

Family Circle

The Christian Life

Small words, but they stir the resonant air
With softest, sweetest hymns
And hovering angels bear the song
To the golden gates of heaven—
Of those who are weaving day by day
And the toil, and dust and strife,
Sweet flowers of joy, and love, and peace,
In the web of their Christian life.
The Christian life, does it mean alone
The hours we spend in prayer?
The offerings laid of spices sweet
On the holy altar stair?
The vows we breathe on bended knee
In the church's sacred calm?
When voices blend in sweet refrain
Or glad thanksgiving psalm!
The Christian life, does it only mean
Great deeds in the Master's name,
Or lives laid down for Christ's dear sake
Beneath faith's oriflamme?
Of victories gained on mountain tops
With glimpses of the Master's face?
It is only great and lofty deeds
That wear his seal of grace?
Not only these! fast grows the web,
A thousand shuffles fair
Gleam through the pattern's silvery sheen,
And thrill the dreamy air,
A cup of water in his name,
Though the gift be small indeed,
Yet it may save a precious soul
In an hour of direst need!
A heart to grieve when others grieve,
To stretch the ready palm,
And when the tempted soul is sick,
To pour the healing balm,
To help the erring back to Christ,
And fold them 'round with love,
The cloak of charity that broods,
As sweet as whitest dove.
To meekly bow the head and bear
The sacrament of pain
To see the needy do not breathe
A prayer to us in vain.
To press life's chalice to one's lips
Accepting joy or ill;
Our life-work growing sweet and pure
Beneath "Our Father's will."

A Trip to Some of Our Out-Stations.

BY MISS THOMPSON, SWATOW, CHINA.

[Instead of the story usually given in this department, we give this week a missionary narrative. The writer, Miss Thompson, and Miss Fielde, are associates of Miss Norwood, so well known in all the Provinces. Miss N. has made one or two trips similar to this.]

Missionary tours to the country are sometimes necessary in the interests of the cause, and here at Swatow we ladies have gone to the distance of eighty or ninety miles inland, a distance which seems much greater, because we must travel slowly and endure many inconveniences. Of one such trip taken by Miss Fielde and myself I propose to write.

Early one dark morning in last March, having provided for a twelve or fourteen days tour, we embarked in a small hired boat, en route for the Western Stations of our Mission. Traveling by sam pan is very comfortable if you have a roomy one and it does not rain. In this case it commenced to rain shortly after we started. Then, under a heavy shower, and with only a narrow space for ourselves and our servants; with beds, baskets, sundry bundles, and a trunk full of Chinese books to be stowed away, the situation was not very enjoyable, nor could that morning's row of twelve or fourteen miles across the Bay, be counted a success merely as a pleasure trip. At last it came to an end, and we were glad to land at Kie Than at the head of the Bay. Here a few persons have lately heard and believed the Gospel, but as yet they have no chapel. We visited these new church members, and were cordially received. One old woman who until recently had been an interpreter for the gods, was loud in her welcome, bustled around with the activity of youth dusting seats for us, putting things in order, and keeping back a closely pressing crowd of curious people. We could do very little here, for this crowd was too noisy to allow of conversation. We also discovered that our hosts had an intention of feasting us, to which we entertained serious objections. Much to her dissatisfaction we left, and going through the village visited the other Christians. On our return we met the old woman who insisted upon leading us back to her house, and when seated brought us each a bowl of sweetened farina broth, with boiled eggs, the (to us) unsavory compounds, to be eaten with chop-sticks. Having partaken sparingly, we were allowed to depart in peace. An hour of rowing landed us at the market town of Phan Thai, where is a small chapel and a membership of twenty one persons. The rain had ceased, and as we sat in our open boat waiting until the preacher and a Bible woman could be called, a curious but civil throng gathered to see the foreign ladies. A short stay at the chapel, a visit to a poor persecuted old blind woman, and we started again to a village across the river, with the object of making peace between a miserable heathen father and his son, who had become a Christian. The son was then attending the Mission School in our Compound, and the father had said in wrath, "Just let him come home once and I will tear his eyes out." In the presence of the assembled village the man was reasoned with until he withdrew this dreadful threat, and then we departed for Khek-khoi farther up the river. Night closed in before we reached the place, but after many inquiries of passing boats we at length anchored at Khek-khoi. We went to our little chapel, truly thankful for the prospect of spending the night under a roof. Many of the church members had collected to welcome us. They watched us eat our supper,

