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SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

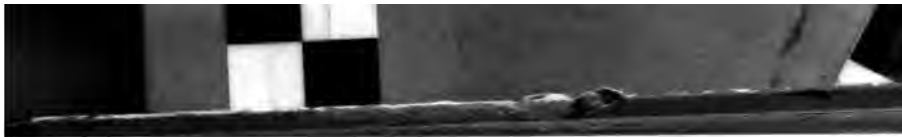


p A CRY, as of pain,
Again and again,
Is borne o'er the deserts and wide-spread-
ing main ;
A cry from the lands that in darkness are
lying,
A cry from the hearts that in sorrow are
sighing ;
It comes unto me ;
It comes unto thee ;
Oh what—oh what shall the answer be ?

p Oh ! hark to the call ;
It comes unto all
Whom Jesus hath rescued from sin's deadly
thrall :
Come over and help us ! in bondage we
languish ;
Come over and help us ; we die in our
anguish ;
It comes unto me ;
It comes unto thee ;
Oh what—oh what shall the answer be ?

p It comes to the soul
That Christ hath made whole,
The heart that is longing His Name to
extol ;
It comes with a chorus of pitiful wailing ;
It comes with a plea which is strong and
prevailing ;
"For Christ's sake" to me ;
"For Christ's sake" to thee ;
Oh what—oh what shall the answer be ?

f We come, Lord, to Thee,
Thy servants are we,
Inspire Thou the answer, and true it shall
be !
If here we should work, or afar Thou
shouldst send us,
O grant that Thy mercy may ever attend
us,
That each one may be
A witness for Thee,
Till all the earth shall Thy glory see !
SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.



FROM SUNRISE LAND

Letters from Japan

By AMY WILSON-CARMICHAEL
/

PREFACE BY REV. C. A. FOX, B.A.

LONDON
MARSHALL BROTHERS

1895

Dear Helpers together By Prayer,

Some of you have asked for this book. Some of you have prayed it into being. Please pray more than ever now!

With the exception of the "Life of Faith" Notes, these little letters were written just for "home"; remembering this, your kindness will excuse mistakes and informalities. And the same plea applies to the little sketches scattered throughout, which, with the exception of a few drawn from curios by friends, were also and only "just for home."

Others could tell you far more, and far more worthily, of the showing forth of His Hand in their part of the great Mission Trust. Will they believe that this thought presses, and that the more conscious of it we are, the more grateful we shall be for their prayer.

Please pray! Please ask that the Master may stoop to use a thing so simple and so small, to lift even one into the Love wherewith He loves.

For sympathy and help from many a Hidden One, many a time—for lessons learned from and with our Leader, Rev. Barclay Buxton, and his band in far Japan—for the love many waters cannot quench, binding us close, Japanese and English Brothers and Sisters together,—I thank Him now.

Yours in The Service,

AMY WILSON-CARMICHAEL.



CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
I. FROM ALBERT DOCKS TO SHANGHAI	1
II. FROM SHANGHAI TO MATSUYE	8
III. MISSION TOUR NO. I	16
IV. WITH THE POWER OF GOD BEHIND IT	29
V. I CANNOT. CAN GOD? GOD CAN!	38
VI. ACROSS JAPAN BY KURUMA	44
VII. KYOTO, AND ONWARDS	54
VIII. TORCHES, THOUGHTS, AND A TYPHOON	61
IX. OUT OF — INTO	69
X. BIRTHDAY GIFTS	77
XI. CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR IN SUNRISE LAND	83
XII. UNTO HIM BE GLORY	89
XIII. CO-WORKERS	97
XIV. TO OSAKA AND BACK	106
XV. NOT YET—ERE LONG.	113
XVI. "NEVER HEARD THESE HONOURABLE WORDS"	121
XVII. SCRAPS—VERY MUCH SO.	130
XVIII. "IT WILL BE A SEED"	140
XIX. WITH ONE BARE TELLING	150
XX. ON WITH THE MESSAGE	158
XXI. CHRIST IS CONQUEROR	166
XXII. AMEN. HALLELUJAH!	176

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

I HAVE been earnestly requested to say a few introductory words on the great cause of Missions. But first I must say a word on the book itself.

It is always interesting to get the first impressions of a young and ardent mind on breaking virgin ground, or failing that, to get the first impressions of old lands on a virgin soul. But how vastly more interesting and important is it to get the first impressions of such a soul not only on launching forth into new worlds, but on touching for the first time the keys of supernatural powers in a strange land. Just such an opportunity is presented to the reader in the following living record of a young lady missionary's maiden experiences abroad.

My friend Amy Wilson-Carmichael went out to Japan under the auspices of the Keswick Convention to join the missionary party in charge of that beloved servant of God the Rev. Barclay Buxton recently established there in connection with the C.M.S.

These simple and unstudied utterances of everyday life in the mission field seem to me to be full of a spontaneous fire and fragrance quite their own. The vivid touches of external nature scattered everywhere do but accentuate and make visible the novel environment and native setting of the all important soul-scenery; indeed these pages throughout are marked by a holy vivacity and a happy glow and sparkle of colour. There is, as we all know, a modesty of outspokenness as well as a modesty of reserve, if only the glory of God be manifestly the absorbing motive, and the absence of self be felt. None but Faith's fresh and eager voice of unwavering devotion lifted under the hoary battlements of heathenism can hope to make any impression on its walls, or arrest the dead ear of countless generations of unbelief.

The Church of Christ in these last days, like all the great business houses around us, has need to close her doors periodically that she may take stock of her inexhaustible divine resources and her boundless opportunities. Then, with these full in view, she has need to rehearse afresh in her own hearing the great primal principles by which alone she can hope to advance the stupendous interests entrusted to her charge. These great principles, the articles indeed of her apostolic constitution, are more than ever needed to-day as the unfailing safeguard and inspiration of all her undertakings.

Never before did the Church so convincingly perceive that none but fully redeemed and consecrated souls can effectually do consecrated service, and yet that one such soul may set on fire a whole dead community, and thereby add unconsciously a new chapter to the Acts of the Apostles. Never before did the Church so keenly feel that on the spiritual equipment and fitness of her chosen representatives everything depends; and that the three most essential qualifications, beyond all others perhaps, for spiritual workers whether at home or abroad are still as ever—*holy deadness, holy daring and holy drudgery*.

And first of these pre-eminently stands out *Holy Deadness*, as essential alike for life and service. It is this that St. Paul emphasizes again and again: "always bearing about in the body the dying," or the deadness to sin and self, "of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal bodies."

In our immortal and life-giving service or ministry, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone."

Holy Daring comes next, which is the inseparable companion of all sober God-

rooted faith when energized by the Holy Ghost. Isaiah complained that "there is none that stirreth up himself to take hold of God"; and David warned Israel of old, "Yea, they spake against God, they said, Can God?" Let us, therefore, with Luther, crucify the question *How*, and crown the *Thou*—"Lord if Thou wilt, Thou canst!"

Holy Drudgery occupies the third place. Without it holy daring, however consecrated, must inevitably fail. For together with the magnificence of an unhesitating faith, such as is implied in the command, "Launch out into the deep," there must ever be associated the lowly quality of holy drudgery—that indispensable habit of dogged industry and devotion to practical detail; "Launch out into the deep, *and* let down your nets for a draught."

" Unheard at midnight Faith embarks her all
Upon some ancient promise of the Word,
Blind sense discarding."

Thank God, to-day the rapidly rising tidal wave of Pentecostal grace is forcing its way far inland, and flooding with new life the old familiar channels and estuaries of our organisations, so as to tempt the hesitating Church to deliberately let herself go, and in the naked grandeur of primitive faith to trust herself implicitly to her Lord. Definite and personal acts of faith must accompany and corroborate the great facts of faith. Such decisive and personal acts of faith shall cast a new and resplendent light upon the grand old Gospel truths, which, however venerable with age they may seem to some, shall break out afresh into swift and living response at the first real touch of desperate yet expectant child-faith. Burning examples of this in the Mission field were never more conspicuous than to-day. "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?"

In closing, let me give five or six special reasons why the Church of to-day is obviously marked out for aggressive missionary enterprise:—

1. There has been vouchsafed to the Church in these last times an exceptionally clear and simple presentation of Gospel truth as to immediate and personal salvation.
2. The widespread and deepening sense of the commanding claims of the Risen Christ upon His Church has forced upon us the necessity of a fuller apprehension and appropriation of the blessed peace and power of His indwelling presence. "Go ye—I am with you alway."
3. The Church has of late become keenly alive to the fact that the best method of enforcing the claims of the Heathen is to bring home first to the conscience of her members the magnitude of their supernatural resources in Christ Jesus, and His consequent claims upon their gratitude. In short, that we must take before we give; and trust Him with everything before we can trust Him for everything.
4. The Church begins to realize the intimate and inseparable connection between her own individual consecration and the evangelization of the world.
5. There has taken place within the Church a marvellous awakening to the greatness of the Person and Office of the Holy Ghost: and consequently to the absolute necessity of her being baptized with the fulness of the Spirit for successful life-service.
6. The growing signs everywhere of the speedy Return of the Master have so stirred the affections of the Bride with holy expectation, that she is increasingly eager to make herself ready.

We know that at Christ's first coming the cry went forth, "This is the Heir, come let us kill Him, and the inheritance shall be ours." But now a very different cry is resounding on all sides, "This is the Heir, come let us crown Him, and the inheritance shall be His!" Let each one of us therefore prepare in haste to crown Him with a priceless diadem of precious souls, which we have personally wrestled for and won, yea Spirit-won, under the solemn light of Calvary's Cross. "Behold I come quickly!—Go ye out therefore quickly!"

CHARLES A. FOX.

FROM SUNRISE LAND

CHAPTER I

From Albert Docks to Shanghai

*"The tender light of home behind, dark heathen gloom before,
The servants of the Lord go forth to many a foreign shore.
But the true light that cannot pale, streams on them from above,
A Light Divine that shall not fail, the smile of Him they love."*

SARAH G. STOCK.

S.S. Valetta, March 3, 1893. By the Pilot.—"Our Saviour has two nail-pierced hands. He lays one upon each of us, and parts us so." You remember that thought, given in our Farewell yesterday? . . . "And our hope for you is steadfast, knowing that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, *so also are ye of the Comfort!*"

Off Gibraltar.—When the Pilot had carried our letters ashore, and the last visible thread was snapped, we felt most truly "*gone*;" but the Comforter came close. Next day we were all a little dismal, we lay in our deck chairs, mildly observing the still more miserable folk, who, with pale grey-green faces, hung about the ship's side, gazing dejectedly downwards. In a brief rallying moment Margaret and I walked unevenly up and down, and sang—

"Peace, perfect peace, with loved ones far away?
In Jesus' keeping we are safe, and they."

But all that this means, is lost upon you unless you too have rolled through the Bay, experiencing the meeting of the waters of home-sickness, and sea-sickness, albeit proving that though very very human you are wonderfully kept.

Sunday evening saw us struggling through a spasmodic sort of service in the second saloon, enlivened by sundry abrupt departures. By the time it concluded we had grown so "*beautifully less*," that a spice of informality enlivened the proceedings, and a gentleman from the first class rose to request that the "members of the S.A.

whom he understood were present" should address the survivors. Finding *we* were indicated, two of us responded briefly, glad of an opportunity to witness for our Master. They call us "S.A.'s" we hear, because we sang hymns at the docks.

And then came a marvellous moonlight. Picture the vast darkness of the waters of the Bay, rising and falling in slow, full, swell; while the clear light fell in a heaving, shining, pathway, till it touched the quiet stars, as they rose one by one above the far horizon-line.

In the Mediterranean.—A storm, or enough of one to be glorious! The mighty majestic waves come lashing up, as if they meant to sweep us into nowhere; we ride over them, in triumph. They rush upon us then, with wild indignant laughter, and we spring again to meet them, shattering their white pride to diamond dust. Then they gather themselves up in thunderous fury, dashing, lifting their crested heads above our dipping bows, and once more with joy undaunted, we leap lightly on to meet them; and they fling their foam upon us, and toss and tumble madly, while the Storm-Psalm swells its music through their tumultuous roar—

"The floods have lifted up, O Lord,
The floods have lifted up their voice;
The floods lift up their waves.
The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters,
Yea than the mighty waves of the sea!"

And then the sun shines out, and catching slantwise the tossed-up spray, it paints a rainbow on it. For a moment the fairy thing glistens there, then drops into the fierce green trough; to rise again, and flash forth in delicate sparkle of colour, to fall again, again to rise, and so on through the long grand hours of tempest and of sun.

Life on shipboard is rich in opportunities for quiet service among passengers and sailors. But to see and use them aright, we need to live close to our Master, and in the full stream of Holy Ghost Power. This evening, (for the sudden storm is over, and the sea smiles blue again,) some of the seamen asked us to have a "Sing" for them. But though they like to listen, they don't care to decide, and so far, we have seen no result, except kindly interest and attention. To-morrow we reach Brindisi, and get our letters. Oh, how one longs for them! It has seemed more like a month than a week since the good-bye day. . . . And yet to the glory of His Name—He has been infinitely nearer than words can tell; it is as though one had never known Him at all before. And I rest on the certainty He must be equally loving, and close, to you. . . .

Last night I stood by the ship's rails, looking through the gloaming, at the long low coast line of Darkest Africa. Far above, the stars were sparkling, the stars we love at home; in our wake the waters were shining with phosphorescent

radiance. But across in the dusky distance there glimmered but one small light, whose very presence served only to intensify the deep sad darkness beyond.

There, as I stood and watched the shadows deepen round that lonely light, it seemed to shine a mute appeal for its land which still lay in the darkness of death—the light-bearers so few and far between, that to-day millions and millions whom Jesus died to win are left to live and die unwon. Oh that His Bride might awaken to the heart-desire of her Bridegroom, ere the cry rings down, “Go ye forth to meet Him!” Surely if we go on leaving “the voiceless silence of despair” unanswered, the heathen, whom we might tell, untold, we shall have to “shrink in shame before Him at His coming.”

In the Suez Canal.—We are passing quaint caravans, with camels looped to one another, trudging patiently single file through the pathless sands, followed by blue-robed, white-turbaned Arabs. Here and there, are little brown encampments, thrown upon the waste, whence boys and babes emerge, as we appear, and hail, and follow us with cries of “Backsheesh! Backsheesh!” We pause awhile at Ismailia, a palm-fringed oasis, cool, and green, on the desert edge. Somewhere about here the children of Israel may have passed over. From this point on, the scenes on either side recall the Exodus, and we think of the song sung on these sands so long ago,—“Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders!”

It is evening now, and the search-light on. The water, where it strikes it, gleams like a ribbon of polished steel; it glances upon the sandbanks, and they glitter like frosted snow; it touches a smaller boat half a mile ahead, and it shines like a spectral thing. Except where its brilliance cuts through the dark, night closes us in: the contrast is weirdly beautiful.

In the Red Sea.—And now we have reached these “purer climes, where stars are eloquent,” and every mile is fraught with memories. To the west lies old Egypt, with its Nile and pyramids, and ruins of mighty dynasties. To the east a shore more wondrous still,

“Where words were spoken and where deeds were done
That changed the current of earth’s history.”

As we pass the solemn Sinai Range, with its bare red peaks and rolling desert, we think of the time when the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.

In the Indian Ocean.—For the first time we have seen the great Need face to face. It was at Aden, where we lay at anchor for a few hours, and where we were boarded by swarms of curio vendors and diving boys, clad in chocolate brown, and little else. Through the medley of colour and sound, one seemed to look and hear deeper—without Christ, without hope, without God in the world—yes, just

that. Yet here we were, a shipful of professing Christians, and who among us cared in the least about it? I thought of the noble Ion Keith Falconer, and his brief bright life upon those sun-scorched crags. Poor Aden to lose him so!

And now in our wake lies Cape Guardafui, the last we shall see of Africa. It is a lovely farewell, for the sun is setting, and the hills are fading slowly in a shimmer of golden light. Sunset now, but the sunrise is coming. Oh, that even now one's whole little life may be "fired with the red glow of the rushing morn!"

Perhaps you would like to hear about Mohan, our first brown brother in Jesus.

One morning, soon after sailing, I was sitting alone, thinking of "this time last week," when an old Indian, with a big white turban, sat down near me. He was followed by a native in simpler costume, with soft, dark, "doggie" eyes, full of silent speech, and presently by a funny little Chinaman, with a pigtail a yard and a half long. And we began to talk. Kui-Hong was a Christian from Swatow. "Oh, yesee, me love Jesus muchy." The Sahib said he was one too; but "that other one, he was but an animal, had no soul in particular, and no religion worth mentioning." "Then, of course, you have told him of Jesus?" was a question which rather took the wind from the sails of the very superior Sahib, who subsided into an astonished silence. Turning to the "animal," I pointed up and touched him, saying, "Jesus loves *you*." I wish you all could have seen the sweet, glad look in his brown eyes, as, touching himself, he too pointed reverently up, and said, "*Me loves Jesus.*"

Very soon it was evident that the old Indian was not converted at all. Poor simple-hearted Mohan knew very little about Him, and clung only to the one rock-truth of His love; so Margarete and I arranged to meet them early each morning to read the Word, the Chinaman and an ayah, who said she was a Roman Catholic, gladly agreeing. In spite of the disturbing elements around us, the Lord of peace was with us, and we felt His presence. It was beautiful to watch Mohan, especially as, day by day, he drank in the words of life. To him our Saviour's Life-Story was so wonderful, so new, each incident was a revelation to him, and his dark face would literally shine as he took in that this mighty miracle-worker was the same Jesus who "loves Mohan." As a flower in the sunshine, so his soul opened out; and we praised the Lord, and wished many a time, that the home-workers, who are sometimes almost tired of telling the message to ears tired of listening to it, could share the joy of giving it in its fulness for the very first time to one who really wanted it.

