REPORT.

By Miss M. Adele France, Delegate From Emmanuel Branch to Junior Auxiliary Convention at Salisbury.

We, the Chestertown delegation, having received several augmentations along the route, reached Salisbury on Tuesday, June 4, at about half past seven.

We were met by the kind friends with whom we were going to stay, and at once taken home to supper, going afterwards to church. On Wednesday we were in church for the greater part of the day but found time in the afternoon to see something of the town and were very much surprised at the extent and beauty of it.

Thursday was, however, pre-eminently our day; our president warned us on Wednesday to make no engagements for the following day, saying we would be kept busy, and indeed, we were kept very agreeably so all day long.

At seven in the morning there was a corporate communion at which as many of the delegates as could do so were present.

Mr. Vanderbogart, the rector at Salisbury, decided to devote the morning to the Woman's Auxiliary, and the afternoon to the Junior and Babies Branches, and it was very well indeed that he did so.

The morning meeting was opened with prayer by the rector, after which short speeches were made by him and Bishop Adams, each of them commending highly the work done by the Auxiliary. Thereupon the president delivered her annual address, which was very enjoyable and encouraging. The reports of the secretaries and treasurer were then read, and afterwards those of the nineteen branches.

Pledges for various objects were taken from the branches of the Woman's Auxiliary, and the question as to what should be done with the next united offering, that of 1904, was presented for discussion and decision, the Juniors being also allowed a voice.

After considerable discussion a standing vote was taken, resulting in the decision that the next united offering should be used exclusively for women workers in missionary fields, the other side wishing to divide the offering equally between general missions and women workers.

It was decided, however, to give our delegate the authority, in case of discussion engendering ill-feeling arising, to cast her vote with the majority. The election of a delegate from the Diocese of Easton to the trienniel meeting of the Auxiliary to be held at San Francisco in October was then held, Mrs. Physick being unanimously elected and Mrs. Vanderbogart being chosen as alternate.

After a committee had been appointed to select officers for the next year, and an invitation to hold the semi-annual meeting at Elkton had been accepted, the meeting was adjourned.

At 3 o'clock the meeting of the Junior branch was called, Mrs. Physick presiding.

Interesting and entertaining reports were read from the branches represented, and a real heart-to-heart talk given by our Junior president, Miss May Stevens, who commended the work already done, and expressed her encouragement at the increase in the number of branches, but spoke of more work to be done and primarily made an appeal for united effort in the Junior Auxiliary. She pointed out how much larger showing it would make and how much more would be done if instead of giving a dollar here and a dollar there, we should select one or two worthy objects and give our whole contribution in each branch to those objects, this, of course, not to interfere with any pledges already made.

The report from the Babies' Branch was next read, and a short talk given by Mrs. McHenry, acting in Mrs. Malster's place. The committee on nominations having made their report, and the officers by them nominated having been elected, Mr. Prevost, a missionary from Alaska, was introduced, and gave a very entertaining talk. How I wish you all could have been there with me to have heard it. I will try to tell you about it as best I can.

Mr. Prevost is stationed on the Tanana river' a tributary of the great Yukon, as large as the Mississippi, which flows through the icy regions of Alaska. This is his principal station, the centre from which he goes out to make long trips across the country with his dogs and his sleds. It is almost always winter there. The Yukon is frozen over for nine months in the year; in June the ice breaks, the river clears, the tender green leaves burst out on the trees, the wild roses blossom along the banks, the air is balmy and sweet and the whole country would be an earthly paradise were it not for the mosquitos and gnats. The mosquitos come first, in immense swarms, and last for about a month. Mr. Prevost gave us a story told by a visitor to Alaska, but assued us he would not vouch for the truth of it, this visitor on returning home told his friends the mosquitos were so numerous as to form clouds obscuring the sun, and when the natives wished to see that heavenly body they would throw up a stick of wood and look through the hole thus made.

