

INDIA MISSION NEWS.

Vol. VII. § Dhamtari, C. P., India, Janry. 1928. § No. 1.

SPECIAL MEETINGS NUMBER.

December is the month of meetings in the American Mennonite Mission in India. The annual business meeting of the Mission is held during this month. The annual "Jalsa", or Spiritual Life Conference, and the annual Church Conference of the Indian Mennonite Church are both held each year in December. Besides these three large and more general meetings held in this month there are also the special Christmas programs and functions at the various stations.

The idea of regular attendance at a specified place for public worship is quite foreign to anything the Indian is by tradition accustomed to. Worship in Hinduism consists of individual worship, either in a public temple or at his own home, only at such times when the individual feels impelled to do so. Together with this the frequent holidays, at which time there is loud and colorful demonstration with much confusion, and the occasional large *meta*, or general gathering, constitute the high points in Hindu worship. The practices indulged in at these times are heathen and for the most part degrading, but the general method by which the Hindu pays his vows to his god or gods is an interesting and worthwhile study.

The fact that the Oriental can worship God, as he knows him, best through these avenues leads us to a careful examination with a view to determining which elements *in his worship* are Hindu, which are heathen, which are unscriptural, and which are merely characteristic of the oriental mind. The investigation turns back upon our own methods of worship as well, those methods and forms which we have brought with us from our homes. We are obliged to sift them to see which are scriptural and which are merely western. We are here not considering doctrines of the Bible, not essentials or non-essentials, but purely those methods and forms of worship through which we approach God in praise, prayer, and fellowship.

The big meeting idea is certainly eastern and the Christian Church in India has used this characteristic of the people to good advantage. As I am writing the annual *Jalsa* is in session at Balodgahan. Some of the missionaries have at times thought it might be well to dispense with this large annual gathering during the Christmas season but the Indian sentiment is in favor of the meeting, and as the Church grows so will also the *Jalsa* continue to offer an ever increasingly valuable avenue of worship, praise and fellowship for the Indian Church, and will serve a tremendous purpose in cementing the brotherhood together into a closer unity and cooperation.

The term used in India for Christmas means literally "Big-Day" and certainly such it is for the Christian community. In the reports of Christmas activities that follow in this issue you will note the importance of this day to the Indian Christians. You will note too, perhaps, that, to some extent here as it is so generally true in America, the season has a strong holiday flavor. But the tendency everywhere evident to include the birth of Christ in every function and activity, even though it may at times seem inappropriately done, is nevertheless a commendable feature of the Christmas celebrations in the Indian Church. Above all, the occasion the day affords for magnifying Christ, and the evangelistic opportunities it brings makes this a time of refreshing and reviving for the Christian Church in India.

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING.

The Annual Business Meeting of the Mission was held this year at the village bungalow at Balodgahan from the 13th to the 16th of December. Twenty-eight missionaries responded to the roll call at the opening of the session. Including the four on furlough our mission family now includes thirty-two adult members. The entire first day was spent in the discussion of devotional and inspirational subjects. Some time was spent in prayer and intercession, and throughout the meetings the new Church Hymnal was used for the song service.

At the opening of the morning session of the first day Bro. Brunk spoke on, "The Danger of Losing Faith in the Power of God to Change the Hearts of Men". The danger

of careless thinking and a tendency to consider the work our's instead of God's was brought before us in a very impressive way. The grave danger of becoming slaves of method and depending too little on the power of God was also stressed. We need to keep in mind that God does still miraculously change the hearts of Men. As an ideal for every missionary there should be a definite purpose to speak words of encouragement or warning inviting people to Christ daily.

Following this address five minute talks were given on the subject, "Missions a Spiritual Task", by Sister Good, Sister Vogt, Sister Esch, and Bro. Beare. In these talks the need for constantly remembering that not efficient supervision, but a definite spirit-filled life is the real unit of missionary service was stressed. The need of insistence on changed lives in our people was urged as a definite objective of our work. After a period of prayer and intercession the morning meeting closed.

The devotional service at the opening of the afternoon session was conducted by Bro. Kniss. The general subject of the afternoon was, "Paul the Missionary". Bro. J. N. Kaufman spoke on, "A Comparison of Paul's Field with Our's". The following interesting comparisons were brought out; the people of our field are not so highly cultured; our field is smaller and much more provincial; our people are as susceptible to and need Christ as certainly.

Sister G. J. Lapp spoke on, "Paul's Relation to the new Churches Established". Paul was a preacher, a pastor, and bishop for the churches he established. The subject was studied by reference to the various Epistles of Paul where the relationship he bore to his churches clearly becomes evident.

"Paul's Relation to his Fellow Workers" was discussed by Dr. G. D. Troyer. Paul's relation to his fellow workers was one of close fellowship based on the love of Christ in his own heart. He was fearless but kind in opposition and never lost his love for his fellow workers.

A men's quartet sang, "I Want my Life to Tell for Jesus", after which Bro. J. D. Graber spoke on, "Paul's Relation to his Home Church". This relationship was shown to have been one of loyalty and honesty. He frequently had to explain his work in novel conditions in distant places but

in such circumstances was always frank and so succeeded in keeping the confidence of his supporting constituency.

At the beginning of the session the following morning Sister M. C. Lehman read a paper on the subject, "How Create a Greater Religious Zeal in the rising Generation of Christian Children". It was pointed out that the problem of training up children in India is greatly augmented by the high percentage of illiteracy among parents and a consequent lack of ideals and training in the home. A resolution covering the recommendations of the paper was adopted which contained the following points:

1. That we encourage the observance of special days for instructing mothers in order to make the home the center of Christianity.
2. That we arrange for special services and meetings for children.
3. That we encourage the distribution and production of suitable literature for children.
4. That we put forth special effort to train children in real worship.

A resolution of general interest that was adopted in this meeting is the following:

We express our deep gratitude to God and the Home Churches, Sewing Circles, and individuals supporting the mission work in India, some of whom have given largely for the work, and that we assure them of our endeavor to dispose of all funds as designated by the donors in such a manner as will by divine guidance further the cause of Christ in India.

At the beginning of the morning session of the fifteenth Bro. G. J. Lapp read a paper on, "How can we help the Christian Community find its place in the Community Life". It was shown that the Mission should loose forces to raise the social economic, educational, and spiritual status of the Christian community.

Election of officers for the ensuing year resulted as following:

Treasurer, M. C. Lehman.
 President, A. C. Brunk.
 Recorder, J. D. Graber.

CHRISTMAS.

"Bara Din", or "Big Day", is Christmas in Hindi, and among all the Christian holidays in India it is easily the biggest. It is the season for new white, yellow, or black wash for the houses, whatever the materials of architecture may require. Courtyards and floors are cleaned exceptionally well with a liberal application of cow-dung solution; all clothing are washed; everyone bathes, and on Christmas morning when they all turn out in their new clothes you feel for once in a year that the Christian people are all washed, cleaned, and properly dressed.

CALENDAR OF CHRISTMAS EVENTS AT DHAMTARI.

1. Tuesday afternoon a program by Girls Primary School.
2. Wednesday afternoon and evening, dinner and program by Boys Boarding.
3. Thursday evening, dinner and program by Carpentry School boys.
4. Saturday evening, public service and program in Church.
 Missionaries meet at the Miller bungalow for short service and distribution of gifts.
 Singing bands begin serenading at mid-night and continue till morning.
5. Christmas morning, public service in Church,

At other stations a very similar program was followed. At Sankra especially the large number of Hindu relatives of Christians who came in to spend Christmas was noted. School children home from the school boardings at Balodgahan and Dhamtari took active part in the programs.

At Ghatula Christmas had to be celebrated on Saturday the 24th because those attending the Jalsa at Balodgahan had to leave on Sunday afternoon in order to be on hand for the Tuesday morning meeting. A common Christmas dinner in which all Christians participated was a special feature. The missionaries of the station furnished the goat while the rest of the community furnished the rice, vegetables and spices.

At Mohadi 225 attended the Christmas morning service. Since the community at this place is very small this figure indicates how Christmas in India affords evangelistic opportunity.

Shantipur had its largest service as usual on Christmas evening. Bonfires were built and the large congregation of lepers, other Christians and Non-Christians gathered for the Christmas program.

JALSA.

Was held this year at Balodgahan from the 27th to the 29th of December. Large crowds were in attendance at all the sessions with a good representation from every congregation of the mission. The general subject of the Jalsa was, "Spiritual Growth in the Christian Home", (I Peter 2:9, 10) and this theme was considerably stressed throughout the various meetings. Contrary to precedent no outside speakers were called in for the meeting and it was ably demonstrated that we can have a good Jalsa with home talent. The programs were filled with speaking, singing, special songs, prayer and praise, and the interest throughout the three days was kept at a high pitch. E. E. Miller was moderator of all the meetings.

The daily program ran somewhat as follows:

1. Early morning prayer meeting.
2. 8:30— Devotional service.
3. 9:00— General meeting in charge of G. J. Lapp.
4. 1:30— Sectional meetings for married men, married women, widows, older boys, older girls, younger boys, younger girls, and missionary children.
5. 2:30— General meeting in charge of Isa Baksh.
6. 7:00— Song and prayer service in charge of P. A. Friesen.
7. 7:30— General meeting in charge of J. N. Kaufman.