and, judging from their quiet remarks about our food, table-ware and table customs, were much pleased with the entertainment. Our evening meal finished, we taught the people, and when they dispersed at last, tired and sleepy we sought our beds in a loft of the house. How to mount the almost perpendicular steps that led to it was a question that required serious consideration until we saw a strong, thick rope depending from the roof above them, when the problem was solved, and laying hold of this rope we contrived by a kind of hand over hand performance to reach the loft.

A good night's rest strengthened us for our work the next day, which was a visit to Po Chan, a station some five miles away. In vain we tried to hire chairs. They had all been engaged for the purpose of conveying people to a theatrical performance, and we had to walk. At Po Chan we found the church members, with all the village beside, gathered in their chapel waiting to see us. On a table was spread a slight repast, of fruits, candies, and tea, and we received a cordial greeting from the Christians. We made inquiries about what they were doing, and Miss Fielde had an opportunity of talking to a number of women who were crowded in one corner of the dark chapel. We were too weary to visit amongst the church members, and in view of the long walk back were rather hurried. However, one of the brethren by urgent entreaty prevailed on us to go and see his very beautiful little jewelry shop, where we were quite amused by the collection of odd looking trinkets. On our way back we were accompanied a short distance by the church members, and a numerous delegation of sight-seers. Several large-footed women and two young brethren went with us to Khek-khoi. The latter lightened the fatigues of the way by singing hymns, which they had learned from the Missionary. We reached Khek-khoi before dusk and that night, foot-sore and tired as we were, we found rest very acceptable. Next morning we embarked in our boat for Peh Tah still farther up the country. In this place there is a membership of forty-one, and it is a very enterprising band. These people have lately with the help of the missionaries built a commodious chapel, which they think very beautiful. Here we spent several days, including the Sabbath, and were glad to see the interest manifested in the "new doctrine. The preacher is a devoted earnest Christian, and his work speaks for itself. At Peh Tah the church members were anxious to have a school of their own and a teacher had been promised them by Miss Fielde, who also wished to assist at its opening. According to Chinese custom, a great deal of planning and arranging was done. At length the morning for the opening of the school came, and with it the fathers of the boys, each carrying his son's desk and provisions suspended from a pole over his shoulder. The desks were finally arranged in two long rows, and the boys seated themselves, each at his own desk. The teacher, (a lad of 17 years from the boys' school in our Compound), having assumed a long gown and a dignity unnatural to his years, was duly installed in his new position. The people were exhorted to sustain their school and teacher, and then we left for Kueh Sia, where is another chapel and a membership of about fifty. As the boat could not land us near our destination it was thought best for Miss Fielde to go by the boat whilst I went by chair. I had gone but a little way when a pelting rain fell, that interfered with my plans, for my chair bearers having reached the first ferry, set the chair down, saying that it was "distressing" to carry me through the rain, and that they would go no further. My servant and I urged, the ferryman cried to them to come on, but all to no purpose. They stood still, insisting that I should get out of the chair. Just then Miss Fielde came up, and by her advice I waited until the bearers should proceed. She took the boat, and was soon out of sight. I might have spent the remainder of the day at the ferry, so far as appearances to the contrary were concerned, had not Miss Fielde, uneasy as to how the affair would terminate, turned back and taken me into the boat. In about time we were landed a mile from Kueh Sia, and walked through the rain to that place. The kind old sister who keeps the chapel seeing us from afar wading through the mud, ran to our assistance, lent a helping hand over slippery places, and so escorted us to the chapel. We could not see all the members on account of the rain, but as in other places, we were well received. Indeed this was the case wherever we went. Had we accepted all the presents offered to us, of fruits, vegetables and eggs, we might have done no inconsiderable business in the green bazaar here.