All their traveling is done with sleds and dogs, the food, tents and cooking utensils are placed on the sled which the dogs draw, while the men run along at its side. They become greatly attached to the dogs; regarding them at we regard our horses, and some of them are very wise and sagacious little animals. We do not realize the enormous distances they have to travel, a journey of 500 or a thousand miles being a small matter, and they frequently take journeys of 2000 or 3000 miles.

On one of these trips across the country Mr. Prevost fell in with a tribe of Indians traveling to their winter hunting grounds. They begged him to stop with them and baptize their children. He thawed some ice and that night under the open heavens (for there was no tent large enough) with the moon to furnish light, and the thermometer 26° below zero, he held services and baptized, I think, twenty-eight children. After he had baptized the children a man and woman presented themselves to be baptized. The minister would first have to give them instructions, and more over the hour was late and he was compelled to move on, so he told them to come to the mission, a distance of fifteen hundred miles, in the spring, and he would instruct and baptize them. He was fearful that they would not come, but in the spring the man and woman presented themselves before him, stayed at the mission about three weeks for instruction and at the end of that time were baptized and married. We can judge from this incident the zeal, earnestness and ability to overcome obstacles of these people in the accomplishment of their ends.

The Indians are very superstitious. When any one is sick they think he is under the influence of evil spirits and at once send for the Medicine Man, who, after having made a good bargain, proceeds to throw a cloth over the sick person, makes wonderful incantations, groans, and appears to be tugging with all his might and main at the spirit, and finally after a mighty tug he triumphantly produces a little wooden image, prepared before hand, and tells the relatives that the evil spirit or little devil, as they call it has been taken from the body of the sick person and is now in the little image.

The parents or friends of the sick man are satisfied and nothing further is done for the patient. Occasionally he gets well, but much oftener dies.

One of the first tasks the missionary set for himself was the abolishment of this superstition and the Medicine Man along with it. He was greatly helped in this work by the fact that he had himself studied medicine and shortly after his arrival had an opportunity to show his skill in this direction. A small boy stuck a splinter in his eye and all the white part of the injured organ ran out. Mr. Prevost drew out the splinter, treated the eye, and after a time it filled out and was quite as good as ever. This to the natives was wonderful, his fame spread abroad and he had patients flock to him from far and near.

At Christmas he and his wife always arrange a treat for the children. Two Xmas trees are placed, one on each side of the room, on the trees are hung fancy decorations such as we have here, and toys sent by kind friends in the States. At night the children assemble, each bringing his plate or dish of some kind, and something to drink out of, very often a tin tomato can when nothing better can be secured. To each one is given a piece of taffy, some tea and other good things prepared by Mrs. Prevost. After they have eaten part, for they always save half to take home to their parents, they scamper off to wash their faces and hands, and then come back to receive their Xmas gifts, which are handed out by Mr. Prevost.

One year in a box of toys there was sent a jumping jack. This was suspended between two trees, and when Mr. Prevost came to it he read the name of a very tiny boy and a very sly one. He was in the back of the room and his mother was compelled to go up with him and fairly shove him along. When the little fellow had gotten quite close, Mr. Prevost thought he would show him how it worked, so he pulled the string and the jumping jack threw up his arms and legs, as you all know jumping-jacks do, now, the little boy had never seen such a thing as that, and the only things with which he could connect it were the evil spirits which get into sick people, so he turned and ran screaming as loud as he could: "I don't want that little devil! I don't want that little devil!"

Mr. Prevost is at present trying to secure money to build a school for boys. He has a school for girls, which, however, is very small and inadequate, accommodating only fifteen pupils, but he wants one which will accommodate about two hundred boys. These boys are very bright and eager to learn, and a school is certainly necessary where they may not only be educated, but kept from evil surroundings and trained to appreciate good ones.

When Mr. Prevost finished his talk Mr. Vanderbogart introduced Miss Mann as coming "From the Flowery Kingdom of Japan." Miss Mann arose and in her own cheery way said, "Well, Japan may be the 'flowery kingdom' but I come from a part of it where for the greater part of the year the streets are covered with snow five or six feet deep."

Miss Mann is from Aomouri in the most northern part of Japan. Her talk was bright, spicy and altogether charming.

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(Continued on Third Page.)

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