Not an integral part of the Jalsa, but closely related, was the Sunday School Conference held on the Sunday following the close of the Jalsa. It was decided that next year these two meetings be merged into one because of the difficulty of getting people to stay over till Sunday for this meeting. At the close of the Jalsa they are anxious to get back to their homes. However, not a small crowd attended the meeting this year. The theme of the Conference was, "How to Teach Sacrifice and Consecration to the Children through the Sunday School". Methods were also discussed, special attention being given to telling Bible stories. Reports of the

year's work in the various station and village Sunday Schools were heard. The Conference certainly added new Sunday School enthusiasm to everyone who attended.

CHURCH CONFERENCE.

Annual Church Conference met at Balodgahan for a one-day session on the 30th December. The chief work before the Conference at this time is the revision of the constitution. A number of meetings of the revision committee, consisting of the ministerial body with lay representatives from each congregation, were held during the past year, but work was not well enough in hand to justify its being brought before Conference at this time. Consequently it was decided to hold a short session of Conference at this time to dispose of the routine business and the regular work and then call a special session to meet on the 1st of March.

Bro. G. J. Lapp was chairman of the Conference with Bro. D. B. Peter as assistant. After the Devotional conducted by the chairman Bro. C. D. Esch preached the Conference Sermon using Heb. 4:12 as a text. The subject of the sermon was, "The Word of God", and Bro. Esch delivered a strong message on the authority of the Bible. He stressed the necessity of the attitude, as we approach the Word that its message is God-given and as such is absolute. The speaker pointed out that this is true of the entire Bible without qualifications of any kind. As a guide and a standard for church administration the Word was held up as the only safe and sure one. Mention was made of the traditional Mennonite principle of a simple, whole-hearted belief in the Bible as the inspired and inerrant Word of God and of the blessings attendant upon such a belief.

After the sermon the roll call was answered by testimony from every member of Conference. There was clear and united testimony by everyone to the message of the sermon, and loyalty and a readiness to support and abide by the principles of the Church as laid down in the constitution were a part of every testimony.

One decision of conference that may be of general interest was the acceptance of the request of the two Bishops for the ordination of another Bishop. The selection and ordination will no doubt take place at the special session in March.

Departmental Committees elected for 1928.

Evangelistic.

A. C. Brunk, Chm.
 P. A. Friesen.
 G. J. Lapp.
 S. Lapp.
 G. Beare.
 Person in charge of Dhantari
 Bible Women.
 L. A. Kniss.

Medical.

Dr. F. Friesen.
 Ada Hartzler.
 Eva Brunk.
 Dr. G. D. Troyer.
 Dr. C. D. Esch.

Publicity.

J. D. Graber, Chm.
 Lydia Lehman.
 Kathryn Troyer.
 J. N. Kaufman.
 P. A. Friesen.

Auditing.

J. N. Kaufman, Chm.
 C. D. Esch.
 J. D. Graber.

Educational.

J. N. Kaufman, Chm.
 M. Kanagy.
 M. Good.
 M. C. Lehman.
 A. C. Brunk.
 G. J. Lapp.

Scholarship.

G. J. Lapp, Chm.
 M. Kanagy.
 C. D. Esch.
 D. B. Peter.
 Parsadi.

Language & Literature.

M. C. Lehman, Chm.
 J. N. Kaufman.
 G. J. Lapp.
 M. Good.
 F. Friesen.

Building.

G. D. Troyer, Chm.
 L. A. Kniss.
 A. C. Brunk.

Managing Committee.

G. J. Lapp, Chm.
 J. N. Kaufman, Sec.
 P. A. Friesen.
 A. C. Brunk.
 M. C. Lehman.
 M. Good.
 G. D. Troyer.
 J. D. Graber.

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A Testimony.

An educated Hindu, Head-Master of a Government High School, said, "What I want is men of character. I'm not so particular if they are called John, James, or Ram", and then he added this significant final clause, "and that is exactly what we do not find among our students here". The statement is significant because to this High School come the boys from the best Hindu and Mohammedan families of the city. And no men of character among these! What an indictment of these religious systems; what a confession of their failure to produce character!

This same Hindu further expressed hopes that some day there might be mission work and Christian people in the city because, he said, "I have noticed that students coming to my schools from mission institutions and from Christian homes are vastly superior in moral stamina to those who are non-christian". This testimony, seemingly made in good faith, both the missionary and those interested in India mission work are glad to hear.

The thesis that the final test of any religion lies in its character producing qualities is correct. Faith and works have never been successfully divorced. But this idea is new to India. A group of Indian educators in meeting were discussing the teaching of morals in our schools. Several speakers took for granted that morals must of necessity be taught in correlation with religion. But a third one was vehement in his declaration that there was no relation between morals and religion at all, and that morals should be taught independently of any religious instruction, and a number of wise men were nodding their heads in assent.

This is just more confession that Christless religions do not undertake the greatest of all tasks, the regeneration of the human heart. The reason is obvious. They have no Christ, neither as a great moral example nor as God who can create man anew in the new birth. Pray for the missionary with his doubly difficult task. He must first of all get across the idea that Christianity and morals are united in inseparable

union, and must then help and stand by the individual as he struggles through to victory,

February 5th was the date of the large Rudri *Mela*, an annual gathering for Hindus of all castes. Thousands were assembled and every good Hindu took a bath in the Mahanadi River, offered his coconut or *ghee* in the crude temple, and gave his offering to the priest. About three hundred gospel tracts were distributed and it is reported that they were very eagerly taken up and some people even offered to pay for the tracts they received.

Rama was an orphanage boy who had been sent to Bombay about fifteen years ago to learn tailoring. After he had learned his trade he decided not to return to the Mission. Nothing was heard of him for a number of years and only a few years ago he turned up in a village about three miles from Dhamtari with his Singer sewing machine. He was living as a Hindu and had even been purified and received back into caste. But he could not forget Christ and the Bible. Just recently he came to the Pastor of the Dhamtari congregation and expressed a full willingness to reunite with the Church. He will be received in the near future.

On February 8th E. E. Miller and family and Irene Lehman left Dhamtari on their way to America. They will sail from Calcutta the 12th on the S. S. Takluva for Hongkong where they make connections with a Pacific steamer expecting to arrive at San Francisco about April 1st.

Sister Kathryn Troyer, who has been seriously ill with tonsillitis and other complications since the middle of December, is slightly improved at the time of this writing. Pray with us that she may soon be restored to full health.

From January 21st to 28th Mr. and Mrs. P. A. and P. W. Penner from the General Conference Mennonite Mission with Mr. Brown from their Mission in China visited among our missionaries. Their time was short but they managed to see all the work at every station.

On the 22nd of January the annual election of Pastor was held at the Dhamtari congregation. Bro. J. N. Kaufman was

elected Pastor for the current year. The Balodgahan congregation selects its Pastor for 1928 on the 12th of February.

Bro. and Sister Friesen have spent most of the month of January on tour to the north west of Sankra. While encamped at Sikosa they saw to the erection of the shed that will house their rapidly growing leper clinic. Sikosa is near to Pairie where the clinic was first started.

Bro. and Sister G. J. Lapp also have been spending some time on tour in the Ghatula territory, while Bro. and Sister J. D. Graber toured from Balodgahan south to Kanker City. A fuller report of these tours will appear in the next issue of the "News" which is to be a special touring number.

Kurud Bazar Clinic.

Kurud is located about fifteen miles north of Dhamtari on the main road to Raipur. Every Tuesday there is held in this rather large village one of the biggest bazars in the country where thousands of people congregate to buy and to sell. There are many lepers in the villages surrounding Kurud and so far the Mission has done very little work of any kind in this particular area. For a long time this was seen as an open door.

So, on the 10th of January, Dr. C. D. Esch drove to the Kurud bazar with his medicine and book case attached to the side of his Ford for the formal opening of a weekly clinic. Not so many patients were treated the first day, but as news of the clinic spreads so also do the attendance and the popularity of the work increase. At present, about a month after the opening, some seventy patients, of whom twenty are lepers, are treated each week. Together with this treatment given, scripture portions and other Christian literature are sold, and the Gospel is preached to hundreds in the bazar.

On the 7th of February Dr. Esch filled the appointment at the bazar as usual but now expects to remain in camp at Kurud for a number of days for preaching, dispensing of medicines, and working up interest in the clinic in general. It is the plan of the Mission to secure land for an out-station here and to send a family of Christian workers here to live. In this way the weekly visits of a Mission Doctor can be made still more effective. Your prayers are solicited in behalf of this work and for the thousands who attend the weekly Kurud bazar.

Opening Service for Hope Evangelistic Station.

We have made a number of references in these columns regarding opening a new station. We had the money but for some years we were unable to find a suitable location. Either the site available was unsuitable or the site declared to be suitable was not available.

The way seemed to be blocked though many prayers went to God in behalf of the new station and we held on in faith. God did not disappoint us. The very part of our field we had in mind when money was solicited for Hope Evangelistic Station suddenly and providentially became available. The Rani Sahib (Princess ruler) of Dondi-Lohara Zamindari offered four acres of land in the village of Dondi, about fifty miles from Dhamtari and thirty-two miles from Sankra. The land is given on a permanent lease for which there are no charges, not even for annual rent. Those in authority under the Rani Sahib report that the Princess is very happy to know that the Mission is opening work in Dondi. It was her husband, the Zamindar of the Estate, who a number of years ago when Bro. M.C. Lapp and Bro. Brunk visited him, gave not a word in reply in an interview which lasted upwards of an hour. The two brethren had to leave without the ruler's sanction. "Prayer changes things!"