Of course we could not get on very quickly, because of the language difficulty. The Sahib, who knew a little of his *patois*, translated verse by verse, and we explained in a sort of broken baby-English, which seemed more understandable than good Grammar. Sometimes when difficult questions came up and our limited vocabulary failed, we would tell him, "Jesus knows, and Jesus tell Mohan some

day, for Jesus loves Mohan." Then his puzzled face would break into a smile, and he would murmur softly with the trustfulness of a little child, "Yes, Jesus loves Mohan." One day he was taught the text, "Fear not, I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art Mine." He could only grasp the last thought then, *Mohan, thou art Mine*, and it meant much to him; it was wonderful and he believed it—which is more than most of us do. Bit by bit we got his life story. A native of Northern India, he had been decoyed away to the sugar plantations of the West Indies, where he heard of Christ. While he was serving his five years (a sort of semi-slavery), he was taken ill, and was given fish and meat, thereby losing caste, for "Hindoo religion say we no eat animal—animal have soul—man good, go into good place—man bad, go into animal—me tink, friends turn me out, so me be Christian!"

Certainly a novel reason for becoming one! But who knows what heart desolation lay behind, what deep longings for some one to whom to cling? And so he came to Jesus, and He did not cast him out. At last he left the Sugaries, and went out as servant to a missionary in Jamaica, who baptized him, and gave him a little A B C book, his one treasure; it has a short lesson on Christianity, and the Lord's Prayer; beyond this he knew little, as his missionary friend did not know his language, and he had no Bible. After a while a fit of home-sickness seized him, and he took his passage as deck passenger (necessarily *via* London), and so we met on board the *Valetta*. Shall we meet again till the day "when He maketh up His jewels"?

Very much I wish we could tell you that the Sahib yielded before we parted at Aden. His self-esteem hinders him sadly, but we believe the Lord has touched him. The night before he left, he came in much earnestness, asking me to open my Bible "where it willed," and read him the verse so found. He was so eager about it that I could not refuse; and asking Him, to whom nothing is small, to guide the fall of the leaves, I did so. The book opened at Galatians vi. 3, "*If a man think himself to be something when he is nothing he deceiveth himself.*" It was God's verse-choice for him and went home.

S.S. Suttlej, March 30.—"Our Father which art in Heaven."

Never did that "*Our*" mean so much to me as now, for we have had the joy of being welcomed as sisters in our Father's family, by new brothers and sisters, who, for love of Him, met us at Colombo, took us ashore, gave up their day to us, and finally saw us off, leaving us with hearts warmed by the glow which comes from kindness received for His Name's sake.

To our sea-weary eyes, Ceylon was a fairy-land of rest and beauty. We were driven over red-sanded roads, through what seemed like a great peopled hothouse, minus the glass, to a Bungalow hidden in palms, where hymns and breakfast awaited us.

From Sunrise Land

It was quite a treat to play upon an instrument which remained steady, and we gathered round it and sang "Like a river glorious," "Loved with everlasting love," and many another old favourite, ending with one, sung to the tune of "Jehovah Tsidkenu."

"I'm waiting for Thee, Lord, Thy beauty to see, Lord ;
I'm waiting for Thee, for Thy coming again.
Thou art gone over there, Lord, a place to prepare, Lord ;
Thy Home I shall share, at Thy coming again !"

After our kind friends left us, we investigated the state of our new cabin : cockroaches to begin with, rats to continue with, stuffiness and scents to finish up with. Two of us could not sleep in our berths : so we "went and told Jesus," and then we spoke to the steward. All has come right. Rough shakedown are laid for us on the orlop deck, where in spite of the aforesaid ills, (which flesh in the East, it would seem, is heir to,) plus a publicity somewhat embarrassing, we are fairly comfortable. I have printed "*In everything give thanks*," adorned the corners with the initials of our woes in chief, and hung it up in our cabin, to act as gentle reminder.

In the Yellow Sea.—Penang, Singapore, Hongkong, only names to us ten days ago, how much more now. For behind each name lies a mingled memory of things dark and bright. At each port, kind friends met us, and took possession of us, for Jesus' sake ; thinking no trouble of trouble. We saw something of the work, and thanked God for it, but oh it is a sorrowful thing to see what even an hour can show of real heathendom. May the Master speak His Inasmuch to His servants who were so good to us, and may He give them the joy of winning many and many a gem for His Crown !

China Inland Mission, Shanghai, April 20.—"O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever ; let the redeemed of the Lord say so." Let us say so indeed : for all through this voyage, not one thing hath failed of all the good things our God spake concerning us. All have come to pass ; we have lacked nothing. "Christ can come closer than the very sense of loneliness itself ; so close that there is no room left for it—it is *Jesus' only*." And for the dear ones at home, with whom every thought is linked, it is blessed to know it must be so too. It is worth the "Good-bye" to prove Him so. Our little band has separated. The C.I.M. members clothed in the blue garments of this strange China, have gone by native boat to Yangchau, kind letters have reached me from Mr. and Mrs. Buxton, and I am waiting for my steamer to Japan. Warm welcomes from Mr. Stevenson and others, in this happy home, soon took the stranger-feeling from one. To be here, is in itself an inspiration ; and as one looks at all the faces, most so glad and strong, one is constantly reminded of words read in the homeland.

"Blessed are the far-seeing men and women of all ages, who are always watching for great things, bending forward, and listening for the prophetic voices; quick to see the great light in the heavens, when it first gilds the tops of the Eastern hills."

To-day a friend took me to the old Chinese city. Round the wall lies a stagnant substance, more like the drainage of antiquity, than anything sweeter. Inside the gates odours greet you, embrace you, escape is impossible. The streets are very narrow, very uneven, very dirty. "Refreshment" shops are numerous: within them are people discussing viands which—we shall not further discuss. We pass before a carpenter's open front, where the deeds of long ago are being enacted, and the cunning workman is preparing a graven image from a tree that will not rot. As one watches the senseless, self-absorbed features of Buddha slowly evolving, one wonders how the hand so deftly guiding knife and chisel could ever be raised in supplication to a thing of its own fashioning. They that make them are like unto them. But how can we leave them so?

CHAPTER II

From Shanghai to Matsuy

"Do ye look on things after the outward appearance?"

April 21, S.S. Yokohama Maru, en route for Japan.—Alone for the first time, and yet not lonely in spirit, for "Thou hast made Thyself to me a living, bright Reality." Who could be lonely with Jesus? He satisfieth!

We are steaming out slowly into the dusk. Behind us lies the great dim shore of China. Before us a shore-line, more shadowy still. He knoweth what is in the darkness. I will trust and not be afraid.

Nagasaki, April 24.—A few hours have been pleasantly spent with Mr. and Mrs. F. of the C.M.S. and now I am on board again, quietly thinking over the fact that this is JAPAN. Wooded hills surround the lovely Bay; from one, the early Christians were flung in the old days of persecution. Little sampans carrying bright-faced, blue-clothed mortals, are passing to and fro. There is a sound of laughter in the air. In the short time on shore I saw much, but cannot stay to describe it yet. *This is Japan.* That is enough for to-day. And now—

*"Lord, I ask that I may be crucified to all but Thee,
From all sin and self set free, ever, evermore!"*

Chofu, April 28.—According to Mr. Buxton's kind arrangement, Miss Thompson, one of his party, was to meet me at Shimonoseki, where I change to a small coasting steamer. But between plans, and their fulfilment, is many a slip. And here "the tail end of a typhoon" interposed, and my experiences savoured rather of Robinson Crusoe. For after a wild night, the sea was too rough to admit of easy landing. Hours were spent in waiting a mile or so from shore. Then a steam-tug ventured out. My luggage was rolled in somehow, a few woe-begone Japanese passengers emerged from cabins below, stumbled down the ship's ladder, and tumbled in, I among them. After a prolonged pitch and toss, we were precipitated upon a wave-washed pier. The wind howled, the rain pelted, a vociferous swarm of wet watermen fell upon us, worried and tugged, and finally bore off whatever could be carried—my boxes included—and I looked for Miss T. but saw her not. Then a being pounced upon me, handed me a card addressed to her, with an address written in English, upon its reverse side.

Thinking she had come from him, and all was right, I followed him for a moment, but when he began to talk in vigorous Japanese, it struck me something was wrong somewhere. Could he be mistaking me for somebody else? Evidently it was so. Gesticulations told it. We stopped, he and I, and looked at each other. So did everybody within range of voice or vision. And they all talked *hard*. Mercifully the drollery of the thing, carried me over the perplexity thereof. I laughed. They all laughed. It was comic—but serious, for what to do, or where to go, where my baggage was, above all where Miss T. was, I knew not, nor could I ask. My captor though profoundly polite, was obviously embarrassed. He led me through a bit of street where all the little ladies and gentlemen, adorning all the fans and teapots, and paper umbrellas you ever saw, seemed to have made themselves at home—through a passage with sliding paper on one side, and people on the other, to a perfectly dark room. What next? I wondered—and the next was a rumbling back of wooden shutters, a slipping back of paper windows, a flooding in of tongues and eyes, and a lengthy conversation, neither side much comprehending. At last they realized that I wanted to know the fate of my boxes, and to go to the ship's office, if it possessed one. In response to request number one, my belongings were discovered safely scattered over the place; a general stampede indicated a desire to comply with the second.

They escorted me to a sort of shed where lounged a youth smoking a long pipe; he bowed gently, but that was all. At that moment of mild despair an English face appeared. Was ever one more welcome! He was a traveller passing through. A mere chance had delayed him this morning, and he happened to be in the office. But I recognised God's finger in the "chance." How His plans fit! In a few minutes all was straight. I mounted a rickshaw, was consigned to the tender mercies of a broad-nosed, narrow-eyed Mongol, who undertook to convey me to the address on the card, the abode of American missionaries it appeared, and we started. It felt slightly strange to be trundled off thus, in this curious cross between a bath-chair and a hansom cab of liliputian make; by a man unknown, to a place unknown, with no power at all, save to sit still, and trust. Part of the way lay between sea and hill. The rain had gone, and brilliant sunshine touched the still stormy waters, and brought out wonderful rich green shades in the waves, as they curled over on the brown rocks. It glistened upon the dripping woods, where Tropic and Temperate mingled, and the crimson of camellia, the purple of wisteria, the ivory-white of magnolia, lifted their shattered beauty, among pines and palms, cryptomeria, and bamboo. We passed a hamlet or two, where small things ran after us, clad in quaint garments,—or none. On and on we went, till I began to wonder whether my human steed had forgotten the address, and intended to run on until he remembered it. Suddenly we turned up a smooth-sanded drive, and calmly upset before a verandah, whereon appeared a

young lady, who came forward to welcome me, though not in the least divining who I could possibly be.

Explanations followed. They had expected Miss T. and sent their card to the hotel man who had taken possession of me, asking him to meet her. He naturally mistook me for her, hence the bewilderment. As to Miss T.'s movements they concluded the storm had delayed her in her voyage down the coast. And so it has proved. She is here now, and we are waiting for our boat up to Matsuye.

These dear friends are so kind. Certainly missionaries seem hospitable people! We are "more than welcome," as they say, and feel indeed, one in Christ Jesus. The work in this little out-station is very interesting. A church, mission school, a little orphanage, bright young Christians, loving service rendered on all sides—this is what we have seen. And this in the midst of heathenism is something to thank God for. There is another side, they tell us. Difficulties, discouragements, disappointments, are not few; but praise Him, He is Conqueror. Victory is sure.

April 29. Native Hotel en route for Matsuye.—Curled up tailor-fashion on the white matted floor, under the fitful light of a swinging lamp, surrounded by all the strange weird sights and sounds of evening in the East, my thoughts turn homewards. It is Saturday morning with you. I picture the Exeter Convention's closing meeting. The well-known platform group, the mass of upturned faces, the ringing "Praise Him! praise Him!" "Let us sing of His love once again." Or perhaps it is a missionary meeting, and some one is pleading for the regions beyond. How one's heart goes out in earnest asking that His love may constrain some lighted life to follow Him into the dark! The present with its contrasts closes round me—the encircling heathen town *without one missionary*, the vastness of the need, its pitifulness; the blazing sunshine (at least by comparison) at home, the darkness which may be felt out here. Will no one come? But I dare not press the question. Only His voice may speak the "Go!" which sends. Only in the power of His Spirit may one obey.

And now may I ask those whom the Master is trusting to tarry at home, to pray specially for some of us who are learning to be dumb? Think how you would feel if you were standing upon a rock, around which were seething billows wherein were sinking and drowning men and women, within your reach, yet just out of it—you safe, yet helpless to save them, helpless to stretch out a hand or throw out a life-line; helpless utterly. Almost so is it with us. Can you realize what it is to be plunged into silence just when your whole soul is longing most burningly to tell the good news you have come so far to bring? Oh that the gift of tongues were for us to-day! But it must be best that it is not. It is such a rest to *know*, whatever one *feels*, that what is in His plan, is right.

How I wish I could show you something of what I have seen for the first

time. The eye affecteth the heart. I know you would pray double if you could only look through my eyes, for "when He *beheld* the city, He wept." . . . We are in the innermost shrine of an idol temple, in the heart of a Chinese city. High above us tower colossal figures, grim and terrible—one with clenched fist claspings a huge club frowns down upon us; at his feet lie offerings, mutely appealing; in the dim light are seen idol forms, shrouded in mystery, and before them candles flickering faintly reveal the darkness beyond. The air is heavy with the sleepy fragrance of burning incense, "the voiceless silence of despair is eloquent in awful prayer," and our hearts are aching as we turn away and look up to Him who looks down upon us; and looking so, our eyes meet, and we are comforted.

It will not be always so. One day the Lord of love alone shall be exalted, and the idols He shall utterly abolish. As we pass through the inner and outer courts, between monster griffins, quaintly fantastic, the wail is lost in the victory song—Eternity's Alleluia. . . .

We are driving now, through the country; around us wide reaches of paddy fields stretch far away, till green and blue touch. Here and there, are scattered farmsteads, to which distance lends enchantment, and the pink-and-white of some late orchard's peach and cherry gives colour to the scene.

But dotted about everywhere, singly or in groups, are strange conical-shaped mounds, hundreds and thousands of them. Each marks a heathen's grave. As we take in the thought, so startlingly unexpected, it is as if the sky had overclouded, and the chill of the shadow of death had fallen upon the land. One seems to be in the midst of a vast cemetery, where death-beds and graves intermingle as in a dream. "They fear dying so," says one; "they think a devil is catching them away, and they cry out in terror as they feel his hand upon them." And I think of a picture, seen only yesterday, of a Buddhist hell—the great scales held in merciless hands; the naked, shivering mortal placed thereon; the verdict given with horrible glee by the spirit of torment; the series of tortures, too diabolical to tell, one more fearsome than the other, each intensified by the malicious delight of the ferociously horrible demons, all revelling in a refinement of cruelty unspeakably realistic. No wonder, as that cold breath falls upon the shrinking soul, it cries that piteous cry which even now seems to ring through the air, and echo from mound to mound. Can you not hear it too? Before you read these lines—think of it!—there will be nearly two millions of fresh mounds in China, each vocal with that wail of woe. . . .

And now I have reached the "Land of the Rising Sun," and once more stand in the stillness of a heathen temple—this time a Shinto shrine, old and quaint. One cannot help looking forward to what this lovely land will be when the Sun of Righteousness shall rise upon it, in the golden days to come. All around is the glory of His handiwork who hath made everything beautiful—nature unspoiled,

fair in her new spring dress of many-tinted green, decorated daintily with the glowing crimson and delicate pink of camellia and azalea bloom.

But again that ever-present shadow falls: the very sunshine seems sad as, for the first time for me, it falls upon a figure worshipping—what? There he kneels, bowing till his forehead touches the ground, clapping his hands, as we do here, when we want a servant to come; praying, bowing, and clapping, again and again; “but there was no voice, nor any that answered,” and in silence we watch him turn away, half wistfully. None of us can speak, but we give him a copy of Luke xv., and he passes down the long avenue of stately cryptomeria, reading it as he goes.

Another comes; he is carrying a bundle, and lays it down by the shrine. One is reminded of the Pilgrim at the Cross—alas, for the pitiful contrast! He has an earnest face, and bows, and claps, and prays repeatedly; then goes to another corner, leaving his burden behind. Into it we slip a prayer-wrapped leaflet. Presently he returns; finds it, looks at us inquiringly. And now one who can speak has come, and for the first time he hears the message. Yes, it is very wonderful, he says; he will read the book, and think about the teaching; he has never heard it before. And so we leave him—hearing once the story we have heard so often. Will he ever hear it again? God knows. There are more than thirty million in this lovely land who have never heard *even once* of Jesus.

Matsuye, May 1. Night.—“And He said unto me, ‘My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’ Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

May 12.—First impressions being more or less unrepeatable, perhaps you would like a few more. Everything is so new to one here, that one feels like an “Alice in Wonderland,” and longs to share the funny mixture of sensations, with you all in the dear homeland.

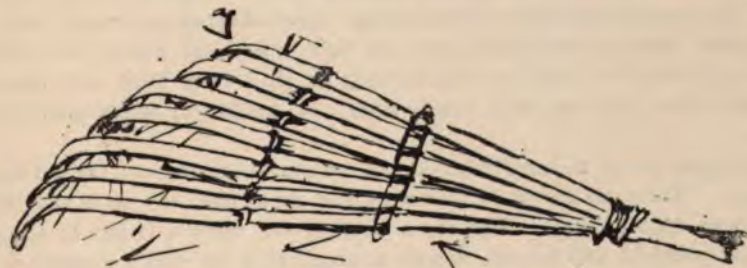
Matsuye Church is a converted Shinto temple. It is a real native church, without a suspicion of the foreignising element. Divested of hats and shoes, we sit on the floor, and are Japanese to the Japanese, if by any means we may save some. And praise God, some are being saved, that first Sunday four new converts were baptized. Will you pray that each may continue Christ’s faithful soldier and servant unto his life’s end? The Christians strike one, as being very earnest, and kindly. Their welcome was a thing to remember. They seem thinkers too: one who can read English, has borrowed my copy of Dr. Elder Cummings’ “Through the Eternal Spirit,” another does difficult translating work, and another with whom I have had some talk, is what we should call at home a thoroughly well-read man. The women are sweet and gentle, not insipid or characterless, however, as their artists sometimes portray them. They are full of quick sympathies and tender little ways.