At Kueh Sia lives one of Mrs. Partridge's school girls named Po Chn. She is a Christian, but was when very young betrothed to a heathen. This betrothal she and her parents (who are now Christians) are very anxious to break. They had been promised Miss Fielde's help in the matter. Accordingly the mother of the lad was called to the chapel and every persuasion was tried. She was told that the money paid for the girl, with compound interest, would be returned, and every reasonable compensation be made. But the only terms on which the mother would consent to the annulling of the contract were that the friends of the girl should go through the streets, having a trumpet blown before them, and proclaiming that they had most scandalously broken the engagement. Thus the matter stands, and the girl declares that she will never marry and leave home. A little affair also occurred at Kueh Sia that to us was quite laughable, although it was distressing to the Chinese with their strict notions of decorum. A widow of sixty, a church member, came to Miss Fielde in deep trouble, complaining that one of the old men amongst the church members had been making overtures of marriage to her contrary to all custom and decency, that her mother had wept bitterly over the disgrace, and that she herself felt greatly scandalized. She also said that proceeding so uncommon amongst the Chinese, would reflect much discredit upon the church. Accordingly the old man was called, and an in-

quiry instituted. He denied that he had ever thought of such a thing, said somebody wished to ruin him, and asked if it would be wicked to kick the originator of the scandal.

Having spent two or three days at Kueh Sia, we embarked for Kite, stopping an hour by the way at Hwa Cheng, a chapel three miles from the river bank. Our arrival was the signal for the gathering of so great a multitude in and around the chapel, that it was impossible to do anything unless the church members could be gotten together separately. So we left the chapel and walked through the village, giving all an opportunity to see us. Then we gradually drew near the chapel which, finally, we quickly entered, when the doors were as quickly shut and barred after us. Thus, alone with the church members, we could make all necessary inquiries and suggestions. But the people outside did not give us much peace, for they shouted, beat on the doors, and tried to push them in. At last when those inside were trying to admit one more church member, those of the mob nearest the door rushed in pell mell. Many were thrown down and trampled on, and one old woman was picked up for dead, but with a little attention she was somewhat restored. We could say nothing to the people, they were far too rude and noisy, so we soon took leave and came on down to Kit Je. Here we passed a quiet, pleasant Sabbath, and could see and speak with the women who came. We could not visit amongst the church members, as they lived in villages some distance from the city, and our stay was necessarily short. We found the preacher laboring earnestly for the enlightenment of his charge, and things working harmoniously.

Early Monday morning whilst the stars were yet shining, we were preparing to start for Swatow, and before the sun arose we were fairly on our way. But we were not too early to see a long funeral procession of women dressed in white, going to the tomb of some relative, and their wails and lamentations sounded all the more weird and strange for the stillness of that early morning hour, upon which they broke so mournfully.

As we took three little girls for Mrs. Partridge's school in the boat with us, we again found our quarters rather close. We encountered a rough sea during the last half of our day's journey, and it was with truly grateful hearts that we at last landed at our pier, after an absence of twelve days.

Smiles.

A wee laddie was brought before one of the Glasgow bailies, who, after reading him a lecture, asked, "Where did you learn so much wickedness?" "Do you ken the pump in Glassford street?" "No," said the bailie. "Well, then, do you ken the pump in Briggate?" "Yes, sure," was the reply. "Well, then, ye may gang there and pump as long as ye like, but ye canna pump me!"

Even a clothes line becomes unsteady when it has too many sheets in the wind.

An old lady, the other day, was told that eight mules were killed by lightning in an adjoining country. "Good gracious!" she exclaimed, clasping her hands over her head, "I felt in my bones that something had happened to John."

Junior, parsing: "Nihil is a noun." Professor: "What does it come from?" Student: "It don't come at all." Professor, quizzing: "Doesn't it come from Nihil?" Student: "No sir. Ez nihilo nihil fit!" Professor settled.

"You never saw my hands as dirty as that," said a petulant mother to her little girl. "No, but your ma did," was the reply.