On the 6th of February we held an opening service on the site in Dondi village. Not all our missionaries were able to be present but twelve were present besides ten missionaries' children. The service was simple and informal. After the singing of hymn, Romans 8:28-39 and Heb. 12: 1-2 was read and a number led in prayer. This was followed by a short talk giving briefly the history of some of the experiences connected with the location of this station. Then a number of those present took part in wielding pick and shovel on the site on which the new bungalow is to be erected. Excavating will be continued in the regular way by Bro. Brunk who has been appointed to build the new station. The appointment is appropriate since Bro. and Sister Brunk were instrumental in soliciting the money for the new station. The money was donated chiefly by the brethren in the Virginia Valley, Elida County, O., and in Iowa.

We ask for the prayers of the home church for this new station.

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The S. S. Picture roll and cards arrive in a Kanker State village.

Touring in the Ghatula District.

For various reasons we have not been able to tour the district as completely as we have in former years but hope to get out more again later in the season. We spent two days and nights at Kaspur where we have a village school and evangelistic work. During that time there were thirteen separate meetings held. In every place, including a number of surrounding villages, the people were very receptive. The wives of our two school teachers visit villages regularly which has led the people to more readily listen to the Gospel message.

Two days and three nights were spent at Ghutkel, 18 miles South-East of Ghatula. The malguzar of the village kindly puts a small bungalow at our disposal each year which saves our having to transport the large tent. Meetings were held in eleven different villages. In Ghutkel we visited houses and had a meeting in the evening with the people emphasizing by the use of pictures the need of refraining

from strong drink and drugs. They are both a curse to the country.

One village had never been visited before and in two homes the women refused to allow the sisters to have a meeting. At the third place they started the meeting without asking permission. After they had sat and sung several hymns the people of the home became interested and the women who refused to allow a meeting in their own homes came to listen.

We have also spent several days with our workers visiting the villages around Ghatula. During the Bible School year we are not able to do much village visiting because of the time required in teaching in the school.

When going to and from Ghutkel we stopped at several villages and held roadside meetings. At another time Bro. and Sister Vogt accompanied us to a large bazaar seven miles West of Ghatula at which time a very large crowd gathered around the car with whom we had meetings and sold books. On the way home we also held a meeting in a village where the children and some of the grown-ups ran away from us to their houses from fright. They slowly came back and by the time the meeting was well started we had a fair sized crowd of interested people.

The village of Kondai is in the Jaypur State South of Ghutkel. One half day and evening was spent in that village and Bharawan in which a very large weekly market is held. Large numbers of people gathered around us and showed great interest. In the evening meeting the village owner of Kondai, a number of merchants, and state officials came out. They did not gather until nearly nine o'clock in the evening which caused us to run the meeting into the night. But it gave time for quiet presentation of the Word to a gathering which had eaten their evening meal and were content to quietly listen to the Message. Two young men impressed us very much. One was of South Indian parentage but had been born in Africa and knew English from childhood. The other was a graduate from a (Mission) Junior College and could speak English equally well. Both were in State employ. The pity of it was that in spite of their education and ability they were heavy smokers and addicted to strong drink. We tried to lead them to a better way and hope the books they bought will be a help to them.

Through the touring and special effort around Ghatula the workers during the last two months have sold 150 books including Scripture portions, New Testaments, One Bible, and Christian literature. We are happy to report that one of our Christian brethren who is a cook and was working for a Forest officer also sold books, a Bible, and Scripture portions as he went on tours through the villages with his employer. Pray with us that God may honor the work of direct evangelism.

TOURING—SANKRA.

Touring from the Sankra station was all done in the extreme North-West part of the district this year. Last year the Commissioner gave Rupees five hundred for the erection of a shed in that territory where many patients are treated each week. While the shed was being built the missionaries and some of the Christian co-workers camped near by and worked in the surrounding villages. Forty-two villages were visited, seventy-six meetings were held, and over two hundred books were sold.

For nearly two years medicine has been dispensed at this place each Wednesday and the people have become accustomed to coming for medicine on that day so not very much medical work was done on other days. An average of about one hundred and twenty-five were treated each Wednesday. The people in all the surrounding villages know us quite well because of our visits to that part of the district each week and so no time was spent in getting acquainted. Many had been helped physically before and we received a hearty welcome into each village and home at once. As much as possible we all went to the same place for an evening meeting. The work was done for the day and the Indian people enjoy music so the crowds gathered in rapidly as soon as the meetings began. Many took part in the singing and the interest was excellent from beginning to end with very little confusion of any kind.

The last evening out Dr. Esch from Shantipur favored us with a lantern lecture. He showed two sets of pictures, one on the subject of Leprosy, showing what to do in case one is afflicted with that terrible disease and how to avoid getting it, and the other was on the Life of Christ. There

were five or six hundred people present in that meeting and some came long distances. There were a few present from the Mahara caste who are considering accepting Christ as a body. They not only invited us to visit them in their villages but insisted on a visit in the near future. They need the prayers of God's children for there are other sects who are trying hard to keep them from accepting Christianity.

We come in contact with people from about eighty villages each week through the clinic and many of these come each week. They have learned our Christian hymns and enter into the spirit of them heartily. They are learning to pray and some give very good testimonies. There is only one thing that keeps them from accepting Christianity and that is CASTE. Pray that the bands of caste may be broken and that many souls be born into the Kingdom.

Kanker State Tour.

Bro. and Sister Graber with a number of native co-workers from Dhamtari and Balodgahan toured to the South of Balodgahan as far as the capital of Kanker State during January and February. Several hundred books and Gospel portions were sold and a considerable amount of medicine was dispensed. These books are hardly worthy of this name but are rather pamphlets and booklets, which sell at the very nominal price of from a half to one or two cents, but they have been found to be very effective means of Christian propaganda.

In the villages we found no opposition to direct preaching although the message was presented as dogmatically and vigorously as could well be imagined. Everyone agreed that something should be done to be saved from sin and its certain consequences but the moral stamina required to get out of the ancient and time-worn ruts somehow was lacking. Our hope lies in this that we believe that by such teaching through sermon, books, and example, the old ironclad social system in which these people are imprisoned will gradually break down leaving the individual more free to do as he knows to be right.

We are sowing the Gospel seed. May God give the increase.

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April is the month with which the hot season makes its advent in central India. Already there is no mistaking about the scorching south west winds, the haze, and the parched fields. On the sixth of April one thermometer on a bungalow verandah registered 104 degrees, and there are already occasional nights when out-door sleeping even feels warm.

On the ninth of March Bro. Lapp and Bro. Kaufman drove to Kondai, about thirty miles to the South of Ghatula, to meet a committee from the German Lutheran Schleswig Holstien Mission regarding a change in the boundary line between our fields. The German mission has its work among a people who speak the Uriya language and thus was unable to do any evangelization among the Hindi speaking people of the northern end of its district. As a result of this meeting the south-eastern corner of our field has been extended to the town of Raigarh, about twenty miles beyond the original accepted limits. This opens a very large territory to be reached through the proposed new station at Likhma of which we reported in an earlier issue. The new territory contains some thousands of mostly illiterate people who have not yet as much as heard about Christ. Will you help us bring the Good News to them?

We have had several cases of rather severe illness among our missionaries this spring. Sister Troyer, who became ill about the middle of December, finally regained enough strength to make the trip to Darjeeling the last week in March. In the cooler climate and the better mountain air she hopes to be able to regain her full strength.

The 27th of March Dr. Eschs received a telegram from Landour stating that their little daughter Nellie was suffering from a severe attack of kidney trouble. Doctor left at once for Landour and found her very ill indeed, but she made rapid amends and at this writing is well on the way to recovery.

Bro. Beare received a wire on the 2nd of April asking him to come at once to Darjeeling because his little daughter Evelyn was suffering from pneumonia. Later reports indicate that her case was a serious one and we cannot yet say what the outcome will be. Much prayer has been made in behalf of these sick and we praise God for having heard us. He has again been faithful who promised, as in James 5:15-16.

The Easter season was observed with more or less of special meetings at the various stations. In Dhamtari evening meetings were held in the open air beginning Thursday evening, the series of special meetings closing with the Sunday morning service. Communion services were held in most of our churches during the month of March.

In regular Church Conference on the 1st of March Bro. G. J. Lapp was chosen by lot to the office of Bishop, two brethren being in the lot. Ordination services were held at the Sunderganj Church on the 11th of March. Brethren Esch and Friesen, Bishops in the Indian Church, officiated in the ordination.

Girls' Orphanage.

A sad accident occurred on Saturday, March 3rd when one of our girls was drowned while bathing. She was a bright, promising girl of about thirteen years.

Four girls have recently been married and have gone out into homes of their own. We hope and pray that these girls may be true witnesses to God in the home and to their heathen friends and neighbors.

School closes for the hot season vacation on the 30th of April.

We are planning to hold a series of meetings for the girls the first of May. We believe that the fundamental principles of Christianity can only be grasped after much faithful teaching and trusting God for spiritual enlighten-

ment. The forces that militate in a land like India against the development of sweet, strong christian lives are appalling. Will you pray for these girls that God may create in their hearts a real sense of sin and a greater desire to be true and faithful.

For some years the girls' School has had to face an acute problem with girls, most of whom came from the famine, who are unable to make normal progress in school. This year after the annual examination they were separated into what is called the special industrial class. They are happy in their work and the arrangement is much better for them as well as for the progress of the other members of the classes.

Sankra News.

March 18th nineteen children were baptized in this congregation. Immediately after the baptismal service communion was observed. All the members were ready to partake of the sacred emblems and with one or two exceptions were present.