One day, after putting on my Japanese dress for the first time, (for some of us wear it here, when working in villages where foreigners are unknown,) I went away to ask Him to use it to draw me closer to these strange new sisters, that they might be drawn to Him. Just then one of them came in, and, kneeling in their graceful way, offered me a dainty little carved vase, with a few kind words, which, though not translatable, were easily understood. It seemed as though He had sent her just then to tell me He was listening and would answer. It is not hard to care for such a people, but one does not want the mere natural love only, but the Divine love, which loves the unlovable, and loves on, always, through all.

*"Give me a love like Thine! Give me a love like Thine!
Should it lead me like Thee, unto dark Calvary,
Give me a love like Thine!"*

The language seems very difficult, one cannot hope to know it usefully for a long time, but the mere presence of a difficulty is inspiring, especially when one can count on superhuman help in overcoming it. In the meantime a little may be done through interpretation. It is not easy to speak so. One feels far away, out of touch, helpless. The impotence of human power, the death there must be to fleshly glory, the literal *nothingness* in which one stands—these things press much, and one is thrown back upon God, in a way I cannot describe. It must be all of Him now. . . .

Later.—Some of our Christian boys called this afternoon, and thinking you might as well come in touch, I asked them to draw something for you—whereupon one of them disappeared for a minute or two, and presently returned with the



enclosed romantic production—the garden rake! It is made of bamboo slips, as you perceive, and the little spiky bits scattered about are supposed to be pine needles!

And now to return to description: Matsuye lies between two inland seas or lakes, the lower one opening into the sea, the upper bounded by the hills. They



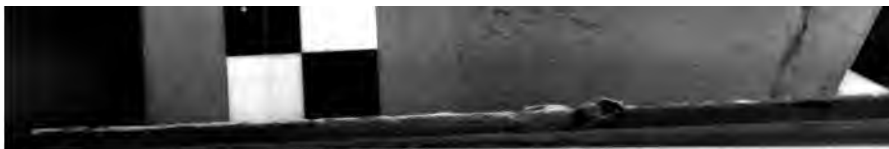
A Corner from the Castle.

are connected by a broad stream, (navigable by small steamers,) and by divers streamlets and canals. Just where the upper lake narrows thus, and flows smoothly down to its twin in the valley, the old feudal town is built. Its castle crowns a wooded height; in the distance Mount Daisen rises, snowtipped still. Sketches cannot catch the beauty of it all. Blue and green, brown and purple, opal lights, and changeful shadows, sunset glories on the waters,—you must paint them for yourselves, I cannot. A corner from the pagoda-shaped castle may interest you, as it is essentially Japanese.

But there is much more to show you. Stand with me on the edge of the crowd which gathers round any small street-excitement. Here is a knot of school boys, bright-eyed, mischievous; there a gentle woman lingers, she smiles at you, and you notice the blackened teeth, and shaven eyebrows, which mean she is married—and marred, so far as appearances go. A small boy rushes across, demands her attention, and she disappears from view. "*Ting-ting!*" It is the begging-priest, with his metal bell, and sing-song voice. At the corner a fishmonger performs upon a victim just out of the water tub. He looks content, *it* does not. Lower down is a toy and sweet shop; three demure little maids enter, bow profoundly, and are bowed to, in return. In the street beyond, a Night-Fair is being arranged for. It will be gay enough, for Chinese lanterns and flaring torches will reveal wares of many a name and nation, from ancient shrines, with tiny idols shut inside, to the latest but ten pot-hat from the West. Everywhere is life and colour: children play about, sometimes with babies not much smaller than themselves, tied to their little backs. You wonder how those infants escape sunstrokes, as you watch their shiny shaved heads dangling unshaded, over the tight blue folds which bind them in. But nobody seems to mind, the babies least of all. They blink and thrust out sticky little fists, bob up and down, asleep or awake, in imperturbable good humour.

The houses are all so built that you can see straight through to the garden-yard at the back. There are scraps of rock-work and dwarf pine, toy pools and bridges, all manner of quaint things. The room opening out upon it is fair to see; pure mats, wood polished, and natural, flowers arranged in a way which suggests a poem made visible.

But it is not all gladness. Night has come, and as we ride home in a *kuruma* (which is Japanese for jinrickshaw), a strange thing passes us, a funeral. In the darkness dimly lighted by the paper lanterns carried by the mourners, we only see a line of swiftly-moving, white-draped figures, of a square white-draped box, of more ghostly forms and swinging lanterns. They are hurrying on to the temple



From Shanghai to Matsuye

15

there, now they pass within its massive gates, and the priests do their work, and all is over. To-morrow the children will play, where these feet have sped, nothing will speak of what the night-watches saw; and so it has gone on for nights untold, and so it may for many to come. Oh, it is awful! awful! Nothing can prepare one for the realities of Heathendom. The woe of it, the shame of it. Think of His honour being given to another. Think, if you can, that you see it done. Would it not move you into feeling anything, *anything* we could give or do, just *nothing*, if only it could help to heal the "open sore" of Heathendom?

Healed it may be, and shall be, for in the thick of it all, facing it fearlessly—

"Here stands the Cross of the Crucified One,
Symbol of faith in the Father's dear Son,
Symbol of victories yet to be won.
By this we conquer!"

CHAPTER III

Mission Tour No. 1

*"The least flower with a brimming cup may stand
And share its dewdrops with another near."*

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

June 5.—How glad of that one is! May He who is as the dew unto Israel, keep the cup ever brimming to overflow!

Our start was thoroughly Eastern, for the kuruma men were late, and when we reached the bridge, whence the boats depart for their voyage down the lake, we found that ours had whistled itself hoarse, and was all but gone. However, our good men shouted, it stopped, we were sculled across in a sampan, climbed in through a hole in its side, and off we went. Then we felt our way, stooping low the while, through a dark little passage, to a cabin in the stern, wherein were ladies and gentlemen smoking peacefully. Dropping our shoes outside, (hats we had none, being in native dress,) we curled ourselves up in corners, and tried to survive. But it would not do. For the boat began to roll, the smoke thickened, we sickened. So we crawled out, up a ladder, on to the deck, where we slipped about, till we touched at the village-port, where we were to change to kurumas. "We" means Sarah Thompson, her helpers, T. San and S. San, and myself. "San" means Mr., Mrs., or Miss. In this case it means Mr. and Miss. It always comes after the name it adorns.

And now came excitements manifold. Sampans wobbled us ashore. A crowd collected and commented. Kurumas had to be bargained for, and a slight lunch despatched. Finally we were packed up, and trotted off.

How funny it felt; especially, when, after leaving the village streets, we were jogged up and down, over what they called *roads*, but which we should call "ruts," in a manner upsetting in more ways than one. Sometimes after a plunge of unusual severity, my kuruma-man would turn with a cheerful "Oh!" and a glance to make sure I was safely inside, and once I replied with such an irresistible peal of laughter, that the other three floundering along behind, caught the infection, and followed suit. At last we descended and walked, that being the easiest mode of locomotion. Our men were the most obliging of ponies, gleefully stopping to gather flowers for us. We got such beautiful things, yellow lilies which turn terra-

cotta in old age; azaleas pink and crimson; sweet-scented creamy blossom, like bramble; tall royal fern, and parsley fern, two feet high, and all manner of dainty greenhouse treasures, whose names I know not.

We passed through a long avenue of pines, the huge trunks wreathed with ivy and Virginian creeper; under foot, however, it was less delectable, the long twisted roots gave us many an unexpected jump, and between them lay pools, pretty to look at, cool to splash into. Most of the way it drizzled feebly: we lived under our umbrellas, and enjoyed life from a new point of view. At last we arrived at our halting-place, for the next few days; and were trotted in triumph to the small hotel which was to be our headquarters.

At the door we were greeted with bows and smiles, and escorted through rooms scented with flowers, to a pretty little one overlooking a garden. In each was an idol, with offerings of rice before it, and in one was the family shrine, where the ancestor's tablets dwelt, and incense-sticks, stuck in ashes, slowly smouldered.

Being wet, for the rain was of that insinuating kind, which makes no fuss, but quietly soaks you, we changed our raiment, and sat down on the floor, to await the advent of the inevitable tea. It came, served on a round wood tray, in pale blue china, by a woman of honourable age, who bowed to us most devoutly, then the preliminaries over, sidled gently up to me, gazed at my hair, by this time dry and fuzzy, patted it, and remarked, "No oil at all on it!"

A Japanese feminine head is a sight to behold, black, and shiny, and anointed to a degree unknown in other lands, thus you see, her remark was not inappropriate. Sarah possesses hair which is fair, so they say she must either be very old, or much addicted to washing it, it presenting to them a somewhat bleached appearance.

That evening we had a large meeting, of men chiefly. About half way through, there was a sudden rush. One of the few women there had fainted, and in a few minutes twice as many people as the village could have been supposed to possess, were crowding, rushing, and shouting about her. All down the street too, they swarmed, the movable walls had been pushed back, and we could see them in hundreds, with their paper lanterns flitting to and fro.

In the thick of the throng, held by as many as could get at her, lay the poor girl; all round her the people pressed with tiny bowls of water, scores and scores were handed up from the outer rim of the crowd, until they reached the central point of interest, where they were seized by those nearest, and then followed an exciting trial of remedy.

First, the men filled their mouths with water and shot it over her, till she was well drenched, then they got fire, and pressed it to the poor little bare feet, separating the toes, and squeezing it between them: this proving fruitless they shouted her name, thinking thereby, we were told, they could call her spirit back. For half an hour or more, they yelled, and sobbed and wailed, gathering close

round her, and screaming into her ears. It was enough to terrify her out of her senses, or them out of her, had they returned. But the much-besought spirit kept its mysterious distance, and she lay, white and still, in the midst of it all.

Finally, they sent for a doctor, who came and looked, and listened, then mixed some white stuff, with his finger, turned the cup round with an air of wisdom, handed it to the howler-in-chief, and sat down on the floor with calmness unruffled, to smoke till she revived.

We could do nothing, and of course dared not interfere, so we left at this point. I quite expected they would turn upon us, and pack us out of the village, especially as last time missionaries were here a kuruma-man fell down dead in the street. But instead, they thanked us for coming; and next day, when we went to inquire for the poor little wife, her husband apologised for the trouble she had been in the meeting.

Their courtesy is a marked characteristic. If one gets in your way for a moment, he exclaims that he is an honourable bother, (rather meaning that he has had the honour of being a bother to you,) and promptly removes himself. Your kuruma-man bows, hat in hand, when you pay him, and you hardly feel comfortable, when you reflect how little you have given him! Servants kneel when they address you. You kneel and bow elaborately, if you want to be very polite. At first one feels it impossible to compass such prostration, but speedily, especially if robed in Japanese garments, and living on the floor, it becomes easier to perform than abstain. Their courtesy manifests itself in trifles which are not trifling. You have been kneeling in their quite agonising position, until your back aches, but fearing to break some nicety of an etiquette hardly understood as yet, you don't like to move, and curl up rationally. Somebody notices the fact, gently urges a little relaxation. "Deign to sit as an honourable foreigner," otherwise "we understand you want to be one of us, but don't tire yourself, we accept the will for the deed." And you are grateful.

We are going soon to a village near, where they have only heard *once*. In every English village, how often have they heard? Oh the need—it wrings one's heart! All around us are lovely hamlets nestling among the woods, all untouched. There is no one to touch them. Surely the blessing in the homeland would be greater, if instead of keeping its best, it freely gave! Never should one be urged to come, unless he felt the burden of souls and the Master's call. But, oh! in the face of such scenes as these, one wonders why so few do. Is it as the Chinese lady said, as grieved at heart, she turned away from Christian England's coldness—"These people don't love their God enough"! Can it be really that?

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A touch of the prosaic may interest you perhaps, for you know life isn't made up of "going to meetings."

One evening, after the somewhat novel experience of the Japanese Bath, (the first question asked you when you enter a Japanese hotel in the evening is, "Will you condescend into the honourable hot water?"), I tucked myself between the layers of blue quilts laid on the floor, and being alone, and tired, composed myself for slumber.

"Honourable pardon deign!" So spake a voice outside my paper wall; it slipped aside, revealing an aged form convulsed in bows. "Come in," I said, and she came. Then she sat down, and waited for me to begin. Not knowing how else to, I sang "*Jesus loves me, this I know*," which I had laboriously learned, in faith that with the proverbial quickness of a Japanese, she might recognise her own language; she smiled and went away.

I fell asleep, but not for long; enter visitor No. 2, another ancient dame, with a grandchild tied on to her back. They seemed to think I was shamming ignorance, for they chattered away to me, eagerly asking "Honourably understand?" Then, not to be defeated, they tried the effect of speaking both together, very slowly, and very loud, as to a deaf old person: foiled again, and they departed; to return at intervals all through that long queer evening, with a sort of "keep her company" intention, I expect.

The other returned about midnight. They had been to a village some miles away, where nearly two hundred gathered to hear. . . .

While I was writing this, another bit of the comic came in the shape of another visit. Three women, each baby-laden, appeared, bowed, and sat down. Of course I had to stop writing and bow too. Then one dropped her infant on my lap, and retired to observe. I expected yells, but no, the fat little morsel chuckled, and wriggled, and crowed, till it fairly doubled up with mirth, and lay hopelessly tangled, in its scrap of a frock, a jelly of giggles too funny for anything. The other babies were introduced, and now they have all retired, the mothers highly gratified.

Then came some friends who were musically inclined. A concertina was produced, and I was requested to perform. Never having tried one, and this being the most atrocious of its kind, you can imagine the effect, for I went at it with a gusto which charmed my audience, opening and shutting it wildly, and the result was—not music.

* * * * *

It is Sunday night. One may get accustomed to many things out here; to existing, minus chairs and tables; to going about hatless out of doors, and shoeless indoors; to the sweet publicity which begins with the performance of our morning ablutions upon the verandah, and concludes with the nightly crawl under our mosquito nets, and hardly then—but to an encompassing heathendom one can never get accustomed.

All day long the whirr of the silk weavers, the thud of the rice-pounders, the tramp of the matting makers, has been in our ear, and now they are working at a sluice, unfragrant to a degree, just opposite.

No Sunday here. No Rest Day. And how long is it since He told us to go into all the world with His Message of Rest?

This morning we had a meeting with some who are inquiring. They asked in what manner we prayed to our Gods, did we clap our hands to call their attention, as they must do with theirs? Another said it was hard to understand, for how could a God *love*? "Once or twice is seldom to hear this teaching, could you not come oftener?" said one. But we cannot. Oh, to think that we must say so! If only you could see the need, as we have seen it to-day, I think we should not long have to say that sorrowful "*No*."

Monday.—To-day began in true Japanese fashion; we were wakened by the murmur of voices outside our paper windows, for the wooden shutters had been rolled back some hours before. So we looked out, and beheld a quiet group of children standing there, patiently waiting until we should reveal ourselves. Much entertained we emerged from our nets, threw wraps round our shoulders, and—for it was too good an opportunity to lose—began to sing—

"Jesus loves us, this we know, For our Holy Book says He does. Friends, will you trust His love, for it is strong?"

Ah, Jesus loves me; He is the Lord of Love; it is written in our Holy Book."

Speedily the group grew into a crowd, and we sang on until the tiniest child must at least have understood that we meant them to know our God was Love. Then with bows and farewellings we closed the window, (*i.e.*, slid it into, being a wall,) and for the time, retired into private life.

As I write, another constellation of eager twinkling orbs is visible; for the window is open again, and there is only a little space between one room and the street. They are following the movements of my pencil, as it forms these words, and from one little baby-faced child comes a sound, recognisable surely—it is our morning's chorus, and it never sounded so sweet to me before. But now, through the children's chatter, another sound drops heavily. It is the Temple gong; low, mournful, monotonous, it seems laden with hopelessness. It is meant as praise to the gods. "Do you think they hear?" I ask one who comes, and stands beside me. "Alas! I fear not often," is the sad answer.

We have beautiful glow-worms here, and fire-flies, like fairy stars. The glow-worms light up the ferny banks, with their quiet lustre, the fire-flies flit with their pulsing light away and away to the regions beyond. And as one looks one longs to be just either one or other. His Glow-worm hidden where only He sees, in some hedge of His planting, lighting it up for Him; or if He will, His Fire-fly, carrying

the lamp He has lighted, over the hedge of the home life, far far away through the dark.

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I only posted yesterday, but it is a relief to write again, one's heart gets over-full sometimes, and mine has been so since we said good-bye to the kindly village folk whom we may never see again. Just before we left, old Mrs. Springtide came close to me, stroked my dress, and softly said how sorry her heart was that we must go. Once again I repeated the now well-known little sentence, "*The one true God honourably deigns to love you.*" For the first time she seemed to take it in; clasping her withered old hands together, she said the words slowly over, the tears running down her cheeks, and then we had to go.

She had a strange dream while we were there, and described it to T. San. She seemed to see a beautiful city, shining and golden, but between it and her, ran a dark deep river, and she could not cross over, she was too weak and old. The golden city was like Heaven, T. San told her, and the dark river like death. Jesus our Saviour could carry her over, if she would let go her false gods, and trust Him only.

Pray for the dear old lady, that for her, life's autumn may prove its spring.