"Have you any marble or plaster busts of Psyche?" asked a Chicago lady at an art store. "No," was the reply of the polite but rather verdant clerk, "we have busts of most all the great men, but none of Sankey." The woman did not attempt an explanation.

"Mama," said a little boy who had been sent to dry a towel before the fire, "is it done when it's brown?"

A wit once asked a peasant what part he performed in the great drama of life. "I mind my own business," was the reply.

Husband: "Hil Maria! Take care of the paint!" Painter: "It don't matter, ma'am. I'll all 'ave to be painted again."

In a severe gale a lady asked her neighbor if he was not afraid his house would blow away. "Oh no," was the answer, "the mortgage on it is so heavy as to make that impossible."

Professor (looking at his watch): "As we have a few minutes, I should like to have any one ask questions, if so disposed." Student: "What time is it, please?"

Fireside Pastimes.

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM H. GRAFFMAN.

Contributions of good original puzzles are solicited from every reader of the VISITOR for this department. All communications should be written only on one side of the paper, marked "For Fireside Pastimes," and addressed to William H. Graffman, West Scarborough, Maine, U. S. A.

NUMERICAL PUZZLE.

I am composed of 11 letters.
My 6, 8, 3 is a body of water.
My 10, 3, 4, 11 is a farming implement.
My 7, 8, 9, 10 is a fruit.
My 2, 3, 4, 5 is a kind of fish.
My 11, 9, 10, 1 are parts of the body.
My 1, 2, 9, 10, 4 is a sea-fish.
My whole was the name of a poet.
F. D. M.

Eldon, P. E. I.

CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

1. In grant, but not in sigh.
2. In thou, but not in my.
3. In vapor, also in air.
4. In lion, but not in bear.
5. In play, but not in fun;

6. In daughter, but not in son;
7. In ladie, also in dish;
My whole is the name of a fish.
STEPHEN A. BROWN.

St. Stephen.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

A desert in Arabia, one of England's treaties;
one of England's Foreign possession, a poetic foot, a bird of prey.
The Primals name a musician of the 11th century, and the finals his native country.
TECUMSEH.

Westport, N. S.

DIAMOND PUZZLE.

1. A consonant in Amherst.
2. An animal.
3. A song.
4. A royal title.
5. To tear.
6. To fib.
7. A consonant in Amherst.
Tom.

Moncton, N. B.

CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

I am composed of ten letters.
1. My first is in the Judge but not in the bench;
2. My second is in Scotch but not in French;
3. My third is in harbor but not in bay;
4. My fourth is in Nancy but not in May;
5. My fifth is in harmony but not in tune;
6. My sixth is in April but not in June;
7. My seventh is in marvel but not in mirth;
8. My eighth you may find near the ends of the earth;
9. My ninth is in the globe when riven asunder;
10. My tenth is seen in the lightning and heard in the thunder.
My whole was a famous poet.
S. E. MARCH.

Canning, N. S.

Answers next week.

ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S PASTIMES.

To Numerical Enigma.—Nebuchadnezzar.
To Cross-Word Enigma.—Doxology.
To Poetical Transpositions.—
Pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow-fall on the river,
A moment white, then melts forever.
To Bible Questions.—1. Haman, Sisera.
To Charade.—A ban-don.

SOLUTIONS RECEIVED.

Tom, Moncton, N. B., sends answers to Bible Questions (nearly), Cross-Word Enigma, Word-Square, Triangle, and Concealed Proverb, in the VISITOR of Jan 8th.
A. Non, St. Stephen, to Bible Questions, Word-Square, Cross-Word Enigma, Concealed Proverb and Triangle Puzzle.
A. T. Dykeman, Jemseg, to Bible Questions (nearly), Word-Square, and Concealed Proverb.
C. D. D., Jemseg, to Bible Questions (nearly), Cross-Word, Word-Square and Triangle (partially).

CHAT WITH OUR VISITORS.

Tom. A good acrostic, it shall soon appear.
C. D. D. is thanked for last batch of pastimes.
A. T. D. A very acceptable lot of pastimes. You write nice and plain, which is very pleasing to the puzzle editor as well as the compositor.

Lame Back. Weak Back.

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