On March 14th Dr. Muir, who is in the School of Tropical Medicine and is authority on the subject of Leprosy, visited our clinic. He spent the day with us and gave us many helpful suggestions and much encouragement. On that day we treated one hundred and fifty patients, ninety-seven of whom were Lepers. He is now on furlough and when he returns it is his plan to organize treatment centers in every Leprous district as much as possible. Now that the hot season is on the Gospel truck leaves the station at three-thirty in the morning and all are ready for work a little after sunrise and the bulk of the work is done before it gets so hot.

The new evangelistic station in Balod is being prepared for the workers, and two families are making preparation to get out as soon as possible. The workers in this station will meet with more opposition than in some of the other stations and they need our prayers.

We have three in-patients at this writing who came to us from villages that are thirty or more miles away. It is an opportunity to get the Gospel to them and we hope they will carry the message back to others in their village.

Baby Day At Balodgahan.

March 5th was set apart at Balodgahan as "Baby Day". All the mothers were invited to bring their babies under three years of age. In the forenoon a lecture on the care of infants was given to the mothers, and a card was given for each child on which its name, age, and father's name were written. This was done to facilitate the work of the afternoon. In the afternoon the babies were brought again, with their admission cards, and were weighed and measured and given an examination by Dr. Esch. The mothers responded very enthusiastically and when the day's work was finished we found that sixty-six babies had been examined. Forty of these were the children of Christians and twenty-six of Hindus.

The object of the day's work was to give information to the mothers regarding the care of their children and to stimulate an interest in normal babies as well as to determine the physical condition of the children in our community with a view to bettering conditions if possible. Some normal babies were found, and many, too, who showed a lack of care. The most outstanding case was that of a child, one and a half years old, who weighed ten pounds and was still unable to walk. There is a great need for doing definite work along these lines in all our communities and we hope that this may be a step in helping conditions among the little ones about us.



INDIA MISSION NEWS.

Vol. VII. § Dhamtari, C. P., India, May 1928. § No. 5.

SHANTIPUR STATION NUMBER.

The meaning of the name "Shantipur" is "Village of Peace". The purpose of this station is to furnish a home for the people afflicted with leprosy, as well as for their children who are as yet not tainted with the dread disease.

When the Mission was first established in Dhamtari there was a separate place provided for the lepers in the south east part of Dhamtari. The work increased in size so that it was thought necessary for the best of all concerned to get a new site for the Leper Home. So the present site of Shantipur was chosen which in most respects is an ideal site for a leper home.

Shantipur is situated 5 miles south west of Dhamtari near the main Dhamtari-Jagdapur road so that we have a good road to travel the whole year. The plot of land consists of about 120 acres, is a part Chota Borid village, is so situated that it lies about a mile distant from any other village, and, being a plot all by itself, makes an ideal site for a leper home.

The land is partly murrum plain which slopes off towards the south east and includes about 40 acres of good farming land, which furnishes work for the leper folks at least part of the year, and a little food and fodder for the cattle.

BUILDINGS.

Building work was begun here in the early part of 1923. In the fall of 1924 the people were moved to their new quarters, some in temporary quarters. The building program is finished now and includes 24 buildings for lepers, which give accommodation for 288 inmates; one central dispensary where medicine is dispensed, and an office for the Superintendent and his helpers; two kitchens where the food is cooked for the inmates; one barn for the cattle and place for storing grain and fodder; one home for untainted boys which will accommodate 30 boys; one home for untainted girls that will accommodate 30 girls; a school house for the untainted children, and children of other healthy folks living on the place; a

bungalow for the Superintendent, and quarters for all other helpers and workers in the Home. Last of all the Church building, built in the centre of the home, which will seat 400 people, so arranged that the lepers sit separately.

This whole place, including the price of the land, cost about Rs. 1,40,000/0/0 of which Government gave Rs. 57,000/0/0. The rest being furnished by the Mission to Lepers, except what was given by the Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, about \$2500.00. for part of the Superintendent's bungalow, the deacon's home, and the home for the untainted boys.

THE LEPERS.

These are human beings, the same as all others, and have their peculiar needs and tastes. They come to us from the villages around in various conditions, often in the last stages of the disease, when they have become loathsome and helpless so that no one will have anything to do with them. None is refused admission, all are given the best treatment we can give under the circumstances and many recover to a certain extent. With good suitable food and simple medical and sanitary treatment many will get much benefit if there is enough vitality left.

Those in the hopeful stages of the disease are given injections for the healing of the leprosy. These injections with other treatment have proved a great blessing in the early case, and even in the advanced case there is help received from the treatment.

It is no longer necessary to tell a person that "if he is once a leper he is always a leper" as the statement was formerly made. Last year seven cases of young people were dismissed as symptom free. These children are being kept under observation and are given frequent examinations to see if there is any further manifestation of the disease. Time will tell if the result will be permanent or not. All who are able are required to work a few hours daily.

RELIGIOUS TEACHING.

Most of the people that come to us are ignorant and illiterate, so that it takes much patience and time to get them to understand much. However, after some time they usually get enough knowledge to grasp the simple, plain teachings of Christ and many of them become Christians.

We have Sunday School every Sunday morning and Church services on Sunday afternoon; regular prayer meeting on Wednesday evening. The lepers take part in all these services. There are other daily prayers and special meetings among the lepers in their homes. Usually conducted by the lepers themselves. Sometimes by others who come to help.

The population of Shantipur is about 250 souls including the healthy folks. There are about 180 lepers and untainted children.

THE UNTAINTED CHILDREN.

These are the healthy children of lepers. All children are removed from their leper parents as soon as possible after birth. Lepers do not live as families in the home.

We have now 34 untainted children. Those who are of primary grade are kept in the home and go to school here. Those who read beyond that stage go to more advanced schools. At present there are 10 girls in the school at Balodgahan, one in Normal Training in Bilaspur, one boy at Jubbulpore learning blacksmithing, four boys in the carpentry School at Dhamtari, two in the Anglo Vernacular, (grammar) school, and two have just finished reading in the 5th Hindi Class. These latter two are asking to be taught tailoring since they think they would like to be tailors.

The untainted children as they grow up get married among their own number as far as possible, enter the occupation they have chosen, and live among their folks without any restrictions. So far I know of no one who has got leprosy after they were grown up even though their parents were lepers. It is worth much to be able to save these children from leprosy and make them useful Christians men and women.

SUPPORT.

Government pays Rs. 4/0/0 per capita per month for the maintenance of each leper in the home. And Rs. 2/- per month for each leper child and nothing for the untainted children. This is a little more than half the cost of maintenance for the adults and less for the children. The remainder of the support of all is furnished by the Mission to Lepers, Head Office in London, which organization supports

much work among the lepers in all parts of the world. The money sent by American friends through the Mission Board for the lepers is used for their support thus helping the Mission to lepers to bear their heavy burden.

The Christian lepers are your brethren and need your help and prayers. Pray that the many thousands more who need help and care may be persuaded to come before it is too late both physically and spiritually. Pray for those in charge of the work that they may be used of God to His Glory.

C. D. ESCH,
Superintendent,
 Shantipur Leper Home.

NEWS ITEMS.

The new water system at the Leper Home was opened on the 7th of May. There is an elevated tank with water piped into the various units of the home. This system overcomes the former difficulties and trials of getting all the water needed during the hot season from a well on lower ground at quite a distance from the home.

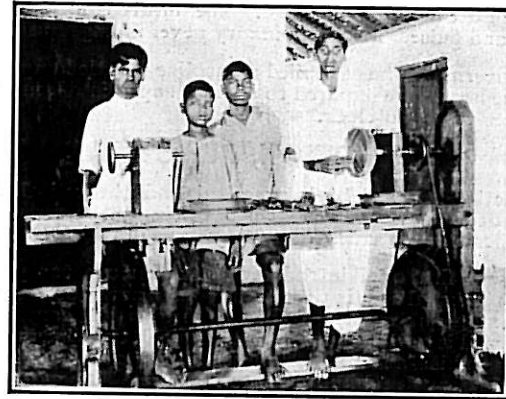
At this season of the year there are occasional rather severe electrical and wind storms. Bro. Brunk who is living in a tent while seeing to the building of the Dondi bungalow had a rather exciting experience one evening when it became necessary for several men to hold on to the tent ropes to keep the tent from being blown away. A number of trees were blown down and many branches flew over head but they are thankful to God that they, as well as the tent and the motor car, all escaped injury.

On April 15th Rama, of whom we wrote in an earlier issue of the Mission News, was received back into Church fellowship after having been outside the fold for many years. On the 6th of May he was married to Lois the daughter of Mohan.

INDIA MISSION NEWS.

Vol. VII. § Dhamtari, C. P., India, June 1928. § No. 6.

THE CARPENTRY SCHOOL.



Making fancy turned plates on the Carpentry School lathe.

This is the only purely industrial institution at present maintained by the A. M. Mission. The school is located in Dhamtari, and its only Master is K. D. Ram, a Christian of good character, training and ability. In reality the school is a government institution and Mr. Ram is a government servant, the Mission being merely the manager of the school. The advantages of this arrangement are obvious. The government shoulders practically the entire cost of operation of the school while the Mission thus has the opportunity of training under its own supervision and direction a number of Christian boys in carpentry, with the added opportunity of bringing a number of non-Christian boys directly under Christian training and influence. It gives us further an opportunity for showing through this school that we as Christians believe in the dignity of labor, and that we are interested also in the economic and industrial welfare of the people of India.

THE HOSTEL.