Some of the inquirers came to help us to pack. One, a very well educated man, who had been reading the New Testament, wanted to know all about Palestine, its history, geography, national customs, and so on. Specially he asked about Jerusalem, Calvary, and the tomb where Jesus lay.

Last night we had a women's meeting, but a number of men crowded in too, and we could not turn them out. Sitting on the matted floor, at the foot of a large idol before which rice and flowers lay, and incense burned, we told them of God and His love for them. Over and over again we repeat the same message. Its strangeness to them, no words can describe.

As we passed through the streets the people came out to look and bow, several stopped us with the polite formula, "Honourable thanks are, honourably hasten return," and one of them added "Why do you stay so long away?" Yes, *why?* I pass the question on to a wider circle than they thought of—why do *you* stay so long away?

This evening being fine, we walked over to the pretty village which is now our resting-place. Half-way we were met by some children, bright eyed, gentle little things, who had come to escort us home. When we arrived a crowd had gathered as usual. Men and lads *ad lib.*, a sprinkling of women, and children by the dozen.

As I write they swarm below the verandah, gazing, gazing. Everywhere one turns one sees eyes big and little, wide open and slitted, all black, and always gazing.

* * * * *

The meeting is over, and now before the kaleidoscope gets another shake, I must tell you about it.

Picture then a whole house thrown into one large low-ceilinged room, with walls which are not, having been slid into nowhere; the boundary line, street on one side, garden on the other. Here and there, are lamps more picturesque than luminous, a crimson Chinese lantern hangs among the trees, and the semi-darkness is further relieved by the dull pipe-glow, for the audience is placidly smoking, and you sneeze and choke and wonder how you are going to get through.

The meeting begins, we are in the middle of a hymn when a splash in the near distance, tells us that somebody is in the middle of something else—but I refrain.

We sing, or try to, then one of our helpers speaks, again we sing, and then my turn comes.

Oh the strangeness of it! By this time the smokers have ceased to smoke, and the noisy tapping of the tiny metal pipe bowls, upon the charcoal braziers, has ceased too. I think the Lord Jesus is leading me on with great gentleness in this new work, for He knows how hard I find it to speak in a noise, and so far I have never had to. T. San interprets for me, and then for Sarah who closes the meeting with singing and prayer.

Most of the time there had been close attention, unbroken even when a fond parent undressed and rubbed down her juvenile son, and now that it was over, there was perfect stillness, as if waiting for "what next?" But the moment we moved there was a scramble, everybody talking and gesticulating, eager as it seemed to exchange opinions upon the whole performance, in the midst of which we departed, and mounting our ladder-like stairs, prepared to be seen no more.

Vain hope. We were just ready to get into bed, only as yet there were no beds to get into, the quilts not being produced, when visitors arrived, and to my much astonishment, bowed politely and came in.

Then our possessions were inspected, one lifted the bread we had brought, turned it over, and shook his head, it was beyond him. Another examined my little dressing-case, and another examined *us*. And all with such perfect politeness that it was impossible to mind very much. At last Sarah got our feminine helper, to tell our masculine helper, that we should be obliged if our gentlemen friends would retire, which they finally did, while the ladies still lingered to see the last of the show.

Then they brought our quilts, spread them upon the floor, helped us to hang our mosquito nets, and at last we were left in solitude, to sleep on the bed of the lowly, and awake, I at least, feeling much as if one were somebody else, and living in a story-book, unable to get out.

* * * * *

A pause came here, and now the week is half over, and you must hear of its doings.

I am writing on the tiny verandah overhanging the street. Just underneath is a carpenter's shed ; in the middle is a shrine, a roughly made thing on the top of a great stone. Behind it, a graveyard hides among the trees ; all over the country they are dotted, like the mounds in poor dreary China, one is constantly reminded "The night cometh," oh to work while daylight lasts !

I don't think I have told you what a Japanese hotel is like, it is so *unlike* anything called by that name at home, that it is not easy to describe it.

Here we are well off, for we have an upstairs ; in our last abode, there was none, and they gravely assured us that "stairs could not be good things," for they never had them there. So we lived on a level with everything and everybody, and got sore throats in consequence.

When we came here, we looked out eagerly for the "not good things," and to our joy discovered them, leading out of the kitchen, each step utilized as a repository got at from underneath, but real stairs nevertheless, which was the important point. With alacrity we ascended, and once aloft, fresh surprises awaited us, for two straightbacked cane chairs, (and a table twelve inches high) had been bestowed upon this fortunate upper chamber, and we rested, and felt Westerns again.

To return to our subject. Hotels, like all purely native houses, are built upon stilts (see sketch for the how thereof). They are spaces, enclosed or not, as the case may be, in wooden shutters by night, and paper walls by day, at least, two sides and often three, seem to be of the latter uncertain description. You can't lean upon them—they would go through, (that is, when they are there at all :) you can't hang things on them, they would come down ; in short you can't do anything with them, but slide them about, and be thankful.

Furniture there is none, unless you call a vase of flowers, a smoking box, and a brazier, furniture. On the floor are perfectly clean mats, "Tatami," by name, each mat 6 x 3 ft. fitted neatly, and carefully dusted. Upon this you must never walk with your shoes on. Upon it you live, sit, by day, and sleep by night. The rooms are divided one from the other by sliding walls of tinted paper, sometimes ornamented with old Chinese characters,



Built upon Stilts.

so well written that nobody can read them; or adorned with landscape, perspective quite in abeyance. There is no such unnecessary luxury as a door that will shut,

much less lock, but Japanese etiquette is so highly developed, that this little omission is not so appalling as it sounds.

In each room is a small dais, or place of honour. The wall on this side is solid, and a scroll of some rare old design, such as this bit of branch-beauty which is before me as I write, hangs upon it, just over the vase of flowers, or curio, or perhaps idol, which stands in the centre of the dais. A "hibachi" or brazier, with a kettle set upon it, is a probable item, and a pipe box, and perhaps tray and diminutive tea set, share the floor with it.

In the front or living-room, is a nondescript assemblage of odds and ends of everything. It is hall, kitchen, and bedroom all in one. There are no ovens, ranges, or fireplaces, in our sense of the word. They seem to cook things anyhow, over small fires, which smoke into anywhere, and yet the result is always satisfactory, from a Japanese point of view. Down one side runs a sort of open walk-way, upon which the inhabitants clatter in clogs; it leads to the rear, where a gardenised courtyard closes the scene.

Everything which can be artistic, is so. Food is served in the daintiest lacquer or china, upon black or red lacquer trays, one to each person; each such tray is a "thing of beauty,"—here the quotation abruptly stops. Anything further removed from "a joy for ever" than are its contents to the average English palate it would be difficult to imagine.



A bit of Branch Beauty.

flower-arrangement, in which Mr. Keats might revel, uninterrupted. I am daily becoming more enamoured of the Japanese flower-taste. It is so simple and so satisfying.

To change the subject—here is a little

And now a gentle voice announces our noontide meal, served by a bright-faced girlie with sweet soft eyes, and elaborate hair-puffs.

So, for my menu—

Fish, unblushingly raw, sliced, and adorned with brown sea-weed; something green, in a blue bowl, a sauce

wherein float fragments of —? A cup of black beans in a liquid like senna tea. Rice plentiful and good, a pair of chopsticks. We have brought a supply of tinned things however, and yesterday Sarah invested in a chicken (*i.e.* thin and bony hen), which we cooked ourselves in a small pot over a brazier, fishing out morsels as they grew tender—so we don't starve.

This isn't a fruit country, flowers they consider far more important, but one new to me, and very nice, is the dried persimmon, something between a fig and a date. There are huge oranges too, and later on "Biwas," a fruit like which they say we have nothing at home, so I need not attempt to describe it. In the woods are berries, tempting—till you taste them, and everywhere are flowers.

* * * * *

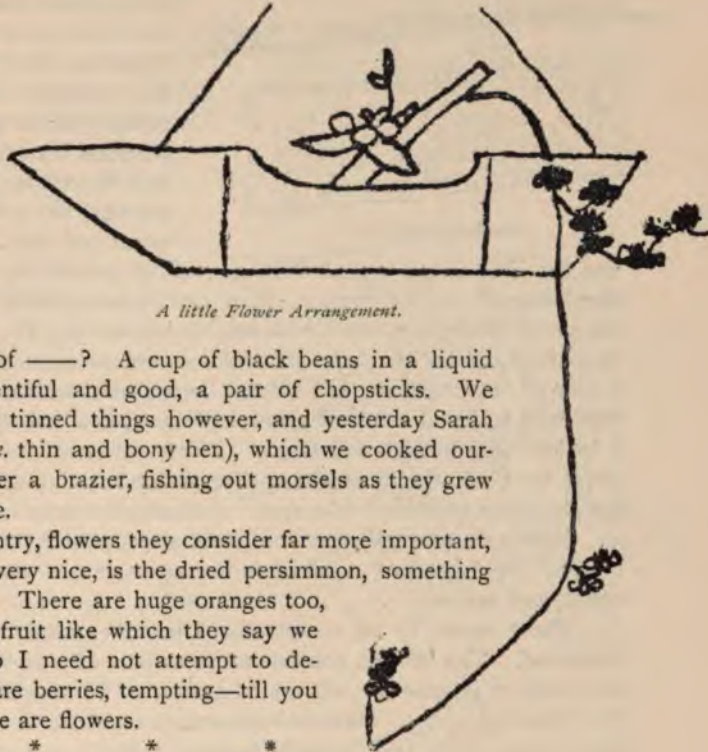
We have been to an Éta village.

The Étas are a pariah people, and when we asked why, they told us this—

Long long ago a god and goddess landed upon these favoured shores, from them are descended the present race, now the Étas were here before they came, therefore they are not descendants of the gods, wherefore the Japanese despise them.

We discovered the existence of a colony of these unfortunate beings, and said we should like to go to them with our message. They were our sisters and brothers too. To this proposal, little encouragement was offered. It would spoil our work in the village, for if it was known we had been there, no one would come to our meetings. They were a stupid people, not worth going to. There was no room to be had, they were busy with silk-worms, and so on. We listened to all these weighty objections, and finally went, escorted by half the village.

And we had a good time. Sitting under the kaki trees, upon our umbrellas,





Our honourable Eggs.

was the little brown-roofed hamlet, and its people in their dark blue raiment, stood framed in pink azalea. Men and women straight from paddy field, and silk-worm tending; children with bright eyes, and shy yet fearless ways; babies tied upon mothers' backs, quaint creatures, shaven pated, and faces most expressive of a note of interrogation; old crones, bent nearly double, in a perpetual bow; old men with wrinkled foreheads, and half-weary, half-dull eyes—there they were, and I looked and longed over them! Earnestly we spoke through our interpreters about the God who loved them, then we knelt and prayed that something might remain, some good seed take root. And then we came away.

What can once telling do? Can it even ruffle the dust on the surface of their beliefs? And yet Paul rejoiced in the bare fact that Christ was preached. If he could, well may we. . . .

There seems to be a sort of silk-worm epidemic in the air—everybody is distracted. The worms control conversation. To-day they lent me a book on their culture (excuse the mixture of pronouns) from which I copy the following gems. Three old women, two girls, and two men are bending over, and fervently gazing. "Ah!" says one in a tone of chastened joy, "*our honourable worms and we ourselves are going to England in a letter!!!*"

Home again, and home in the rain. How it can pour here! For twenty miles we sat in pools in our kurumas, while our patient coolies plodded through mud, ankle deep.

We have had a happy time, though a sad one. For me, this first little experience of itinerating work and ways, has, as it were, opened a door into a new world, a World of Want. To think that

(the ground being damp, and our dresses thin) we sang and talked through our helpers, to the people who gathered round. How pretty it was, the country-side already yellow with harvest. Great Daisen in the distance, then the lower wooded hills, and then the valley, with its streamlet winding through, like a thread of silver among the green and gold. Clustering all about us,



Our Honourable Worms.

these people are utterly unreached, to think they must remain so—not because God plans it so, but because His people will not obey. One thinks of a crowded meeting at home—a missionary one perhaps—and wishes that through the might of the Spirit a sudden power to *feel* might be given—to feel as God feels. It would be as though a bomb had burst in the midst, and speedy would be the scattering! Not that one would pit the importance of foreign work against home, but surely the proportion of workers is so cruelly unfair that words cannot describe it. “In the four quarters were the porters: toward the East, West, North, South.” Four thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine to a *third of one*, is the fact as it stands to-day. Four thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine porters to the West quarter, and a third of a porter to each of the other three. A princely donation truly! The Shepherd left the ninety and nine, and sought for the *one*; we stay with the one,—the ninety and nine, all wandering, are left to take care of themselves.

Mr. and Mrs. Parrot, two of our party, have been spending the evening with us. A baby-organ and a hymn-book might seem poor entertainment to offer one's guests at home. Not so here! We had such a nice time singing hymn after hymn with a zest which would have charmed a Salvationist. Really hymns seem *real* now. They come with a new freshness, and we enjoy them thoroughly. It is just the same with Bible verses. You know how the one about the two or three being gathered together, is quoted in prayer-meetings two or three hundred strong. Here, where oftener than not, there really are only “two or three,” the force of the fact attached seems emphasised. In the most practical possible way, you know that there He is, in the midst.

People sometimes kindly pity missionaries. They needn't! Our Master gives us so many compensations that I think He must let some handfals fall on purpose for us. It would be just like Him.

But the fiery pain is the thought of what it is costing *you*. One day when this was just burning, He lit up a



And We Ourselves.



Word for me,—“Unto you it is *given* in the behalf of Christ to suffer for His sake.” “Unto me, who am less than the least, is this grace *given* that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.” *Given to suffer, Given to serve.* Is there not a connection between the two? Perhaps we could not be given the one without the other—

“Never the exquisite pain, then never the exquisite bliss,
For the soul that is dead to that can never be tuned to this.”

Surely any loss were well worth while that we may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, that from the darker gift of pain, may come forth the brighter gift of service. A fuller passing on of those unsearchable riches than could have been possible, had He not called us to follow Him through the very shadow of death, where He keeps His treasures of darkness.

“For which cause we faint not: for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, *while* we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal!” And part of the glory will be, the Service Gift all perfect—

“For He hath met my longing
With words of golden tone,
That I shall serve for ever
Himself, Himself alone.”

“They shall go no more out: and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads.”

CHAPTER IV

With the Power of God behind it

*"Only a buried grain,
Only the falling rain,
Only the sun's bright glory
Bursting through heaven's top storey,—
Only a grain, only a grain,
Buried and dying and living again."*

Sunday night, June 18.—We had a stormy time at our meeting. Buddhist agitators have been exciting the people, and anti-foreign, anti-Christian sentiments prevail. To-night they gathered in crowds, tore down the doors, pelted us with stones, and carried off our shoes. The Christians were anxious lest we should be hurt, and two of them saw us home, but as the stones came from all quarters at once, and the streets were quite dark, they could not do much. "He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust!" We were safe. Praise Him for opposition. It shows us the devil sees something worth fighting: anything is better than stagnation. "Make Thou a large calm in the midst of strife," O Lord, and keep us still!

Up the lake for a day's seed-sowing. You shall hear all about it. Yesterday Jane and I set forth in the cool of the morning, and divested of shoes as usual, sat on the clean matting they spread in the little boat's bows. After a long wait, we started, a breeze ruffled the blue water, breaking the reflection of hill and cloud into a sort of rippling loveliness. We had half a dozen eager questioners at once, and Jane talked a little to our fellow-passengers, while I listened, and wished I could. After a couple of hours we reached our destination, and were landed by means of a sampan, amid the usual crowd which springs from shore or sea, wherever a foreigner goes.

Our first thought was to get five quiet minutes, if possible, before beginning to do anything, so we walked down the long straight village street, went up the hill behind, and found we were—as usual when we try to lose ourselves anywhere—in the precincts of a beautiful Shinto Temple. Always one is being reminded one is in a shadowed land. Never can one escape that ever-present darkness which may be "*felt*." It was a peaceful spot, not a sound but the song of a lark far overhead,

the rich green of camellia trees, arching a glimpse of the lake and its hills, underfoot ferns and mosses and flowers. We had a big basket of leaflets with us, and we asked that it might indeed be His seed basket, and we His sowers that day.

"Only a grain of wheat, so small that folks don't mind it;
Only a grain of wheat, with the Power of God behind it."

I was just thinking of that, when a little woman with the inevitable baby on her back came up the path below us, so we sowed our first seed.

"There's harvest in a grain of wheat,
If given to God in simple trust,
For though the grain doth turn to dust
It cannot die. It lives, it *must*,"

—for the Power of God is behind it.

It was lovely work. As we passed down the village hundreds of hands were held out for books: we only gave to one in every group, or to one of every two or three houses. The people did not know what they were for, wanted to know how much there was to pay, asked us what they were about, and so on. Always they began to read them at once; soon you saw at every corner, clustering round one who had just got a book, quite a number of eager faces, while he read aloud slowly and wonderingly the strange new story they had never heard before. Some did not even know the name "Christianity," much less its meaning. We had thought of going back by boat, but in passing had noticed many stray hamlets among the trees by the lake-side, to reach which we must walk. It was only ten miles, we were told, to Matsuye, the sun was not very strong, so we walked.