There is maintained in connection with the school a hostel, and the Instructor of the school is also the warden of the hostel. The boys are thus kept under supervision and proper influence not only during school hours, but during every hour of the twenty-four. A cook prepares the food and an inspection at meal time reveals the fact that sawing and planing are splendid appetizers. Before the carpentry school hostel was opened these boys were kept in the English school hostel but it was found that their ravenous appetites made keeping them a financial loss for the English hostel. On the first of the month each boy pays Rs. 5]-(about two dollars) into the hostel fund and from this fund the culinary department of the hostel is operated. The meals consist of rice, vegetable curry, and pulse. Meat is a luxury never indulged in.

The government has supplied a gasoline mantle lamp and all boys staying in the hostel are required to attend supervised study each evening from seven to nine o'clock.

INSTRUCTION, PRACTICAL.

Instruction is along both practical and theoretical lines. The boys work at the benches from seven to twelve in the forenoon and are engaged in theoretical studies from two to five in the afternoon.

The boy is first of all introduced to the various tools used by the carpenter. The usual case is that a boy has never so much as held in his hand a plane or a saw before he begins his carpentry course. His back-ground is quite different from that of the American boy who drives nails into his Father's work-bench and chops down cherry trees before he is old enough to know better. A boy here was actually seen trying to operate a hand-saw with the teeth of the saw up and the back down on the board he wished to cut off. A beginner, in his vain attempts to adjust a plane, was seen driving the blade back by striking the cutting edge with an iron hammer.

The boy is first of all taught the use of the common hand saw. He is given slabs and all the useless timber about the shop to experiment on day after day until he is able to saw a fairly straight cut. Next he meets the jack-plane. Again there is a heavy demand on waste timber and after having converted several hundred weight of this material into splinters and shavings he is ready to try the chisel. He begins on the simple mortice and tenon joint. This gives him a review of sawing and planing in the preparation of the necessary timber, and then he incidentally learns measuring, marking, and squaring off as he proceeds with the joint. The first one usually turns out to be a ball and socket joint, but gradually, as the supply of waste timber in the shop nears exhaustion, he has learned to make a fairly tolerable joint.

Simple pieces of furniture are next introduced with more complex projects as his ability grows. At the end of the second year and during the third year boys will be making library tables, dining tables, chairs,

and similar useful articles of furniture. It is always kept in mind however that this is essentially a school and not a factory, and educational value is always given precedence over commercial output. A turning lathe, as the illustration shows, is a part of the school equipment. Very beautiful bowls, plates, candle-sticks and various other turned articles are produced. Indian cabinet woods such as teak and siris lend themselves well to this kind of work and are capable of taking a very high polish.

INSTRUCTION, THEORETICAL

consists of drawing, practical arithmetic, and a little of geometry. When the boy first arrives he is given a sheet of drawing paper and a pencil and he begins to draw straight, parallel lines. However, he is allowed no ruler for this work and if anyone not trained in drawing will try to draw straight, parallel lines free-hand he will find out that the boy's first drawing lesson is no mere farce. After wearing down a considerable amount of erasing rubber and making heavy inroads on the supply of drawing paper he finally produces a sheet that receives the Instructor's O. K., and he proceeds to drawing simple geometric figures. After this comes sketching of curved figures; then model drawing, after which furniture sketching and machine drawing are introduced, and, before the boy passes out of the school, he makes a number of really good blue-prints.

Throughout the course emphasis is continually laid on practical calculations. Logs are measured, roofing timber is computed, relative sizes of timber required in building a truss is calculated, cubic feet of timber required for a given piece of furniture and other similar problems are continually put before the boys in as practical a way as possible.

The project method of instruction is always followed out. For example, a boy is instructed to make a chair. Rough dimensions are chalked up for him and he prepares a sketch of the chair as he has visualized it. If he is seen to have gotten the proper idea he proceeds with an accurate working drawing prepared to scale. A bill of timber is next prepared and only after that does he begin to cut the required timber. Thus the boy is continually grappling with his project and in the end has before him a definite result of his efforts and abilities. The ideal of our instruction is not to teach theoretical formulæ but to build good, practical carpenters who will be self-supporting citizens after they leave our school.

EXAMINATIONS.

The Inspector of Industrial Schools for the C. P. makes a number of inspection trips to the school during the year, and in the month of April he gives the annual examination. The boys are required to do a paper in theory and drawing, and the Inspector also watches them at their benches for half a day as they work on various projects he assigns for the examination. Boys who are passed in the first division receive

a certificate, and all who pass in first and second divisions receive gratis a kit of tools. The value of these tools is about Rs. 150/- and this enables the boys to enter their occupations without any handicap on account of a lack of tools. It is an actual fact, however, that some of the boys sell most of their tools after leaving school and gradually degenerate to the level of the traditional *barhai* (carpenter) who sits on the ground while he works and uses no tools except a small saw, a chisel, and a hammer. It is one of the discouraging features of this kind of work in India that there is a terrible social inertia that makes progress next to impossible. The ways of the Fathers are good enough, and words like *efficiency*, *practicability*, and *reliability* might as well not be in the language.

SUPPORT.

As said in the beginning, the government shoulders practically all the financial outlay required for the operation of the school. The Instructor's pay, scholarships for 18 boys, as well as all tools, equipment, and stationery articles are paid by government. This leaves for the Mission to furnish scholarships for eight boys at seven rupees per month, and the building required to house the school. The building used at present is satisfactory with the exception of the roof. This is very bad and during the rainy season becomes more than disagreeable, actually causing damage to the building and equipment. A new roof for this building has been placed on our current building budget and we trust our loyal supporters in the home land will see the need and make this new roof possible for us.

JOSEPH D. GRABER,
Superintendent,
M. M. Carpentry School,
Dhamtari, C. P.



INDIA MISSION NEWS.

Vol. VII. § Dhamtari, C. P., India, July 1928. § No. 7.

The first rain of the season came on June 7th and with it the termination of the more severe aspects of the hot season. However, the rains were somewhat sluggish for a number of weeks and the steamy, oppressive heat continued. During the month of June only about seven inches of rain fell, but July has been more wet and consequently not so hot.

Missionaries have all returned to their stations after some leave to the high hills during the hot weather and everywhere the work is going on in earnest.

Mohadi.

During our hot season stay at the hills our people at Mohadi experienced less sickness than they usually do during that season of the year.

The rains are on but there are quite a number of villages to which we can go regularly. We expect, if the Lord wills, to make two special evangelistic tours during the coming cool season. By the time the reader gets this we will be about ready to start on our first tour and we request your prayers.

A nearby Hindu village observes Sunday and we have begun to conduct weekly meetings for these people with the hope that they may go farther than merely observing the Lord's Day.

Our language teacher, who is a Methodist and was baptized as an infant, has made application for membership in our Church.

The missionary family is physically on the mend again. Sister Kniss, Mark, and Paul all had a seige of malaria. Sister Kniss was down for two weeks but is better at this writing.

Dondi.

During the summer the work of collecting material for the building at this new station (Hope Evangelistic Station) went on. Digging in the well was also started but not completed before rains made work in the well impossible. Most of the bungalow foundation is in but that work also had to be stopped as we were unable to get carts for hauling brick from the kiln half-a-mile away. A small building was constructed for temporary living quarters for the missionary-in-charge of the building operations. This building will later be used as a motor shed. For the present practically all work has been stopped, with the exception of lime burning, till after the hard rains are past.

Balodgahan.

School reopened after summer holidays on the 4th of July.

On July 2nd Puleshar, one of our Indian trained nurses, was married to Obed, one of our young men who completed his High School work in Dhamtari last year. Puleshar works in our hospital at Dhamtari while Obed teaches in the primary school at the same place. We are expecting these young people to be valuable workers in the Church.

Since the rains have started malaria fever is becoming more common among the girls of the orphanage, but so far none have been seriously ill.

On July 15th Bro. Esch preached an inspiring sermon to us. This was his farewell sermon for Balodgahan before the Esch family proceeds on furlough.

The Christian workers here are taking up their special studies in connection with the Christian Workers Normal which will be held in November. Pray for them that they may increase in the knowledge of the Lord and that they may sink deeper into His Love.

Sankra.

Bro. Hirsch and Sister Sugni Bai have moved to our new outstation at Balod. They find a warm welcome into the homes of the people and we hope and pray that they may be able to bring the Gospel to many in that rather large and important village.

Bro. Friesen made a short trip to Landour recently to see the boys who are in school there. He was called home a few days early on account of the illness of Paul. Paul went down with dysentery a few days after Bro. Friesen left and it proved to be a very stubborn case, though he is improving now.

Dhamtari.

There are 202 students enrolled in the English School of whom 21 are in the High School department. We have succeeded in securing the services of a competent drawing teacher on our staff. He is a Christian.

The Director of Public Instruction for the Central Provinces recently visited the Mission schools at Dhamtari. This officer is the son of a Missionary and as such is keenly sympathetic with the objective of mission schools. His suggestions were not merely of a departmental nature but were made with a view to help the Christian teaching of the schools as well.

The fourth primary and normal classes are just now transplanting rice as part of their school work. They enjoy this work more this year than last because they see the benefit of being able to do something with their hands.

A farewell meeting and dinner for Bro. Esch, who has had Bishop oversight of the Sunderganj Church for a number of years past, was held in the primary school building on the evening of the 22nd July. A large number of the congregation were present.

Born to Bro. and Sister Vogt at Landour on the 15th of July a son named Merle.

Born to Mr. and Mrs. J. M. G. Ram on the 11th July at the European ward, Medical Station, a girl named Muriel Olga. Mr. Ram is a teacher in our High School.

Dr. Troyer made two trips to Mohadi recently on account of the illness there of Sister Kniss. Living in an out-station far from medical help during the rainy season is often very trying.

Since the rice sowing is finished more patients are again coming to the hospital. Dr. Benson, our Indian assistant, is doing good work and is a great help in the work.

Shantipur.

The work at the Leper home has been taken up by Bro. and Sister Graber. The Esch family is leaving the Station for their furlough on the 28th of July, and are sailing by the outbound S. S. Cracovia from Bombay on the 1st of August. Dr. Troyer has been given charge of the medical work at the Leper Home.

Ghatula.

Bible School opened for another six month term on the 17th June with 22 students enrolled. They are a good group and are doing satisfactory work.

A panther has been prowling about the station recently and so far all attempts to capture him have been futile. One morning while two classes were in session in the Bible School he came walking up on the verandah and entered an unoccupied room. The door was quickly closed on him but he made his way back to the jungle in short order leaving shattered glass and a splintered window frame in his tracks. It is thought that the animal is young and hasn't yet learned the proper respect for civilization.

A Snake Story.

The other morning a child that had been bitten by a cobra the evening before was brought to the hospital. The cobra, a deadly poisonous snake, was killed and also brought in a basket so that there could be no mistaking as to the species. Death usually occurs within an hour after the bite occurs. These people live about a fourth of a mile from the hospital and the child was bitten about ten o'clock at night, yet the child was not brought till the following morning at eight. *Rigor Mortis* had set in, but is a common superstition that a person suffering from snake bite is not completely dead for at least two days after the bite regardless of outward appearances. Hence they brought the lifeless body to see what we could do for it. Of course, all we could do was to try to impress them with the necessity of bringing the patient immediately.

This only illustrates how the people will cling to their old customs and superstitions. They worship the snake and very few will volunteer to kill it. Pray for us that we may give them the TRUTH that will make them FREE.

INDIA MISSION NEWS.

Vol. VII. § Dhamtari, C. P., India, August 1928. § No. 8.

A statement made by a Missionary of wide experience in India came to our attention recently. It is worthy the consideration of every Missionary and every other disciple of Christ as well. He said in effect that many people expect the good influence of their lives to draw men to Christ and so cease to be genuinely aggressive, in the Lord's Commission of making disciples of all people. The good influence of a consistent life is absolutely necessary; but usually Christ expects us to be more than a mere subtle, invisible influence. Sometimes He wants us to be a *voice*, and always we are commanded to *fight*.

Telegram received by the Mission on the 1st of August from Bombay:

"Farewell Greetings to All. Rejoice in the Lord. See Habakuk 3:17-19.

C. D. Esch and Family."

A ghastly murder and suicide occurred in the village of Borid on the 11th of August when the village owner shot his daughter with a shot-gun and then subsequently shot himself. The cause of the crime was an outraged sense of self-respect. The daughter had long been a source of shame and humiliation to the family by her immoral conduct and the father sought to save the respect of the family by this crime. The Shantipur Leper Home is within the limits of the village of Borid and the murder was committed not more than a mile from the mission bungalow. The strongest impression of the whole affair is the fact that these people *died in their sins*. Yet this same sad statement must be made of thousands more in India every day who die without a Saviour. How much do we, do you care?

Bro. and Sister Vogt with their new son Merle returned from Landour on the 16th of August.

Dr. R. G. Cochrane, Medical Advisor to the Mission to Lepers, spent a few days at Shantipur the first week of August. A significant statement he made while here was that the new hope of life a leper gets when he accepts Jesus Christ is an essential factor in the treatment and cure of this dread disease.

Doctors Friesen and Troyer performed an abdominal operation on a patient from Sankra at the Dhamtari Hospital on the 16th of August.

The leper clinic at Sikosa is growing week by week. Bro. Friesen reports that on the 15th of August 113 lepers were treated and a total of 183 patients were registered for the day.

After a drought of three weeks the rains seem to have set in again on the 15th of August. Rice was suffering and no doubt the crop has been damaged somewhat. August is usually the wettest month of the whole season hence the break in the rains was unusual.

The dates for the fall language examinations are September 13th for orals and October 11, 12, and 13th for the written work.

CHRISTIAN WORKERS NORMAL.

General Subject: PRAYER.

The annual Normal, or spiritual Life Conference for all Christian workers is to be held this year at Dhamtari from the 24th October to the 7th of November. The course of study for Evangelists and Bible Women that was outlined by the Evangelistic Committee includes the books of Joshua and Acts from the Bible and a book called, "Jesus is Coming." These courses are taught before the opening of the Normal by the various missionaries in charge of workers and during the first three days of the Normal a written examination on these books will be held.

Bro. Friesen has been chosen manager of the Conference. The daily program will run as follows.

Morning Session:

1. Devotional hour by Sister Good.
2. Sectional Study Classes in charge of Bro. Friesen, Bro. Lehman, Sister Lehman, and Sister Sarah Lapp.

Afternoon Session:

1. Round Table Discussion on Doctrine conducted by Bro. Kaufman.

Evening Session:

2. Evangelistic Meeting arranged by Bro. Graber.
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For a part of these meetings arrangements have been made for all teachers in all our schools to attend. A special course in "Bible Teaching in the School" is arranged for them, to be taught by Bro. Brunk. J. M. G. Ram from the High School will conduct a special class for non-Christian teachers during this period.

Will you pray that this Conference may be fruitful in the deepening of the spiritual life of every Christian worker and teacher?

HOW YOUR MONEY IS INVESTED.

The Church through the Mission Board sends us at present a little more than \$ 3000.00 per month.

\$ 210.00 is used for Medical work consisting of the general Hospital at Dhamtari, and one Dispensary each at Balodgahan, Sankra, and Ghatula.

\$ 525.00 is used in Evangelistic work. This includes the support of 32 Bible Women and 21 Evangelists; 7 village schools (located at Ghatula, Khaspur, Bagtari, Gopalpuri, Bhatgaon, Maradeo, and Mohadi); the Bible School at Ghatula; Religious Literature and Tracts; and special touring expenses.

\$ 512.00 is used in the Educational work consisting of one English High and Middle School, one Normal School, one boys' and one girls' Primary School at Dhamtari; one Hindi Middle and Primary School for girls and one station Primary School at Balodgahan; and one Primary School at Sankra. In all the schools at present maintained by the Mission, are about 1070 pupils taught by a staff of 72 teachers.

\$ 55.00 is required to meet expenses incidental to Language Study.

\$ 335.00 is spent for operating allowance for motor cars, ox tongas and carts, feed for oxen, night watchmen, mail carriers, postage and stationery, office help, minor repairs, and other items of a miscellaneous nature.

\$ 1400.00 goes toward the education and support of 525 boys and girls, support for 115 widows, 8 old men, and 12 babies.

Is it a good investment ?

INDIA MISSION NEWS.

Vol. VII. § Dhamtari, C. P., India, Sept. 1928. § No. 9.

The rainy season, or rather the lack of it, continues to be the chief concern among those interested in India's rice crop. The total rainfall to date is 35 inches which is about ten inches below the average. The rice crop has suffered considerably and if the rains should have stopped entirely, and there are indications of this, there can be not more than a fourth of a crop. Since the mass of India's people keep no resources in store but depend yearly on the crop for their sustenance, a single crop failure has a tremendous bearing on the welfare of these people. Already the price of rice has advanced sharply.

Balodgahan.

During the month of August two aged sisters of the Widows' Home passed to their eternal reward. One had been paralyzed for seven years.

The repairs on the village bungalow are about complete. It is now much more convenient for two families to occupy. Being one of the oldest bungalows in the Mission repairs had become imperative.

Recently two more women have come into the Widows' Home from a neighboring Mission who are paying their full support.

On Sunday the 2nd of September Bro. and Sister Graber worshipped with the congregation at this place. Bro. Graber preached a sermon on Prayer.

On the following Sunday Bro. Hijkeal, who has charge of the Home Mission Station at Mogradahan, preached a sermon on "Tithing" in the regular morning service. An offering for the Home Mission was taken up after the sermon.

Bro. Sukhlal, one of our Deacons, was called to Bilaspur recently on account of the serious illness of his daughter who is in school there. The Doctors have diagnosed her disease as typhoid. Special prayer has been offered to God in her

behalf and we believe He will hear us.....Later reports indicate that she is much improved.

We are having Mothers' Meetings once each month for the mothers of the village. There are many things the Indian mother does not know about bringing up her child. We are endeavoring to help the mothers so that their children may have a better opportunity for normal development along all lines. Mrs. Biswasspoke at this meeting on the 13th of September.

Bro. and Sister Brunk and Sister Good spent a few days recently visiting the Mennonite Mission at Champa C. P.

Sept. 23rd is the date for our preparatory service and the following Sunday is the date set for Communion. We are praying for a season of blessing at this time. Bro. Friesen, who has Bishop oversight of this congregation, will have charge of these services.

The babies in the Babies' Home are all "quite well at present. We have thirteen babies in the Home just now.

Ghatula.

Bro. Lapp writes, "This forenoon I went to a near village to treat a Gond woman who had been bitten by a snake and was groggy when I got there. After half an hour she recovered from the poison."

The enrollment at the Ghatula village school is 132. The people of the surrounding villages want a well at the school and are pledging donations to help construct it. A number of villages have had meetings and pledged different amounts varying from fifteen to twenty-five rupees.

First term examinations were held at the Bible School the first week in September. A few did not do well with their papers. They were also poor in their class work. Most of the students did creditable work.