How they gazed at us in those strange, little, out-of-the-world places, coming up from the paddy fields, where they were planting out the rice, to gaze upon us, and gratefully take our books. One who could not

understand that they were *given*, kept saying how much he thanked us, but he was poor and could not buy: at last the facts of the case dawned upon him, and then his bows suggested suffusion of blood to the brain. He was a funny old character too, and toiled away in the slimy swamp with his clothes bundled into a bunch, and a smile of content on his face. (My sketches don't profess to catch the expression, it would be a pity you know to leave nothing to the imagination.) At one little mud-and-paper hut they asked us if we were men or women, and much marvelled because we could read their hieroglyphics well enough to be able to read from a hymn-book, and



His Clothes Bundled into a Bunch.

sing to them. Oh, to be able to speak freely ! They are everywhere so ready to listen ; but we could only sow the little leaflet seeds, and pray for the rain and sunshine. So, sowing and praying, we went our way. And a long way it was—the fabulous ten miles spinning out like a Scotch “wee bittie”—till, with mosquito-bitten feet, which refused to do their duty, at last we sat down on a little stone bridge and thought of Jesus being “wearied with His journey,” and rejoiced that we might be a little weary too. There were some inviting-looking sampans lying near, but everybody was either in the rice or silk line, so we sang “Praise the Saviour, ye who know Him,” revived, and went on.

At the next village they told us Matsuye was still five miles off, at the next *six* ; but to our joy we got kurumas there, and were trotted along in bliss. It was an exquisite evening. The road, following the windings of the lake, curved in and out among rocks and woods. How solemn the great pine trees seemed in the waning light ! Now and then we passed a belated pedestrian with his straw cloak folded across his back, and his big hat (the identical basket sold at sixpence for those three-legged work-things at home, here costing three-farthings) tilted half-way off his head. And then the glow of the sunset faded, and we reached the outskirts of the straggling little town as the quiet lake was wrapping itself in mist wreaths, and shining its last Goodnight. Here the hush of Nature's lullaby was exchanged for its strangest opposite, and the sunshine was lost in cloud once more, for we were plunged straight into a throng of people carrying lanterns, passing swiftly on and on. No rest here, only eager hurry and subdued excitement. The lantern throng parted to let us pass, and soon we got to the heart of it all. Here, where the sadness was focussed, there was a sort of frightened stillness, quite indescribable but very feelable, and we knew we were looking at that weirdest of all weird things, a heathen funeral. From a house beside us the mourners came, carrying the white-covered box, within which was the round cask which held all that was left of one who had died in the dark. Forms in shrouds led the way, bearing tall bamboos and flowers, the glimmering lanterns closed round, the scent of incense rose, silently they all moved on and were gone. No wailing, no weeping, for that would make the departed spirit sorrowful, and hinder it in its journey through the great unknown. Can you see it, I wonder ? I wish you could *feel* it, too !

One evening we passed a wedding procession. The bride was dressed in white to show she had died to her old home, and would never leave her husband's until she was carried out—dead. After she left her father's house, fire was burned and incense offered, as if a dead body had just been taken away. White, you know, is the mourning colour here—we do most things upside down, in Topsy Turvydom.

Will you pray for those villages where we sowed the little life seeds ? The ground is hard and dry as yet. “Thou makest it soft with showers.” Let us trust Him to bless the springing thereof, so that one day even these valleys shall be

covered over with corn, that of them the angels may say "They shout for joy, they also sing."

June 28.—Item No. 1 is of a startling character. I am reported dead, buried, to be exhumed, and reburied in England. Yesterday this intelligence reached me, other people as usual knowing more about one than one knows about oneself. It happened in this wise. One of our workers chancing to visit the village where we were a fortnight ago, was commissioned with a note to the hotel folk from me, and found it occasioned surprise—for I was dead, had "deigned to cease to become," and they told him all about it. After some difficulty, the testimony of an eye witness as to my then existence was received, they had grieved to hear of so early a departure, now they rejoiced, and inscribed a yard of congratulation, which was duly handed to me. A note of condolence would have been more *apropos*, I should have thought. This small tale is worth telling, because it shows how rumours go, and stories grow; and how careful we have to be to set no stones rolling which might do any possible harm. The origin of this one was simple enough, but it would take longer to tell than it is worth.

Being somewhat freshly interested in the sepulchral subject, I unearthed quite a curious mummy in the shape of old custom. Only in the writing, the thing loses; you should hear it as I did, extorted bit by bit, in quaint broken English, while the breeze rustled softly in the bamboo, and camellia petals fell like rosy snowflakes round. When a man dies, the priest gives him a new name, by which he will be known in the spirit world, and by which he will be addressed in prayer, by his relations. This name is poetical and highly honourable, it is carved on the tombstone, and painted on the ancestral tablet, which tablet, sacred to his memory, is placed in the household shrine, or on the Idol shelf. Before it, flowers, fruit, incense, and rice are presented, and when they think the departed has had time to absorb the essence thereof, they demolish the substance themselves; the absurdity of such action does not strike them in the least.

In the coffin various things are put. Sometimes a gilt ball to denote space; money to pay the old woman who ferries him across the river Sandzu, the Buddhist Styx, which separates hell from paradise; beads, which (Roman Catholic like) he had "told" in prayer through life; and a staff to help him on his long long journey.

What befalls him thereafter, I do not know; it seems a misty subject altogether, fraught with contradictions and sadnesses indescribable; for the Buddhist hell is an awful place, and thither according to their theology at least, the majority must certainly go. But the Japanese mind does not dwell upon this,—for them the horrible has little attraction. They prefer to forget it.

After the funeral, things go on much as usual till the great yearly feast to the souls of the ancestors. For a week the spirits are hospitably entertained, visits are

paid to the graves, and they are freshly tidied up. It is a time of paying and receiving grave-calls. I go to your friend's grave, pray to the spirits therein, and leave my name on a bamboo incense-stick, stuck into the ground. You return the call, doing likewise.

When the week is past, the departed are requested to withdraw. Little straw or wooden boats are made and launched in the nearest water, the assembled relatives gathering on the shore, and seeing them off. This is always done in the evening, and the priest burns the purifying torch in the dim light, as the spirit-fleet floats away to the land of shadows.

There is something pathetic about it all. Contrast it with our sure and certain Hope!

* * * * *

It is Sunday, midnight. The house is quiet, but through the open window of my room, comes a sound I am learning to know too well. For across the street is a temple, some one is praying there now, and sonorous waves of sweet gong-music fall softly round me, and breathe sad thoughts. You are in full swing of Sunday afternoon work; all over the land the children are gathered; their hymns are rising now; it comforts one to think that somewhere, some one is praising Him.

And now the gong has ceased, and the pitiful prayer begins, every word is audible, and one listens almost breathlessly in the silence which follows, for something, one hardly knows what. But the old words come back with tenfold deepened meaning, "There was neither voice nor any to answer, nor any that regarded." Only a dark-hearted bit of humanity, praying into the dark; but what must that "only" mean to the Christ who died for him? And what should it mean to us? Oh! if only once for an hour, all we could bear to know of what Calvary meant to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, could be flashed upon our hearts, burned deep into them, our thoughts upon this "only" of heathendom would become transfused with the fire of a Love Divine, our lives henceforth would be transfigured. And the heathen would know it.

As one lies thinking of the great world lying in wickedness, turning away from the Love-light, wrapping itself in the shadow of death, a cloud seems to close upon one's spirit, pressing closely, heavily. Then comes a thought-beam piercing the earth mists, and looking up one sees the first faint glimmer of sunrise breaking over the sky, and thinks of another awakening, near perhaps, and welcome:

*"In the chill before the dawning,
Between the night and morning,
I may come!"*

"Behold, I come quickly! Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

I have been reading *Regions Beyond*. One thought in this May number I should like to ring back to you all—"Ora pro nobis" is the longing cry of the

brothers and sisters from across the sea." It is indeed. Your prayers are almost everything to us. Often the mails are delayed, and we may be weeks letterless, as in many another land they are months; but prayers come *via* heaven, and God forwards the answers straight on to us. We know when they reach us, too, and look up and ask Him to thank you. I wish I could make the reality of this vivid to you. A little sketch in outline may give you a glimpse into things as they really are at times.

In a far-away land a sister of yours wakens one morning feeling dull. Perhaps she has been to a late meeting the night before, and is tired, and the devil has a rather mean way of teasing tired people. Perhaps she has got discouraged because of the way; perhaps she is very homesick. Suddenly is flashed to her a sweet love-note from the Lord, who knoweth our frame—a scrap of psalm or hymn, a promise long known, now going to be fulfilled. His felt presence, a nearness never known in less lonely days, soothes and thrills her, and the consciousness comes, "*Some one is praying for me.*" She finds herself breaking into "Praise Him! praise Him! Jesus our blessed Redeemer," "Glory, glory, hallelujah! Glory, glory to the Lamb!" The cup runs over again, Himself its overflowing portion. All the day long that dear home-prayer is with her, and she knows it.

Or perhaps she is trying to give the message. In very visible weakness, in much fear and trembling, knowing it may be that some one is listening for the first and last time, hardly knowing what to say, hardly daring to say anything for fear of saying wrong. Then comes strength. In the power of the Holy Ghost the word is spoken fearlessly, and as distinctly as if a voice had told her so, *she knows it is the answer to a home-prayer rising then.*

Once more, and if you doubt the truth of this last picture, ask some one who has been out, if it is not so. Temptation and testings come. Insidious little things, scarcely recognisable at first, "subtle wiles" indeed. The climate is trying. Home friends and ways are missed. Trifles have a power to fret and chafe. Perhaps study or service try to press in and hinder quiet with Him who says, "Be still and know." It is terribly possible to get out of touch. She feels it, and shrinks in shame and pain from the very thought, "Oh, what if it should be so!" Then she learns the value of home-prayers as never before, *knows with a quite curious certainty that even now, in the moment of need, one of the Lord's remembrancers is reminding Him of her*, knows too that He Himself has prayed for her that her faith fail not. And such reassurance comes, such rest!

Dear friends, will you not send us *ever so many* prayer telegrams? Pray for us whenever you think of us, turning thought into prayer, and know that not one "ever miscarries. Nor will the answer come too late."

Summer is upon us now, and robed in the coolest obtainable raiment we still feel hot. The natives retire into nothing, or the nearest possible approach thereto,

and the children are clothed in little, save comicality. This, be it known, is chiefly when the policeman is out of the way. When that uncomfortably got-up gentleman in tights, whites, and gloves, all complete, appears upon the scene, there is an immediate scuttle of the undressed. Their politeness is something wonderful. The other day a coolie watering the road, as we passed, apologized volubly for the scantiness of his toilette, and struggled to get into something, for our sole benefit.

Everywhere the people are so accessible. Sometimes we go up the lake to the unreached villages among the hills. Will you spend one evening with us?

We have put up at the quaint little hotel, with its deep, overhanging eaves, and have suppered picnic fashion, squatting upon the mats, and, to the delectation of all beholders, wielding our chopsticks valiantly. We have brought tinned meat, bread, and condensed milk, by way of supplement to the questionable delicacies provided—such as ancient eggs chopped up in sugary juice, “chicken,” usually “a fowl of much experience,” treated likewise, leathery scraps, nature unknown, floating about in some terribly fishy liquid, sliced bamboo, lily roots, odoriferous radish, fish, boiled *or otherwise*, sea-weed, sea-ears, sea-slugs, plus pickle, plus rice.

But supper is over, and we, having warily partaken of the good things of this life, go out together into the unlighted streets. A small boy trots beside us swinging a pink paper lantern. Soon we separate, each taking one side, sowing the leaflet seeds, gospels, simple “doctrine books,” texts and hymns, here and there where He seems to lead. Everywhere they are received with bows and smiles, almost always they are at once read aloud to a listening circle. But how much can they possibly understand? God knows, and He the All-knowing One will be their Judge. With Him we leave the seed, *His seed*, feeling that He giveth the increase.

At one of the houses they say there has been preaching once here, will there be some to-night? Sorrowfully we must answer, we have no interpreter and cannot speak much. Soon all the books we can spare have been given, and followed by the quickly gathering crowd of the East, begging for more, we return to the little hotel. But they will not leave us yet. So sitting on the matting by the open window-walls, while they cluster close about us, we sing to them over and over again the Japanese translation of the children’s hymn, “Jesus loves me, this I know” till they catch the tune, and shyly try to sing it too.

Then the “God is Love,” embroidered on my dress, forms the text for a few broken words. We sing again and say “Good-night”; but they linger still, waiting with the strange un-Western patience which never seems to tire. Can it be that these nations have waited so long, though so blindly, for the Word from the Eternal, which makes all time grow precious, that they have lost count of the hours, and think of them as minutes?

At last we leave them, for we are very sleepy; unlike the brook of nursery lore, we cannot “go on for ever.” Upstairs our thick blue quilts are soon spread

upon the floor, the large green mosquito net is hung tent fashion over us, and we try to sleep. Vain try! On the other side of the sliding paper wall a Saké party is in progress. Till long after midnight it continues. Then peace *external* is restored. But here I draw the curtain, only adding, by way of explanation, that the fact that we were foreigners, and the first foreigners who had ever slept there, was speedily discovered by visitors other than human. Early next morning we parted regretfully from our kind hostess, and setting off once more in kurumas scattered the seed.

That morning I shall never forget—the sadness of leaving those people so. The many hamlets dotting the lovely landscape all around, where as yet no one had ever been with the message given so long ago, the solemn groves of Cryptomeria and pine enshrining many a shrine, the Buddhas by the wayside, the heathendom visible, audible, feelable everywhere, the utter hopelessness of everything! Oh, the tears *would* come as I thought of it all! What was the use of giving away a few little books here and there? What were they among so many? The poor people couldn't understand, we couldn't explain. Matsuye was a long way off, for one who even wanted to know more, to come to: was there any use in trying to do anything at all? Then with a freshness indescribable, with a power irresistible, came the Word of the Lord, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." In the face of the improbable, *impossible*, His "doubtless" stood out, shone forth. It must be true. It shall be true, yea, it *is* true. From those very villages now steeped in idolatry there shall be sheaves to lay at His feet in the glorious harvest home.

Oh! that some abler sowers would come to the unsowed fields. Here there is room for all sorts and conditions. Why don't some of the leaders come? Surely England could spare some. She has so many. Why does not she give more of her *very best*? There is work through interpreters to be done. Cultured minds are wanted, for the Japanese can think. Simple workers are wanted, too, by the thousand. All over the great world-field the cry is rising, and growing in intensity day by day.

*"It comes with a chorus of pitiful wailing,
It comes with a plea which is strong and prevailing—
For Christ's sake to me,
For Christ's sake to thee,
Oh what, oh what, shall the answer be?"*

And yet one dare not write a "Come" without His added, "*Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high.*" "*Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto*

Me both in Jerusalem and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

There is much one would like to tell the dear Helpers Together who "hold the ropes" for us—how where the valleys run among the mountains, in villages nestling under green woods, we have had the joy of sounding forth the Life-Word; and how the people listened, men, women, and children, too, gathering in little meetings from forty or fifty to two or three hundred. Do not mistake listening for believing, but pray that the one may soon follow the other.

One triumph of the Gospel, and I close. "How did you become a Christian?" I asked one, Stephen-like, "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost." And he told me how, when he first heard of it, he was bitterly opposed to it, and mockingly laughed at it. He was a schoolboy then, and two or three of his classmates were Christians. They prayed for him, and asked him to pray for himself; and he prayed, "Oh! God, keep me from being hungry without food, and make me pass my exams. without study." So turning from them scornfully, he went his way. But they went on praying believingly, *and they lived Christ*. This won him. He could resist words, but not lives. He yielded, came to the Saviour, was led on lovingly, by his missionary teacher; and now, having laid aside all that makes life precious to a young Japanese of position, he has joined the followers of the crucified Saviour—yea, rather, has enlisted in the army of the King of kings.

One of Christ's schoolboys may read this story. You cannot come to the forefront yet. He means you to carry the banner at home. And after all, though we speak of "the field" as if it meant foreign lands only, He says, "The field is the world,"—England as much as Japan. Now will you ask your Captain to help you to be so true to Him, that the boy in your form who cares nothing for Him may be won for Him through you? Ask Him to tell you which special one to choose, and pray for him, and live for him till you have the wonderful gladness of leading him straight to Jesus. Don't give him up till he is safe inside the kingdom.

And now once more, as a farewell word, "Ora pro nobis." Ask for us this:—
"That He may grant us according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith, that we, being *rooted and grounded in love*, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God."

*"Lord, we ask it, hardly knowing
What this wondrous gift may be;
Yet fulfil to overflowing—
Thy great meaning let us see."*

CHAPTER V

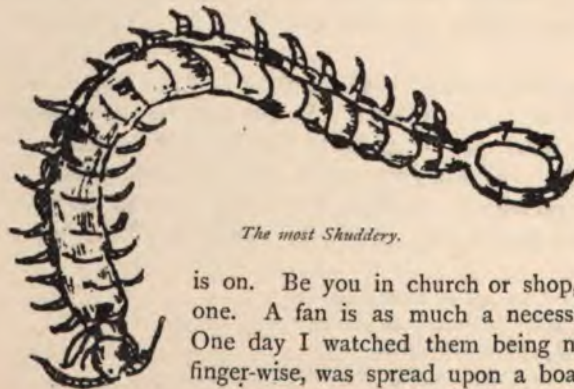
I cannot. Can God? God can!

*"Here work enough to watch the Master work,
And catch hints of the proper craft,
Tricks of the tool's true play."*

BROWNING.

MOSQUITOES! All they are responsible for in the way of small misery, I hesitate to state. You would not understand. A sting lasts from a week to a season. It dies down, and revives again. It feels like the application of the Essence of Irritation. Butterfly life is various. Big black beauties flit about; they have electric dusted wings, purple and blue. Dragonflies, three times our home size, are ever on the dart. Beetles of pugilistic character prevail. Creatures of the locust tribe, of superlative size, with voice to match, astonish the beholder. Pink land crabs crawl about the streamlets in the hills. Great toads, which inflate when you pat them, sit on ancient stumps; and frogs of vivid green, whose conversation deafens, congregate in swampy plain and hollow. Strangest of all new insect friends—or foes—is the "Semmie," a goliath fly, possessed of three distracting notes, to be heard from dawn to dusk. One sounds like a scissor-grinder's whirr, another like bacon frying, the third must belong to an egotistical member: he says, "Mee, mee,

mee-ee—ah!" Among the number which we generalize as "*Things*," the most shuddery is the giant centipede. Larger at times than this. He has forty legs, and a bite worse than a scorpion's.