A poor woman came to the hospital with a broken arm which had dangled for several weeks because of the neglect of a mother-in-law. We found out that the husband of the young woman had mauled her and broken her arm by jumping on it with his feet. The wrongs of Indian womanhood are not all done away with as yet.

Another poor twelve-year-old girl crawled to Ghatula from a village five miles East with three large open sores on her body which were terribly putrefied and full of worms. The Nurse couldn't restrain nausea as she cleaned up the loathsome festers. The girl is of a beggar caste whose mother forsook her. She is also a hunchback.

Bro. Lapp is working hard at the preparation of a book on Bible Doctrine in Hindi. The manuscript will be complete within a few more weeks. Literature of this kind is needed as fast as we have time, talent and funds for its preparation.

Sankra.

We moved into our new dispensary on the 10th of September.

Every second Sunday afternoon we hold a service on the veranda of our workers' house at Balod. Large crowds come to listen to these services and show a good interest.

Dhamtari.

An epidemic of influenza had made its rounds in the Boys' Orphanage. A number of boys were quite sick but there were no deaths for which we thank a kind heavenly Father.

Brother Lehman had gone to Calcutta on business and while there fell ill with influenza and was compelled to spend a week in the hospital until recovered sufficiently to return home.

The starting of three power mills in Dhamtari for hulling rice is making the export of locally grown rice more easy and is raising the price of rice. This may need to be taken into account in making estimates for our Charitable Institutions in the future.

Eight candidates appeared for the Hindi oral examinations at Dhamtari on the 19th of September. Brother and Sister Vogt, and Miss Schmidt of the General Conference Mission at Korba, sat for the first year examination. Brother Kniss, Mr. Deurkson, also from Korba, and Miss Gadt of the Evangelical Mission at Raipur were the second year candidates. Brother and Sister Graber appeared in the

third year examination. All the candidates were passed. Brother Lehman and Mr. Gass of the Evangelical Mission at Raipur were the examiners.

The Inspector of Schools visited our English School on September 4th, 5th and 6th thoroughly examining the teaching in the various classes.

The Inspector of Industrial Schools visited the Mennonite Mission Carpentry School on September 14th and 15th. There are at present 23 boys serving their apprenticeship in the Carpentry School. In addition to these there are three applicants for admission bringing the total to 26, the present full capacity of the school.

The Junior Hostel attached to the English School is filled to its capacity, 65 boys being distributed in its various rooms. This means a heavy responsibility on the Warden, Brother Peter, who is also one of the Deacons in the Sunderganj congregation.

Brother Peter preached an acceptable sermon to the Sunderganj congregation on Sunday September 9th. His subject was, "How to Overcome Temptation".

Medical Station.

Little Mark Kniss came to the ward again today (September 8th) after being out for a week. His temperature has gone up again and the Doctors are trying in every way to find its cause. We are not forgetting the most important part,—Prayer.

Dr. Troyer attended a meeting of the Mid-India Medical Association at Jubbulpore the second week in September.

In the last several weeks we have had two quite unusual abdominal operations at the hospital. Both patients seem to be recovering nicely. We thank the Lord for His help and guidance in all our work.

INDIA MISSION NEWS.

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I hold a man to be indolent who evades life on its inward side. A man must be sure first that he is in touch with God. Thereafter, but only thereafter, let him go out and mix and mingle with the traffic of the day.....
The Superintendent.

The annual Business Meeting of the Mission will this year be held at Dhamtari from December 11 to 14. This is the only time of the year that the missionaries are all together as one family. A common mess has been arranged and we are looking forward to a time of happy fellowship with each other. The first day and parts of the remaining days will be given over to devotional meetings and discussion of topics relating to our spiritual life. The subject of Prayer has been selected as a general theme for the meetings. Will the home Church remember us in these days when many weighty problems will come up for solution?

At the time of this writing the annual Normal and Spiritual Life Conference for all Christian Workers and Teachers is in progress at Dhamtari. Attendance is good and the meetings are bringing us rich blessings. The season most suitable for village preaching work is here and the workers will go forth to the village masses with a new inspiration and message from these meetings.

Balodgahan. (Girls' School)

The Government Inspectress of schools spent two days during October in our school. On the whole she seemed favorably impressed with the work of the teachers.

An effort to find the physical causes for the retardation of progress among some of the girls in the school has taken a great deal of the time of several missionaries the past few weeks. To eliminate these causes will mean very much to the future of the girls as well as to our future Christian community. The findings from the examinations and investiga-

tions have made us feel that the effort was much worth while. Medical attention and treatment are given where necessary. We have also begun to give a cup of milk and a rest period to the little girls in the beginners' class daily.

The greater part of the time in the weekly teachers' meetings this year has been given to the method of Bible teaching in the school. The teachers have taken a keen interest in these meetings and we feel that our Bible courses have been improved.

Sankra.

This month the workers have all been in for a few days of study in preparation for the Normal. These days have been a source of inspiration to the missionaries and to the workers. We believe this fellowship is valuable and that such seasons together in study and devotion should be arranged for oftener.

Interest in the roadside clinic continues to grow. The people listen to the Gospel messages and to the singing as never before. Numbers also continue to increase. This month we have averaged 125 lepers and 190 patients in all each week. The high mark was reached on the 31st of October when we treated 137 lepers and a total of 200 patients in all. This is a very busy day for us but we feel more than paid for the effort for we have had the privilege of preaching at least five times, and to so many willing listeners. We do not count all the listeners, but on one occasion we preached to over fifty people under a tree by the roadside where only ten received medical help. Some came from the fields to listen, others who were travelers stopped as they passed by, and some were school children on their way to school.

Bro. Friesen has spent part of two days transporting about twenty widows from Balodgahan to Dondi by motor truck. These women are going out there to help build up the new station located at that place. They took with them all the baggage they needed and some building supplies besides. The truck has proved to be a most useful gift to the Mission and a convenience that we could not well afford to be without.

A family from Raj Nandgaon, forty miles away, is here for treatment. The two small children have been suffering from fever for about three months and are reduced to mere skeletons.

Communion services were held on the 21st of October.

In General.

Dr. Troyer left on the 30th of October for a two weeks' course in leper treatment at the School of Tropical Medicines in Calcutta. The Provincial Leprosy Relief Committee is financing the trip.

Sidhgopal Master spent a few days the latter part of October at Ghatula helping Bro. Lapp with the Doctrinal book. While there he also gave a number of practical and appreciated talks in the Bible School.

On the 3rd of November the lepers at Shantipur were given their annual blanket. The cold weather is beginning to set in and they appreciate the warmth afforded by a new blanket. A prayer of thanksgiving to Jesus was offered as the blankets were distributed, and after the prayer, in true oriental fashion, with a blanket in one arm they waved the other hand as they shouted in unison, "Yishu Masih Ki jai" (Victory to Jesus the Messiah).

The Kniss family has left the European ward at the hospital and all have returned home to Mahodi, although little Mark still runs some temperature.

Bro. Kniss writes from Mahodi, "We are planning two tours among the villages during the coming cold season, the first to begin about the fifteenth of November and the second about the middle of next January. We solicit your prayers that the Lord might bless our special efforts as well as the things that must be done in daily routine.

Nov. 11th is the date set for preparatory services at Shantipur and Maradeo, with Communion the following Sunday.

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This is the holiday season for the Hindus. Dashera and Diwali, two of their great festivals, are held at this time of the year. During the Dashera images of Rawan, whom Ram is said to have killed, are set up in every village and then with great heathenish excitement are thrown down and destroyed. Diwali is the feast of lights and all homes and temples are lavishly lighted with numberless small oil lamps. Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth is worshipped at this time. Gambling is also a part of the "worship" indulged in during this festival.

Picture Cards.

The picture cards sent out from America have become a regular part of our evangelistic equipment. Here is a sample of a message that is printed in Hindi on a sheet of paper the size of the card and pasted on the back. It is evident of course that the message on the card printed in English is of no value to the villager of Chhattisgarh :

Who is Jesus Christ ?

He is the pure and sinless incarnation of God.

Why did He become incarnate ?

To save people from their sins.

How can I get salvation through Christ ?

He that believeth on Christ and accepts Him will not perish but will receive eternal life.

Is there any other saviour in the world ?

There is no saviour except Jesus Christ.

—◆—

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.

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BALODGAHAN VILLAGE NUMBER.

History.

The village of Balodgahan is located seven miles South-East of Dhamtari. It was purchased by the Mission from a Maratha Hindu Malguzar (village land-lord) in 1906 for the purpose of giving Christian farmers an opportunity for buying and owning land. Practically all the villages of India are owned by either Hindu or Mohammedan malguzars and no one can buy land in a village without the sanction of this village owner, even if he should wish to purchase it from another farmer. In other words, a farmer cannot sell his own land without the signature of the village owner on the deed, and so the malguzar can easily keep anyone out of his village he chooses. This power is often used by prejudiced malguzars to keep our Christian brethren out of their villages.

Christians in non-christian villages.

But even where our people have succeeded in securing land in a non-christian village their troubles have but begun, for the whole village organization is for all practical purposes a non-christian *religious* organization. This organization has strong executive force and it is most difficult for any resident of the village to escape its toils, especially when collections are being made for purchasing the sacrifices to be offered to the village idols. There are a number of holidays which cannot be properly observed without the cooperation of all the farmers of the village, so it becomes difficult for a farmer in India not to be a partaker in idol worship. The village priest is employed by levying a tax on all the land holders of the village according to the number of acres of land he holds. These taxes cannot be collected legally from Christians but boycott and pressure of various kinds are used so that it becomes all but impossible to live in the village.

A midnight council.