The most Shuddery.

It is hot now, over 90° always, and the Fan season is on. Be you in church or shop, you are immediately offered one. A fan is as much a necessity as a pocket handkerchief. One day I watched them being made. A bamboo stem split finger-wise, was spread upon a board. Two picture-papers were

pasted on either side. A touch of the knife, a twist of raw edges, and it was done. Slight things they were, but pretty, as everything a Japanese fingers is sure to be, unless made according to his idea of the Foreigner's taste, which is usually as barbaric as his own is artistic.

There is something instructive in a walk down a street in midday. Here you see a little woman in blue cotton, boiling yellow cocoons, and winding off five or six threads at once of the delicate fine silk. Another, a young girl, coils it up, as cleverly as possible, into long shining "hanks," as the mill girls at home would call them; they both seem pleased one should care to watch, and one longs to be able to tell them how the God they had never heard of yet, loves them, and wants their love.

Then there are curio shops, and into one I was lured for your sake, and bought a queer old copper lamp-filler—here it is—for 3*d.*, and some pipes, wood and brass, and silvered, all for something under 6*d.* The little flat one with the old gentleman reposing under the stork, is a god of some kind, I'm afraid.

And there are china shops, where you can see a quaint old Baldhead painting those tiny china pin-trays, as we call them, tea-cups, as they really are; or sketching



A Young Girl Coils it up.



A queer old Copper Lamp Filler



Pipes, Wood, and Brass, and Silvered.

flowers or figures upon teapots, which *they* use for their legitimate purpose, while *we*, to their infinite amusement, put them on our mantelpieces. You can see them carving wood, dyeing cotton, weaving baskets, making paper lanterns, polishing crystals, cutting agates into odd little knick-knacks, doing a hundred other curious things, in their open shop fronts, without the slightest attempt at either privacy or speed.

* * * * *

Friday night, July 14.—May the Spirit of Truth now hold my pen, as I try to tell you of yesterday's life. A week might have been compressed into those twelve hours, one seems to have lived through so much.

Early in the morning we heard that quite close to us an old man was possessed by "the fox-spirit." Demoniacal possession is much the same here as in Palestine, of old. I had heard about it, but barely believed in it. We listened now while they talked.

It was the old story retold. "Wheresoever it taketh him, it teareth him; and he foameth and gnasheth with his teeth and pineth away."

And as we listened wonderingly, suddenly flashed the question, "Why could not we cast him out?"

Almost stunned with the thought, I went straight to my room, and asked Him. And the answer came, "Because of your unbelief."

Of the next few hours I cannot write.

Then I went to T. San our interpreter, and asked her, did she believe our Lord Jesus was willing to cast the devil out of that man. She was rather startled, but after praying over it, she too believed.

Our first impulse was to go at once, but "this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting" caused us to wait; in the meantime we sent a message to the people, asking might we go to see him, and they replied we might, but that he was very wild, "had six foxes," and was tied up.

Then we waited, T. San and I, each alone, before the Lord. I cannot tell

you much of these solemn hours, but just this much seems to His glory. Even physical strength and mental power left me, it was in literal utter nothingness we went forth in His Name. What was done, was *all* of God.

We went, and were taken upstairs. I had been prepared for much, but for nothing so awful as this. Stretched upon the floor, fastened crosswise upon two beams, bound and strapped hand and foot, his body covered with burns and wounds—it was terrible. . . . But nothing to what followed. At the name of Christ a fearful paroxysm came on. It seemed as though the powers of hell were let loose. Blasphemies which even I could recognise as such, were poured forth. A voice not his own spoke, and then *his* voice, dry and cracked, seemed to echo the other. He struggled to get at us, but they held him down, and covered his face. We knelt and prayed, but it seemed as though the devil were mocking us. He grew more violent every moment; it was worse than useless to wait. Can you think how I felt then? His Name dishonoured among the heathen, and *I had done it*. Far, far better never to have come! *This* was the fiery dart which was hurled against me. And yet, surely He had sent us, surely it was no self-movement. "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me." In the lull which those words brought, I could hear it again. "*All power is given unto Me,*" it said. "*These signs shall follow them that believe: in My Name shall they cast out devils. Fear thou not, FOR I AM WITH THEE!*"

As the poor wife followed us to the door, with no thought of reproach for what must have seemed to her a cruel intrusion, I could tell her through T. San, what had just been told me, our God would conquer. When the evil spirit was cast out, we asked her to let us know, until then we would pray at home.

And yet, I'm afraid my faith was very weak, for I was almost broken down, and when dear Sarah met us with loving sympathy, and told us she too was praying, it was very comforting.

One hour afterwards the Answer came. The "foxes" had gone, the cords were off, and he was lying, weak indeed, but himself again. At night they sent once more. He was sleeping, very prostrate after all the excitement, but well. We remembered then, how when our Lord cast the "foul spirit" out of the child, he was as one dead, but Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up, and he arose. So we asked Him to do it for him.

This morning he asked to see us. I should not have known the man. Only the scars on the "sore vexed" body told of what had been. One could hardly speak for very gladness: it was such a transformation.

He sent for flowers, a lovely spray of scarlet pomegranate blossom, and offered it gracefully to me. Then iced water was brought, the first we had tasted this season, sugared, and served with chopsticks instead of teaspoons. Joy and peace reigned in the selfsame room, the fury had raged in, yesterday.

We talked to him, and his gentle wife, and prayed with them ere we left them. They knelt and joined with "Hai! hai!" Yes, yes! when T. San asked for a saved soul, from Him who had saved the body. Clothed and in his right mind, worshipping the God he had reviled. How glorious it was!

As we came away, a priest passed, and looked at us with no friendly eye. Among them is a sect called "Fox Exorcists." The spirits of evil are supposed to take the form of foxes, one or more take possession of the victim, henceforth he lives a dual or a complex life. There are various medical explanations, which I don't understand. It is mysterious enough to be considered fabulous by those who do not know how true it is.

Certainly we are in a land where the Prince of Darkness has power. The dreaded Fox Spirit is worshipped, shrines are dedicated to him. Little stone foxes are often set side by side with the Buddhas by the wayside. The strangest tales are told and believed, many of course superstitious, but many based on fact. Fox Spirits have been known to lead their prey into deep mountain pools, and there leave them to drown. This poor man, out of whom our God cast six, according to their count, was bent upon destroying himself. "Ofttimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water," it sounds very much like that.

To-day I have been reading an opinion given by a Professor of the Imperial University of Japan, upon the phenomenon, as he calls it, and I see how what seemed serious hindrance, has resulted in glory to His name. The exorcist's first endeavour is to impress upon the patient his own great power, and thereby win his confidence. Had this man or his friends believed in us, had I been stronger in the crisis hour, and *seemed* as one empowered, the cure might have been attributed to us. As it was, they all saw clearly enough that we were nothing. There was nothing tangible to lay hold of. All the glory went straight to God. Truly we may trust Him to plan His own means, for us 'tis "work enough to watch the Master work."

Saturday evening.—A message came to our cook to-day. The kind people wanted to know if there was anything foreigners liked to eat, as they wished to send us something, and were not sure what we would fancy! They are full of thanks, which we try to turn upward to Him to whom all are due.

To-day we took the poor man some toilet vinegar for his head, he seemed so feverish, and the heat tried him. But he put it on his burns instead! So we got some more suitable stuff for that purpose, and bound the poor scarred limbs in soft cambric. Most of the wounds are caused by the "moxa" (our mugwort) which they dry, roll up into little cones, light, and apply to the skin. It is considered a panacea for almost everything. Two or three applications produce bad sores, and naturally much increase the trouble. . . .

Since writing, we hear our patient is telling every one who will listen, what great things the foreigners' God has done for him. But his son is a strict Buddhist,

I cannot. Can God? God can!

43

and does not like this. He protests that the family must not forsake their old gods for a "new one," and to this the relatives all agree.

And now I want you to join hands with me, and let us all form a Prayer-circle round him. It is not a little thing to ask you to pray. Do we half know what we are doing when we say, "Oh, yes!" to a friend's "Will you pray for me, or about such and such a thing?" Prayer-engagements are, after all, very sacred trusts. Real "praying is no plaything."

And now good-night, and dear ones all—

"Oh, sing unto the Lord a new song,
For He *hath* done marvellous things,
His right hand and His holy arm
Hath gotten Him the victory!
The Lord hath made known His salvation,
His righteousness hath He openly showed in the sight of the heathen.
Sing unto the Lord, before the Lord the King, for He cometh!"

CHAPTER VI

Across Japan by Kuruma

*"The pride of the height, the clear firmament, the beauty of Heaven with his glorious shew
great is the Lord that made it."*—THE APOCRYPHA.

"All upon this earth is broken beauty."—DR. BONAR.

THE others have gone to Mount Heizan, near Kyoto. T. San and I are waiting for a few days longer, for we are anxious about our old friend. A low fever has set in, his relations press for the use of charms, etc.; he is too weak to resist, and clings to us. Also, we cannot bear to leave him until we feel he understands about salvation, and he does not yet. The native Christians are helping together by prayer, some we hope will visit him, when we have to go.

To-day we had a talk about prayer. His questions were intelligent, he was struck by the fact that our God is always ready to listen, and needs no hand-clap, no gong, no offering. He is reading the New Testament now. May the entrance of His Word give light!

* * * * *

July 23. Keswick Sunday!—How I am with you in spirit, and I sing even now, as you will on Saturday next,—

"Set on fire our hearts' devotion with the love of Thy dear name,
Till o'er every land and ocean, lips and lives Thy Cross proclaim!
Fix our eyes on Thy returning, keeping watch till Thou shalt come,
Loins well girt, lamps brightly burning. Then, Lord, take Thy servants home."

We left Matsuye on Thursday. The Christians assembled and bowed us off, and we started happily, trusting that our purpose in waiting was accomplished, our old friend understands, and we think believes. It is such a rest to leave him with God. One needs to learn the lesson of confidence in His power to keep that which we have committed to Him against that day, irrespective quite of our power to do anything towards guarding it. Very often the word seems to be "Hands off," and we can do nothing, *literally* nothing, but pray and trust.

And now here we are crossing Japan by kuruma. The first stage was tiring, the first night restless. Heat and "things" combined in keeping us wakeful till it was almost time to rise, and then an "Honourable morning is!" assured us that

three o'clock had come, which was the hour fixed for our start. Our men must not be kept waiting, (it is not easy to run in the heat of the day,) so we struggled up, breakfasted upon cold rice and eggs which perhaps remotely were young, and departed.

Our way lay among the hills; evening found us in a narrow valley threaded by a river, and closed in by wooded heights. Sometimes where a sudden turn hid the moon from us, we seemed engulfed in gloom, but it always opened into a way, wherefrom I learned much.

There were sharp curves bending round rocky walls, and boulders blocking the path. Once in the depth of a ravine, a band of coolies carrying bundles slung to bamboo poles, and swinging paper lanterns, met us. We drew up close to the side, and they passed on single file, each with a word of apology, to which our men responded pleasantly. The flash of old-world courtesy, the glimmering globe-lights, the flow of the rapid river, the faint fair moonshine, the darkness beyond, starred here and there with pale-green firefly showers—it was all so strange and new, one seemed as if carried on in some swift dream.

When we reached the village where we were to sleep, we were shown into a room opening off the street, wherein were a dusty old model of a Shinto temple, and a whole row of gods and prayer-papers. But the people seemed very poor, and nothing could be had to eat save rice, cold and sticky, and dried flying-fish, all skin and bone, and heads and tails. I had forgotten to bring tea, and the other foreign comforts we usually carry, but a little bread I fortunately had, and so we suppered somehow, and survived.

A little crowd gathered even though it was late, and watched us curiously. Foreigners were rare here, it was not one of the customary halts. When we knelt to ask a blessing, a murmur of wonder ran round. We had our backs turned to the idols, to whom could we be praying? T. San told them, and we gave them books. They had never heard before.

Remembering last night's experience I slept on the bare mats, and at two o'clock we were up and off, for a rice-field round the corner offered malaria gratis, and no breakfast was to be had. Ten miles further on, we found ourselves where rice and eggs were obtainable, and by noon we reached a gem-like place set in hills and pine woods. I lived in the river that afternoon. It was too hot anywhere else. Our kind little inn-keeper was much concerned, and seemed to think drowning the least of the possible ills I was courting, but nothing happened. She was a funny old lady; when we paid her small charge, she tendered part of it back, saying, "Condescended a little piece of your honourable cake, deign to sell!" You should have seen her face when she received a remnant of the dried-up crust, plus the cash.

A ride through splendid pine-woods brought us to our present resting-place,

where we are spending a quiet Sunday. There are temples all round us, and one is so close, that as I lay awake last night, I could hear them chanting prayers. The Head Priest's voice leading, the others responding. A Matsurie is going on in honour of some god. The houses are decorated with bamboo branches, flags, and lanterns; the bridges crossing the river are hung with lanterns too, and the water sparkles back in broken crimson flashes. It is all very pretty, but very, very sad.

It is almost time for your early Communion at St. John's (Keswick). This time last year we were together there. Now, how different one's surroundings are. Instead of crowds of Christians, there are crowds of heathen. (Does not that fact suggest a possible scattering upon the part of the great home band?) Instead of hymns full of "glory to Thee for all the grace I have not tasted yet," one hears the weary, dreary, meaningless chant, and knows that to priest and worshipper, to the careless throng passing all day long, to the little child, and the old man, there is nothing to look forward to save the certain drop of the curtain, and beyond, the uncertain hereafter. Will you not think of these far-away ones? Will you not care for them too? "For my own part, I never ceased to rejoice that God has appointed me to such an office. *People talk of the sacrifice. . . . It is emphatically no sacrifice!*" So wrote Dr. Livingstone, and, though very humbly, so write I. The sacrifice is on the home-side. Our hardest part is the thought of yours.

"For ah, the Master is so fair,
His smile so sweet to banished men,
That they who meet it unaware,
Can never rest on earth again.
And they who see Him, risen afar,
On God's right hand to welcome them,
Forgetful stand of home and land,
Desiring fair Jerusalem!"

Monday morning.—One of our kurumas has broken down, and while they mend it, I talk to you. Whereupon observers gather. One, under pretext of fanning me, has come close behind, and peers over. One sits beside me, and passes remarks. Some stand in front, and talk to each other, about it. They cannot understand it. In turning over my basket to get pencil and paper, a photo was discovered, delight and amazement knew no bounds. Wonderful! Charming! Who was it? Ah! They perceived the family likeness! And so on, question and interjection *ad infinitum*.

. . . Noontide rest in a little hotel, and dinner in course of preparation. I wonder what it will be. Some ghastly skinned cuttle-fish hang near the door; and cucumbers' outside portions repose in a bowl of water, the *inside* which we prefer is not in favour here. Enter the trays—rice of course, plentiful and good, pickled plums, sugared fish (not cuttles, mercifully,) a creature with eyes, in a bowl of soup,

vinegar in a tumbler, chopsticks. Here come our kuruma-men, on bended knee. "May they worship my honourable picture?" *i.e.*, presume to lift adoring glances to it. So it is on view again, and through the hanging blinds I can see quite a collection of admirers gathered under the spreading vine, trained so as to shade from the burning sun. It is over 100° now, in this "cool" room.

The Mountain.—A hot train journey to Kobé, a hotter night in the Christian native hotel. More of the melting train, to Kyoto; thence to the mountain foot by kuruma; a weary climb up a rough steep path, and at last The Camp. There loving welcomes awaited me, for our party had long since gathered, and settled down gipsy fashion, in tents pitched upon clearings in the cryptomeria forest. All were deeply interested in hearing about our old man, and the Lord's great grace. We praised Him together for it.

Arima. Aug. 11.—We have come here for the Missionary Conference. The journey over the hills was another of the all things He giveth us richly to enjoy, for

"Nature, the old nurse, took the child upon her knee,
Saying, 'Here is a story-book thy Father hath written for thee.'"



Down the mountain-side in a kango (here is a rough sketch of one), I wish you could see it all with me! We started in early dawn; the valley wrapped in its dream-clouds lay sleeping still, the heights above were swathed like babes in their christening robes. The fairies had been at work, powdering diamonds upon bush, blade, and fern, wearing veils of silver filagree, over the waterfalls, bathing the woodland in beauty. Above us the boughs of cryptomeria and pine interlaced like the roof of some mighty cathedral. Underfoot their sweet-scented red-brown needles carpeted the path. Soon the fleecy mist-wreaths rolled up and floated away. The mountain-peaks pointed up into crystal blue,—and the sky in these altitudes is something beyond power of simile, a thing you look *through*, not *at*. Then the sound of life and laughter from the hamlet in the valley, rose and mingled with the semmie's cry, and so the world awoke.

By train from Kyoto (an undelectable midday experience in August heat), and once more by kango two thousand five hundred feet up and over the hills to Arima. The views were fine. The wide green rice flats, merging into wide blue sea flats, and far away purple islands hanging half in sky and half in water. Then the sun set, and the whole was flooded with wonderful glories of colour and gold. But the blight was upon it all, for idol shrines claimed the choicest spots, and spoke of Jehovah's dishonour. It was as if a dark spirit had flown across the landscape, touching its life into death, throwing the mountains in shadow, staining the new-born bud, leaving its mark on the frond-curl, everywhere marring all things. Oh may God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, so shine through us now, that something of Him may be seen and felt by the people pressing around us!

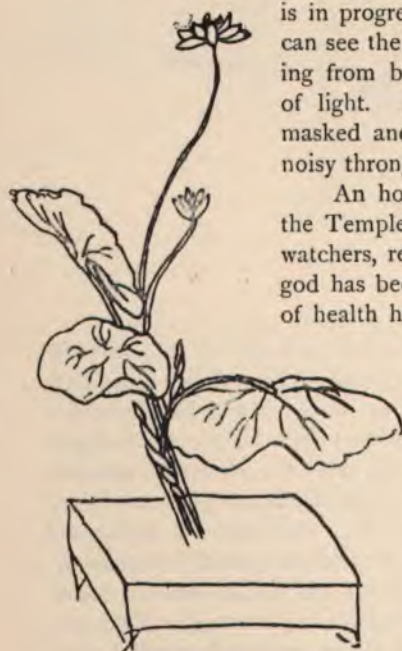
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Some of us have been reading the Life of Mrs. Booth. Such a book is an inspiration. It reminds one of Carlyle's terse way of putting things, "The nakedest, savagest reality I say, is preferable to any semblance, however dignified." Truth in the inward parts, and fearless truth-speaking—that is our need to-day!

August 13.—It is late, almost midnight, but an idol fête is in progress, and sleep is impossible. Through the trees we can see the crimson glow of hundreds of paper lanterns swinging from bough to bough, and gable to gable, in long chains of light. A wild fantastic dance has been going on, men masked and painted taking part. Now it is over, and the noisy throng is breaking up.

An hour ago I went up the narrow lane which leads to the Temple Square, and passing among the crowd of eager watchers, reached unobserved the shrine of honour. A new god has been made to-day, a new temple dedicated. A god of health he is, who will heal the sick. Before him lie piles of fruit and cake, on either side are flowers—the sacred Lotus, with its delicate pink blossom, and tall lilies, pure and fair. Below are the gongs of praise, hung with rosaries. Before one, just then, knelt a man, striking it, bowing, clapping, praying in weariest reiteration, unheeding the constant passers to and fro. Only one word I can catch; over and over again it is repeated—"Please, please, please!"

Sitting down on the wide low steps I looked long, looked till the scene was burnt upon my very soul. Would that I could dip my pen in



The Sacred Lotus.

liquid fire, and burn it upon yours. The little temple festooned with ruby light, its panelled ceiling "richly dight," its delicate carvings, fair flowers, rich colours; its lavishment of beauty;—deeper still, its intensity of sadness; the scores of candles flickering upon those useless offerings, the fumes of incense rising aimlessly; the fearsome god of hell, wrapped in his glowing flames;—and deeper, deeper still its utter hopelessness! How many a suffering one will pray long and vainly for the cure which will not come, how many will turn away heartsick with hope deferred!

At last there was silence. The pleader turned and looked at me. Longing to give him even a crumb, I said, "The one true God loves you." He pointed to the idols—how many there were of them in that one small shrine—and looked inquiringly. Oh! to be able to explain. Quickly slipping through the crowd which had gathered closer now, I sped to our lodgings, got some books, and returned. Evidently expecting some result from the sudden flight, he was waiting still. Very gladly, and with many thanks, the little booklets were accepted, priests and people sitting down before their idols to read them then and there. One could do nothing more, but it was hard to leave them so; the Arima people may have heard more or less, but there were many gathered here from the country round, who perhaps had never once heard of the Saviour who "bare our sicknesses."

The Missionary Conference is just over. There have been a number of friends from China, and awful news they have brought us, of sorrow and death. May God comfort the bereaved ones in far-away Sweden, and once more, may the blood of the martyrs be the seed of the Church!

Soon after we arrived here we found that some were longing for a fuller consecration than they had known as yet, while others, most of them earnest workers from China, were seeking the filling of the Holy Spirit. The little meetings held morning by morning in our lodgings, were very solemn, as one after another confessed failure and heart-need, and claimed His cleansing and deliverance. All week He kept us at the point of full surrender, but yesterday evening a time some of us will never forget was given, when He drew near, and to some was given in a fresh, deep sense, the gift of Pentecost.

Since then a letter has come from a missionary of many years' standing, at whose feet I sit in spirit. Well I remember my faithless shivers when she, so much one's senior, began to attend our little meeting. She tells how for years she had been longing for some unknown something. Her work had often been drudgery, and it was almost resultless. Now she has found out the reason. She had never "tarried at Jerusalem." Her letter finishes with such glad praise to Him—praise Him indeed!

* * * * *

We have come back to the "Mountain of chilly heights," and the event of the

week has taken place—our mail has come in. Oh the bliss that means for us! Shakespeare put it just right when he said,—

“Absence from those we love is self from self,
A deadly banishment!”

And now a blue clad figure, carrying a large set of cases one fitting into the other, wrapped up in a green cloth, appears upon the scene, and claims attention. He is an ex-Buddhist priest, and he sells curios. These always remind me of you, for you would so enjoy the artistic gems he unwraps from their folds of yellow



An old Bronze Incense-burner.

muslin. The best however are beyond our means, and we look, and admire the old embroideries, and silken scrolls, delicate china, and bronzes, and ivories; buying perhaps a trifle or two to remind you, our dear ones at home, to care for, and pray for, these far-away brothers of yours.

Here is a sad enough curio—an old bronze incense-burner, which a skilful hand has drawn for you. It has been used many a time, could it speak, it might tell full many a tale.

And here are carved ivories (or bones), little things for balancing the pipe or pencil case, which hangs from the broad black belt, and is part of a gentleman's toilette. Will you think of it, as you look at them, these things were wrought by men who never once heard of the love of God. Never, never once.

A tale has been told me worth passing on. The Indian tale of the Buddha re-set, in the days of old Japan. He was a prince who had left all to win The Great Enlightenment. After many adventures and trials, he settled upon a mountain top, in a hut of grass, through which the wind blew keenly. Sometimes when he had prayed most earnestly, it breathed more softly. He was very lonely. His life was one long pain. One day he heard a voice from the mountain gorge. It was speaking holy words. Something told him this was The Great Enlightenment. Swiftly descending he found a fearsome fiend, it was weary and hungry. He promised it rest and food, if once more it would speak the words which had thrilled his soul. And it bargained thus—the Buddha must offer himself to be devoured, and then it would speak again. "Speak first, and then I will willingly die," so spake the Buddha. But the dragon was implacable. First the sacrifice, then the reward. Wide yawned its awful mouth, in sprang the Buddha. It closed, opened, pale petals formed and the gentle one sat unharmed, enthroned in a Lotus flower. A moment, and he was gone, the heavens had received him, he had won The Great Enlightenment.

A strange old story, and only a legend you say, but to me it speaks of something most gloriously true. For was not Life's Enlightenment won for us through death? and from the Tomb did not a lily blossom on the Resurrection morning? It touches us closely, this thought of the life laid down, poured forth upon the sacrifice and service. The world is bright and beautiful—



Carved Ivories, or Bones.

From Sunrise Land

"But all through life, I see a Cross
 Where sons of men yield up their breath.
 There is no gain except by loss,
 There is no life except by death,
 There is no vision but by faith,
 Nor glory but by bearing shame,
 Nor justice but by taking blame.
 And that eternal Passion saith,
 Be emptied of glory and right and name."

This is a holy mountain. In olden time five thousand Buddhist temples were hidden away in its mighty woods; three hundred years ago there was a general burning of the temples and massacre of the priests. But new ones were built, and to-day, wander wherever you will, crowning the grandest height, nestling deep in the loveliest vale, everywhere, always is the visible symbol of heathendom; audible too, for ever and anon the tolling of the great bronze gong rings through the stately forest, and echoes from peak to peak. For "this land is full of idols, they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made," and "the glory of His Majesty" they do not know.

If you could travel across this beautiful isle of the sea, and pass from town to town and village to village, where there is no missionary; if you could gaze upon the masses of Satan-bound people, hurrying on and on, down and down; if you could see the hopeless faces, hear the hopeless words, feel the hopeless weight of an encompassing heathenism, as even in four short months one has seen, heard, felt, you too would feel as though spirit, soul, and body—every particle of your nature were one great ache. Until one faces the thing in its totality, one cannot half realize what is involved in being "without hope in the world." Here are two pictures sketched for me this morning by one who knew whereof he spoke.

An old, old man, upon whose head the snows of time have fallen, whose eyes are growing dim, whose ears are growing dull, whose heart has been for a long, long time heavy with forebodings of what is surely creeping nearer, nearer. A strange voice speaks. He listens. "Old man, death cannot be far away from you, what about the future?" Hear the answer. Ponder it till it means to you what it meant to him—"Dark, dark, all dark."

A child, a winsome little maiden, life's glad springtide laughing through her, sunshine falling on her way. A shadow chills her, she is sick, dies. The priest comes, chants, prays, then, with extended arms, cries, "Go." Away, away the spirit flies, into the great unknown, a friendless little stranger embarked on a long journey, its bourn who knows where? The father speaks—and fathers in Japan dearly love their little ones—"She is gone, gone for ever, we shall never see her more."

"Without hope in the world." Oh! if but one drop from the ocean of heathendom, as it is, undiluted, unidealized, could be microscoped, caught in some

great lantern slide, and flung in all its loathsome vividness upon the sheet, if but one note from the grief-chorus which rises day and night—"for half the world is Macedon"—could be telephoned across, and sounded through the hall, while with bated breath you listened, I think you would hardly leave *that* missionary meeting, saying "how nice it was" and how much you had enjoyed it! Oh, one longs for anything to disturb the peaceful slumbers of His daughters who are at ease, anything to waken up His soldiers who are off duty, to the intensity, the urgency of the need.

The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Our Master, our King may soon be here, and what will He say when He comes?

CHAPTER VII

Kyoto, and Onwards

*"My times lie in Thy hand,
Perfect the cup as planned."*

BROWNING.

KYOTO, *Sept. 9.*—An Eastern carnival—is it describable? Can I make it live for you? Last time I wrote, I longed for a fire-dipped pen, but now it seems as if one could write with one's own heart blood, if by any means we could touch some.

All week a "Matsurie" has been raging. Eleven hundred years ago this wonderful old city was founded, and partly in commemoration of that, and partly as a consecration of a new temple, a fête has been proclaimed, and revelry runs riot.

Passing through the town by day, you see signs of it; but not until the city is wrapped in darkness, and myriads of coloured lights gleam out, and its streets throb with intensest life, can you dream what the East can do.

It is not easy to reduce the maze and blaze to black and white, but I must try to tell you something of what I saw an hour ago.

We are riding together in a kuruma, a Japanese girl and I. Spinning along through deserted streets, dark and still, we hear in the distance the beat of drums, the clang of cymbal, the hum of a thousand voices. Suddenly it breaks into a roar, and we are in the midst of it all, caught in the whirl, swept along with it through streets all shining with crimson light, over bridges reflected in crimson-lit waters, under arches dropping with crimson fire—it is as if the stars had fallen upon earth, changing colour as they fell. A burst of "all kinds of music," Nebuchadnezzar's orchestra in full swing, drowns our voices should we try to speak. A blaze of colour, vivid, gorgeous, dazzles us as we look. Some strange pandemonium this might be, so frenzied, so unearthly does it seem. Onward rushes the mighty rabble, another coming from another quarter meets it; there is a lock, and wedged in the corner between the two, we watch the weird happenings around us—so un-Western, they defy description.

Men and women in exchanged attire and gaudy colours flit past, and mingling with uncanny monster forms dance the wild Matsuri dance, with abandonment inconceivable, every step a parody, every gesture a caricature. Dragons, griffins,

reptiles, fishes, birds there are, all dancing, waving fans, shouting, howling, singing, *noising* in one form or another, in chorus perfectly bewildering. Old crones with wrinkles showing through the paint, babies wrapped in rainbow hues, gazing with astonished eyes, children gay as butterflies and as bewitching, men of good position in grotesque masks, women of the gentler order, forgetting all refinement in the strange glamour of the hour—endlessly on and on they swarm, for the throng has parted now, and we are on the wing.

Suddenly a monkey-masked creature, with a lantern fastened in his hair, catches a glimpse of us, struggles across, waves his fan in our faces, and with a yell of "What a fine fellow am I!" rushes on; another swings his lantern round us, and gives chase. They meet, posture, wave their fans, dancing all the time, fling themselves into the crowd, and are lost in the tumultuous swirl.

And now there is a break in the solid central mass, and we look up to see lights swinging high overhead, hung upon waving bamboo branches, while the shrill ting-ting of the Kané pierces the monotonous thud of the drum. A huge car is coming, drawn by scores of revellers. It is festooned with flowers and tinsel, and wreathed with chains of light. Standing within it, and walking before and after, are girls robed in silks and crêpes, palest shades of pink and blue, glittering with embroideries of gold and silver. They are twanging the Jeking, beating the bells. Pale, expressionless faces are theirs; dead, vacant, joyless, their heavy half-shut eyes hardly glance at the revelry around them. Their weary feet drag slowly on. We turn away heart-sick, for this is heathendom indeed.

Then our kuruma-man speaks: "Have we seen enough?" Ah! yes, and far more. He takes us home, and we leave behind us the chaos of sound, and colour, and mirth all hollow, and sin all dark, and in the silence of a pain we cannot conquer, we find ourselves just spirit-crushed, "and with no language but a cry."

Dear friends, it is awfully real this heartless, hopeless, heathendom.

Much is said about the work done. In one sense much has been, and is being done, but with it all, the very verge of the fringe has not been touched. Said one of the Kyoto missionaries to me to-day, "Sometimes I wonder if Japan will *ever* be won for Christ!" And it seems somehow as though, even out here, our eyes are so taken up with looking at the tiny corner, the "station" or "school" where "our work" lies, that we simply lose sight of the world outside the compound—the world that lieth in wickedness, the city "wholly given to idolatry." May God keep us from getting accustomed to the awful verities which encompass us!

Yonago, Province of Hokie, Sept. 21.—3 o'clock a.m. After vainly trying to forget the odours, and liliputians, in slumber, I turn to the forlorn hope that the writing of a "missionary journal" may prove as sedative in its effect, as the sometime reading thereof.

We reached Matsuye safely, after a voyage round the coast which was un-

diluted woe. Then, owing to some mistake in the Japanese part of my passport, I was politely but imperatively turned out of the Province of Idzumu, and consigned to the adjoining Hokie, until it should be rectified. It is a rather curious sensation for a free Briton, to find oneself thus under the strong Arm of the Law, but—"In everything give thanks."

You may like to hear something more of Kyoto, Japan's old capital (and Japanese dates go back a long way, their first great Emperor Jimmu Tenno came to the throne in 1660 B.C.—at least so they say). I stayed there with kind American friends who work the Girls' Mission School, connected with the Dōshisha College, and they very thoughtfully planned so as to show me something of their city.

From above it looks like a waste of low black huts, from without, like a maze of streets, temples, and bridges, from within, like a curio-cabinet. Essentially it is a city of temples, and its temples, beautiful works of art, are among its chief sights.

They took me to one, but all the time we were in it, it seemed to me as though the Master were looking down with such surprise in His eyes. How could we care to see what grieved Him so? I think that unless He sends me to one, as His messenger, I have entered a heathen temple for the last time.

We saw the famous Cloissonnée works. Among the vases were a pair they were making for the Emperor. Three years of careful work would barely suffice to finish them. Upon the foundation of copper or enamel, fine silver wire is laid in the desired pattern, the intricacies are then filled in, with enamel powder in delicate colours, atom by atom. Much rubbing, polishing and burning follows, and the work completed is likely to be a joy for ever, for it is practically unbreakable. As we watched the careful handling, and tireless skill expended upon each tiny vase and cup, we thought of what Job says, "Thine hands took pains about me," and thanked Him it was so.

We saw the palace. In the wall surrounding it and its gardens there is an indentation, a concession to the power of evil spirits. From this still spot proceeded for centuries that strange strong rule from invisible Mikados. One felt in the very centre of a marvellous civilization, fast vanishing into the land of myth. One seemed to feel its heart beat,—fainter, fainter. We stood there, in the silence of the twilight, the eaved roofs, and gnarled pine branches darkened against the pale pink flush in the West—and then we came away. Near to the old palace, stands the Christian College, founded by the burning-souled Nishima San, type of the best part of the change the years are bringing, and near to it is the beautiful school, where Japan's gentle maidenhood may learn what their mothers never dreamed of. All things pass—"The Cross it standeth fast."

"No blast of time, no hurricane of earth's rude clime
Can shake its heavenly stedfastness,"

* * * * *

Evening.—My dear little teacher and helper, M. San, the Dundee Y.W.C.A.'s gift to me, is with me here. She has been translating for me, while I talked to the hotel waitress about sin, what it is and is not. She seemed to think that to kill an animal must be the sum total of human wickedness, while to tell a lie, if for purposes of courtesy, mattered not at all. But anything in reason is permissible, if politeness is in question. A servant of whom we know, wanted to leave her situation. She did not like to hurt her mistress by telling her so. So she got her father to telegraph that he was ill, dying, in fact, and wanted her home at once. Thus armed with conclusive proof of the need for her immediate departure, she cheerfully stated the case, and begged leave of absence. The fact that the little plot was discovered did not in the least disconcert her; her conscience was innocent of pricks. If it *must* be a case of Scylla and Charybdis, far better be slightly untruthful than seriously rude. In this, as in everything else, the power of God puts all straight. They that stumbled are girded with strength!

This afternoon I went with Miss Porter who works here, to see a young girl the only Christian in her family. Her gentle mother is inquiring now, and listened attentively while Miss P. read and talked, the daughter putting in a bright word now and then, to clarify the meaning. After reading and prayer, she offered to play for us; it seemed a curious sequel, but was her way of expressing her thanks. Then came a long tune in two notes, without apparent beginning or end, all a monotonous middle, after which we bowed profusely, and farewelled.

You will know how solemnly we praise God for an opportunity through His grace "bought up," when you hear that our old man at Matsuye has died, or as I trust we may say, gone Home. It was malarial fever. His wife says he passed away clasping his Testament in his hands. We had hoped he would live to God's glory, but He knows best.