Even in Balodgahan where the Mission is the malguzar the non-Christian farmers are continually trying to bring pressure on our Christian brethren. Just a few days ago I was called out at eleven o'clock in the night by a committee of the brethren saying that they were having a village meeting to employ the village cow-herd. He is a servant of all the farmers of the village, is hired every six months, is paid in rice according to the amount of land a man farms, and in return must graze and milk all the village cows. On this particular night the cow-herd, a Hindu caste man (Raut) was refusing to graze the Christians' cows because they had not given anything towards the special sacrifice which had been promised to the village idol the year before.

I spent about three hours in the village explaining to the Hindus that they ought to support financially their own worship and not try to force us to help. I reminded them that we brought no force to bear upon them in trying to make them Christians or to support our Church, and finally they decided to continue to herd our cows.

Division of the land.

The total area of the village is 800 acres of which the Mission owns directly 150 acres. 104 acres is village grazing land which is owned by the community and cannot be disposed of in any way. 140 acres are owned by Christians, and 279 acres are owned by non-Christians. These latter are practically all farmers who were land owners when the Mission bought the village. It is the established policy of the Mission to sell all the land it can secure to Christian people. The non-Christians sometimes feel badly that we do not sell land to them but we tell them that they can purchase any amount of land they desire in villages owned by non-Christian landlords.

Since the Mission has purchased the village non-Christians have prospered in our village because the Mission did not practice nor permit the abuses so common in Indian villages, such as much taking of free labor, loaning money to

man in dire need and then foreclosing at a time when he cannot pay in order to get hold of his land, and many other such practices that are the cause of poverty and serfdom. People of the neighboring villages still talk of how poor the people of Balodgahan were before the Mission purchased the village. They say they were so poor that they had a roof on one side of their houses and none on the other.

We have never yet given land free of charge to any of our Church members but have always sold our land at about market price. At present there are twenty-six Christian farmers in Balodgahan who own land of their own and there are many who are anxious to buy land as soon as it becomes available. The Mission recently decided to sell a little over sixty acres of its present holdings to Christian farmers. The Mission is not primarily here to farm, and, furthermore, so much of the work in connection with rice-farming here is hand-work that it becomes very expensive and not very profitable unless the land owner spends a great deal of his time out in the fields over seeing the work. In the past the farming we have done has not been wholly unprofitable but our returns have not been large. Because of fragmentary holdings farm machinery is unpracticable. The original purpose was to secure land for our Christian brethren and in selling land to them we are fulfilling that purpose.

Who farms our land?

During the past three years we rented to other people much of our land, but land renting in this country, as in all other countries, is least profitable to the owner and decidedly harmful to the land. At present it is the intention of the Mission to keep just as much land as the Widows' Home and the Girls' Orphanage can farm. Both these institutions have been farming and this has been helpful to all concerned. This has especially been true of the Widows' Home. It pays a little financially and provides an abundance of healthful outdoor work much of the year for the inmates of the Home. Rice weeding and reaping, and leveling of the fields is all hand work and is particularly adapted to women. The plowing, stacking and threshing of rice are done by men, but women, especially the more feeble, do the winnowing.

Evangelistic opportunity.

The most important question is whether the Mission ownership of the Balodgahan village has been an evangelistic asset. Has it helped or hindered the establishment of the Kingdom of God? It has indeed brought us into close contact with the non-christian people and we have been able to witness to the power of God. They have confessed that surely God has been with us and yet they have refused to yield their lives to Him. The just manner in which the Mission has conducted the affairs of the village has been a real object lesson to the surrounding villages. Some of the people of Balodgahan have become members of our Church, but not a large number. Most of the land owning Christians have come from our orphanages and it was mostly for these that we bought the village and it seems that the original purpose for which the village was bought has been fulfilled and amply justified during the past twenty-two years.

India is so much inclined to make religion merely a matter of outward form and so much a thing apart from the business of everyday life. I believe God is using the village to show them that it is possible to do every-day work along lines of righteousness and justice and in such a manner that God can and does bless. All these things I believe God is using in the establishing of His Kingdom. There is still so much to do but by the help of God and the prayers of His people I believe God will do even a greater work in this village in the years to come.

A. C. BRUNK.

INDIA MISSION NEWS.

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Business Meeting.

Our annual Business Meeting was this year held at the South Sunderganj bungalow from the 11th to the 14th December. 24 missionaries answered the roll call while seven were absent on furlough. Sister Wenger has returned to the field since the meeting, and, with the arrival with her of Bro. and Sister Hostetler, the India Mission family now numbers 33. We are grateful to a kind Heavenly Father and to the Church at home who supports our work here in His name and makes it possible for ever new members to be admitted into our family and for us to continue to expand our work while many neighboring Missions are being compelled to retrench.

The subject of the meeting was "Prayer", and we shall never forget the inspiring addresses, the helpful discussions and the blessed periods of intercession which we were privileged to enjoy together during these four days. Let us, the Missionaries with the home Church, labor together in prayer for the salvation of the lost in India.

Ghatula.

Dr. E. C. Foote and his two sons have come to us as guests from Hastings, Nebraska. As a specialist he is intensely interested in the physical condition of the Indian people and has done us a valuable service. His service also reaches out to our Missionaries.

Sister Lapp suffered recently from an attack of the "Flu." Many people of the Christian community and of the surrounding villages suffered from this disease and from malaria this Autumn.

Among the gifts at our Thanksgiving services in November rice, pumpkins, one team of young oxen, pigeons, fowls, garments, as well as coins were brought as thank offerings. The total value of the offering amounted to over two rupees

per capita of the congregation. We thank God for this spirit of giving.

From a small capital accumulated from renting out the Ghatula Church land small amounts are loaned to Indian brethren to purchase property or to start in business in a small way. In this way a few of our members have been helped on their feet financially.

Bible School closed for the year on the 7th of December. Most of the students passed creditably in final examinations.

Shantipur.

We have at present about 160 lepers in the Home. Most of these have become Christians since coming here. There is now a class under instruction which is to receive baptism in the near future.

The wife of David, our caretaker, died suddenly of heart failure on the night of the 26th of December. She leaves her husband and a family of six children. The three youngest are girls just of an age when they most need a Mother. The family and all who knew her are saddened by her death, but we have the promise of 1 Cor. 15 and we mourn not as they who have no hope.

The missionaries in the station received two cables from home during the month of December conveying sad news, one of the death of Sister Graber's brother and the other of Bro. Graber's Aunt.

The rice harvest for the year has been gathered in and stacked. The threshing will begin sometime in January. The crop was fairly good and the field work in connection with the Asylum will pay out financially besides furnishing healthful outdoor work for many of the inmates.

The Thanksgiving day offering totalled nearly fifty rupees this year. When we remember that over three fourths of the congregation is made up of leper members who depend on us for their daily bread this figure becomes more significant.

On Sunday afternoons the lepers form groups and conduct Sunday Schools in several of the surrounding near-by villages.

In General.

The Sunday School statistics for the year show that during 1928 we had in our station Sunday Schools an average attendance of 979 each Sunday, and in the Village Sunday Schools an average of 996. This means that on an average 1975 people were in our Sunday Schools each week.

On the 20th of December Sister Wenger and the Hostetler family arrived. J. N. Kaufman and G. H. Beare met the party with motor cars at Raipur and returned to Dhamtari at about sundown. Sister Wenger is stationed at Balodgahan while the Hostetlers are staying at Shantipur for language study.

The second and third weeks of December were unusually cold. There was no frost of course but the air was chilly and the native who does not possess an abundance of warm clothing suffered considerably. The method of keeping warm at such a time is to fill an earthen pot with coals and set this under the bed. With doors and windows tightly closed the house soon fills with a warm smoke and thus the temperature is kept up. The fresh-air doctrine of course doesn't have a chance when winter sets in here.

Bro. Kniss is very grateful to friends at home who recently made it possible for him to purchase a motor car. Mohadi is 40 miles from Dhamtari by the round-about road that must be traversed and the Kniss family will find this car most useful.

Annual Church Conference is to be held at Dhamtari on the 1st of January.

The sailing date from Bombay for G. J. Lapps is February 15th, and for the Brunks April the 10th.

Dr. Neckie from the Brethren Mission North of Bombay was visiting Dr. Friesen at Sankra during November.

Departmental Committees elected for 1929.

Evangelistic

J. D. Graber, *Chairman.*
P. A. Friesen
Lydia Lehman
L. A. Kniss
M. C. Vogt
Sarah Lapp

Educational

M. C. Lehman, *Chairman.*
J. N. Kaufman
M. M. Good
M. Kanagy
G. H. Beare
Dr. F. Friesen

Medical

M. Wenger, *Chairman.*
Dr. F. Friesen
A. Hartzler
Dr. G. D. Troyer
J. D. Graber

Publicity

M. Kanagy, *Chairman.*
P. A. Friesen
Elsie Kaufman
J. D. Graber
M. C. Lehman

Language & Literature

M. C. Lehman, *Chairman.*
J. N. Kaufman
Minnie Graber
M. Good
M. Wenger

Building

Dr. G. D. Troyer, *Chairman.*
L. A. Kniss
G. H. Beare

Auditing

J. N. Kaufman, *Chairman.*
S. J. Hostetler
J. D. Graber

Continuation

J. N. Kaufman, *Chairman.*
P. A. Friesen
J. D. Graber

Managing Committee

J. N. Kaufman
M. C. Lehman
P. A. Friesen
M. Wenger
M. Good
G. H. Beare
J. D. Graber
Dr. G. D. Troyer
L. A. Kniss