September 29.—Still here. There must be some reason for this break in our plans. Changing the D of *disappointment* into an H makes everything right. Another of those seed-sayings which help one so, at times, was given me by Miss Tristram of the C.M.S. at Osaka; from whose nursery for God, (of which I saw something, and from which I learned much) M. San comes. Here it is then—" *With Christ for men.*" It will bear thinking out: and its reverse is equally beautiful. " *With men for Christ.*"

One more, for perhaps somebody may be helped a little by what helps us much.—It is the "Yes, Lord," of trustful acquiescence in whatever He may say or do or ask. Let us look straight up to Him, and give Him a glad "Yes, Lord!" not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver.

You know the lines—

"I give you the end of a golden string,
Only wind it into a ball.

*It will lead you straight to Heaven's gate
Built in Jerusalem's wall."*

Just such a golden string-end is this simple, sweet, "Yes, Lord." Let us wind it into a ball, and following it, we shall find ourselves in the presence of the King of Peace Himself.

* * * * *

We were down by the lake side to-day. We sat on the rocks from which many a weary one has flung himself out of life. Close beside, a Buddha reposes. The living Christ *stood* to welcome Stephen, when wicked hands hurled him heavenward. The dead Buddha sits impassive, while his devotees sob and sink.

As we sat there, musing thus, a peasant came carrying a bundle of prayer papers, which he proceeded to paste all over the image. Then he bowed, clapped, scattered some rice before it, knelt to pray, and rose to go. We told him of the one great Hearer and Answerer, and as we talked a fisherman with a basketful of cuttle-fish joined us. He too listened, but observing that the creatures' tentacles were hanging over the basket-edge, he interrupted us to shake them in, and seemed very slightly interested. And then they moved off, bowing.

Oh, how one needs to be kept from hopelessness, which is faithlessness. After throwing one's whole soul into the moment's message, it is hard to see it tossed aside as a thing of no importance. And the whisper is sure to come—"Is it any use?"

But it must be, for *God is*, and God loves these poor dark souls far far more than we do.

There is a little church here, the Christians who belong rather to the "upper ten," have been kind in calling upon us. At one time there was great opposition, which, as usual, meant blessing coming.

The hotel-folk are most kindly: one of the girls has just been inquiring if I should care for a chicken, instead of the perpetual fish? and my prompt "No, thanks!" has astonished her. The reason however she knows not. One day I saw them plucking the poor things before they were dead, and don't desire a repetition. It is not that they are cruel. Perhaps less so than any nation, but being Buddhists they are not expert in taking life. (*Fish*, it would seem they don't consider belong to the animal creation at all, but perhaps they argue that they die naturally, being foolishly unable to go on living when extracted from the water.)

The aforesaid little maid touched me much yesterday. Something had sent my thoughts home, and I wasn't very hungry. She sat as they always do, while we demolish our "gōzen," ready to supply more rice or tea; and I noticed her eyes fill with tears as she looked at me.

Then she turned to M. San, and said she thought I must be lonely so far from my honourable country—I fear I wasn't very heroic, for the tears in her eyes

brought them to mine, and for a minute or two she and M. San interchanged "Honourable poison of spirit is"! which meant, how sorry they were. And then we had a talk with her, telling her why it was, and how, if she would believe in, and love the Saviour, who loved her so much that He had brought me all this long way, to tell her of Him, I would be gladder than words could tell. "And not the least sorry?" she asked. "Oh, no, not the least sorry! Only glad for ever and ever I have left my own dear home for you!" She seemed to believe it, and went away to tell one of the other girls. Wasn't it loving of her to care?

* * * * *

We are having nice times with the children. Yesterday I was alone, when for the first time they came, and very shyly bowed themselves in. They wanted to see the foreigner rather than to hear the message, but after a few minutes of mute gazing, they gathered closely round me, and all sitting in a circle on the floor we sang:—

*"Light of Grace! we are wandering about upon the dark road:
God is Love.
People vanish, the earth changes, Grace does not:
God is Love.
Clouds cover the sky, but the face of Love is always bright:
God is Love.
And through all sorrow, God gives us hope and comfort:
God is Love.
Oh, let us love too
The Honourable God."*

Not exactly a child's hymn, but it "takes" here; perhaps because the thought of a God who is "love" is so marvellously new to them. So eager were the dear little things to learn it, that they had quite caught both words and tune, before M. San came in. Then she explained it most sweetly to them, and they learned "Come unto Me all ye that 'are tired and carry heavy burdens,' and I will give you rest," repeating it over and over again, until they knew it perfectly. We closed the little meeting with a short, simple prayer, each repeating it aloud: "Oh! God, You love me; please help me to know and love You." Then they went away with the promise that in the evening we would teach them more.

The evening came, and so did they, bringing with them several older girls. In the middle of our talk the paper wall slipped aside and revealed quite a large group of men and women who had been listening outside, and wanted to hear better. So they came in too, and for over an hour there was not a sound, while for the first time they heard the story of Jesus and His love.

Can you in the least imagine how helpless one feels in such a moment—how one is, as it were, thrown back upon, and shut up to the power of the living God? Oh, the intense solemnity of it. To think from your lips for the first time they

hear the message of life, and that they may never hear it again! Of the much you want to tell, *what* to tell, *how* to tell! One longs to "so speak" that they may believe. For naturally listening does not imply believing. And yet one expects supernatural rather than natural results to follow every "meeting" of God with man. Oh! for the mighty, convicting, convincing power of the Holy Ghost! Oh! for faith to remove mountains, to *expect them to be removed!* Pray for us, for the mountains are very tangible, and our faith is very weak. Lord, increase our faith, increase it until "nothing shall be impossible" unto us!

* * * * *

A day or two has passed since I told you of our "yesterday," and I must add one word of praise.

This morning a message came from one of the men who were present at the meeting, and to whom we had sent a Testament, to say that he was reading it, and had many things to ask: might he come to hear the "truth of the true God"? He came, and we had a very earnest little time together. He had never seen a Bible, and was full of wonder over it. He had read all the Gospels, and was deeply impressed with John vi. The connection between the miracle of the loaves and the subsequent teaching had struck him, and he wanted to understand it. He had been searching through the labyrinths of the world's beliefs to find the clue to the true one, and now he said this Book had something the others had not, and he must read more. Gladly we lent it to him again. Let us pray, and *believe* too, that the blessed Spirit of truth may guide him into all truth.

The other day we climbed a hill near the lake, and after the turmoil of life below, we rested ourselves upon the peaceful loveliness of mountain, wood, and water. Then we looked down upon the poor little sin-tossed town, lying in the shadow at our feet. Even as we looked, an answer to our longings shaped itself in symbol before us. Built as it is, in the shape of a two-fold cross, whichever way we looked we saw the sign of victory; and coming down the steep hillside, in the glow and the glory of sunset, our hearts sang "Hallelujah."

CHAPTER VIII

Torches, Thoughts, and a Typhoon

*"Oh, Lord, that I could waste my life for others,
With no ends of my own,
That I could pour myself into my brothers,
And live for them alone.
Such was the life Thou livedst—self-abjuring,
Thine own pains never easing,
Our burdens bearing, our just doom enduring,
A life without self-pleasing."*

FABER.

Yokobama. Matsuye. Oct. 1.—We had a pretty little journey up the lake to Matsuye. The rice is ripening for its second harvest, and the setting sun shone on sheets of gold on either side, as we entered the narrower waters. When we reached the bridge the short twilight had darkened, and the upper lake was lighted with hundreds of torchlights where the fishermen in their sampans, and quaint one-masted junks, were out for a night's work.

When bedtime comes, in hotel life, they give you a candle encased in a shade, wherein it abides in faintness and peace, until morning. These torches with their wild flare, were out in the open where rain might fall, or storm blow roughly. Out in the dark, out with the fishermen.

Then we thought and prayed together over this, asking that we might be God's torches, far from the easy places, far from all care for mere comfort or safety. Kept from getting inside soft shades, (unless at the word of the King.) Kept from settling down to life's least. And that is as possible here as at home. (Why do home people "pedestal" missionaries so? We need praying for instead, that the fire may ever be burning, for manifold are the devil's devices to quietly water it out.) So we prayed together, M. San and I, and some fine verses, whose I know not, rang through me as we waited watching the moving lights upon the water—

*"Full long our feet the flowery ways of peace have trod,
Content with creed and garb and phrase,
A harder path in earlier days led up to God.
Too cheaply Truths once purchased dear are made our own:
Too long the world has smiled to hear
Our boast of full corn in the ear, by others sown,*

From Sunrise Land

To see us stir the martyr fires of long ago,
 And wrap our satisfied desires
 In the singed mantles that our sires have dropped below.
 Oh let the Cross our worthies bore on us be laid ;
 Profession's quiet sleep be o'er,
 In action's earnest scale once more our faith be weighed.



Back of an Old Mirror.

To suffer well is well to serve, stint not nor stay,
 The years have never dropped their sand
 On mortal issues vast and grand as ours to-day.
 Oh small shall seem all sacrifice, and pain, and loss,
 When God shall wipe the weeping eyes,
 For suffering give the victor's prize ; the Crown for Cross ! "

How you would have enjoyed the meeting to-night, if one may use such a word. It was packed ; "it," strictly speaking, consisting of the large open front, the broad roadway, and surrounding vicinity. There were a number of men and lads. Perhaps a Saul was among them, a Paul to be. All through, they listened well, making none of the usual noise and confusion. If those who spoke, and we who prayed were in the Spirit work has been done for Eternity. But some of the young men came only to hear and compare it all with the teaching of their sceptical books, the West's last gift to the East. The Poison Cup of "Modern Thought," with its tincture of babblings profane and vain, and oppositions of science falsely so called, whereof, if a soul drink or a nation, it drinks its own death warrant—is it not a cruel gift from Christendom to Heathendom?

Oh for the coming of the King, conquering and to conquer! Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the churches, or from the multitude of missionary societies, truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of His world!

* * * * *

October 6.—I have come to stay with Mary, until she goes to Yonago, an important out-station needing help. Poor Sarah has broken down and been ordered home, and Mr. and Mrs. Parrott went Eastward in summer, so our little band is thinning sadly. the fact that God better than we can do, wants that the camp may



Another One.

Is it not a comfort to lean back upon loves His work, and His people, far and knows all about it too? Only one be holy, and every fight a Jericho.

Just now the curio-shops are full of ancient metal mirrors, carved on one side, polished on the other. Here are two I got the other day; both were in use perhaps hundreds of years ago. More and more, as one sees proof of the genius, artistic and otherwise of this noble Japanese race, one longs that it should be won for the King—a jewel rare and costly redeemed with the precious Blood.

Some students called to-day for "spiritual conversation," as they said. They know a little English and sometimes astonish with startling bits of grandiloquence,



We have got the House photoed for your delectation!

gleaned from phrase books and grammars. I learned, as I listened, how trying to the risibilities my Japanese must be to them, and how perfect their courtesy is, for they bow one through one's blunders with unruffled suavity, betraying no emotion.

Sometimes, however, their little quotations are not so far out. Said one, when Mary asked him what was left, if he took God out of the universe—"A plus and a minus," "which equals *nothing*," was her rejoinder, and his quick wit would appreciate the point his blunder had hit.

One of the happiest bits of my work, is a weekly Bible Reading in English with a Christian student, who reads Genesis much as an English schoolboy would "Ivanhoe." It is most refreshing, and we have lovely times together, I learning far more from him, than he can from me.

It is evening, and the temple gong is sounding; you know how a church bell tolls when the funeral procession draws near. It is just like that, one note, then silence, another, and again a pause. Intensely sad and solemn, it always seems to me, a death-knell, with no glad resurrection music, ringing through.

We are surrounded by idols. This morning in the grey of the dawn, sounds under my window startled me; three low claps, then a voice quite close, and clear, three more claps, then quiet. I got up and looked out, but saw nothing; after-

wards we found that during our absence two old shrines in the garden had been furbished up, there were prayer papers, flowers, and rice, and some lately offered cakes, so the hand-clap under my window explained itself, it was some one worshipping idols, even within Christian ground.

October 12.—We have got the house photoed for your delectation, the trio standing in the upper window must be taken on faith for Mary, Sarah, and me. This is the house back; its front is to the town. The mulberry field is in full leaf now, likewise the frogs in full croak. They live in the stagnant trenches by the side of the innocent green.

October 15.—And now for a leaf from the book of the unexpected.

When we woke on Saturday morning, it was to find a typhoon whirling round us. All day we lived in a state of "what next?" One moment the large window in my room was blown out. The next the great pine tree in the garden was torn up by the roots, and hurled across the wall. The roar around was deafening; we could hardly hear ourselves speak. They put up the wooden shutters, so we lived in semi-darkness. It was exciting, but nothing to what was coming.

That afternoon I sallied forth clad in weather-proofs, but was drenched in no time, for it poured and poured. The domestics had been in a state of mind about my venturing out at all; but they told of broken bridges, flying housetops, etc., and it was no good trying to keep cooped up in the house when such deeds were adoin.

This morning Matsuye was flooded. Between us and the lake, on the one side, was nothing now: road, mulberry field, garden, all a great wide waste of waters. Between us and the street, on the other, was a deep, quickly-deepening canal. We seemed to be on the swim, for underneath us was water too. It was raining hard, and still that tempestuous whirl circled round and round.

Well, we breakfasted somewhat vaguely, watching the rising of the water meanwhile. When it began to creep over the verandah steps, we took up the mats, and before long were in the thick of a "flitting," for we knew that once upon the verandah, the uninvited visitor would take immediate possession of the lower storey, and the only safe place for us and ours would be upstairs.

Just then there was a commotion outside. The landlord and his family had been drowned out, and had taken refuge with us. There, too, stood Mr. Buxton. He had waded through two-and-a-half miles of water! It was getting deeper every moment, and we must come at once back with him to Akayama. There he was knee-deep just outside the door, and looking tired enough; but he came in, helped us to get our things piled up, insisted on our coming with him, and as soon as we had put up a change of raiment in my hold-all, which is fortunately water-proof, and rigged ourselves in wading-garb, carried us off almost in spite of ourselves; for though we apprehended nothing more than a passing inconvenience, we wanted to

stay with the servants and our own poor people who might be frightened. Had we known there would be real danger soon, we wouldn't, couldn't have left them.

So off we started. I got my plunge over first, as Mary and M. San were carried through the earlier deep bit. The sooner the rather peculiar sensation of just stepping in is over, the better.

Many a piteous sight we saw as we hurried along; little children crying wildly being carried out of wet rooms into wetter boats, for the very few which were obtainable were in great request; poor drenched creatures tying up bundles of clothes, or pulling at bits of furniture, trying to save their household gods from immediate drowning; worst of all, old men and women with ashy faces and drooping heads, half hanging, half being held, upon men's backs as they were rescued from the rapidly rising waters. As I write I seem to see one old worn form, with long straggling grey hair all wet and limp: we couldn't bear to look at him, but that one glimpse was heart-rending. Everywhere was débris, sticking round the corners, tearing along in the current, telling of ruined homes. God comfort them, poor homeless ones to-night.

At last we got to Akayama, wet, oh! so wet. Poor Mary is very tired; she wasn't fit for the walk and the wetting. It is not an easy thing to keep up with driving wind and rain, and water nearly up to your waist, but she got through it, and I trust will not be the worse for it.

And now all day we have been hearing accounts of the greatly increasing floods. They say that if the water rises to the second storey in Yokobama, the house will cave in, and everything will be swept away. In such a moment of dire distress it is wicked to think of one's own,—but, my baby-organ, shall I ever see you again?

A few hours ago we heard cries and saw lights moving along the streets, now even in this high ground, full of water. To stay in was not easy. Mr. Buxton, Jane, and I could not do it. So we got lanterns and waded out—cautiously this time, for coming up I had slipped into one of the open drains which run on both sides of the street, and was up to my neck in a second. We found ourselves in a Venice out-Veniced. Here and there the dark waters gleamed with the broken reflection of a lantern-lit sampan laden with the newly-rescued, or a belated fugitive feeling his way along, guarding his precious light under his straw overall. We found many thankful to hear that a welcome awaited them at Akayama, should they come. As long as their houses were safe, those who had upper storeys wanted to stay there; those who haven't have been taken to the temple and public schools, where already many hundreds are packed in comfortless security. To add to their sorrows, hardly any food can be obtained, and half Matsuye has gone hungry to bed—if bed it has at all.

We don't know how wide-reaching this may be. If it is at all extensive you

may hear of it by wire. We are "under His wing"—so safe always. Now is the time to live our hymns. After all the waters are in the hollow of His hand. He "holdeth" them there. When I was a little child I took that quite literally, and used to think being drowned meant going down *till we just touched His hand*.

Friday, October 20.—It seems more like a month than a week since I began this letter, little thinking, as the story-books say, what was coming. Now, instead of peace and prosperity, all around us is desolation. The villages for miles and miles have been covered. There is want and sorrow everywhere. Until Monday at midday the rain poured, the tempest raged, and the waters increased. Then came the eagerly watched-for rift in the cloud; but soon the heavy leaden grey closed above us again, and that night the flood rose higher. At last came a decided break. Quickly the water fell, till we could see the streets again; and to-day, except near Yokobama, where it is still deep, I suppose it is not much over the ankle. But the poor people with their ruined homes, and the sick old people with no shelter, and the hungry little children! A relief fund has been got up, and this afternoon the Christians are going round to the most needy with rice.

On Tuesday evening we went out in a sampan. It was so strange to find oneself thus locomotioning among streets and houses and through gardens. It was the dreariest vision of dreariness. We paddled into a once dainty little garden, and up to the home of our head catechist. Then he and his wife plunged knee-deep in water and groped their way in. The flood had risen so swiftly and suddenly here, that on Sunday morning they had wakened to find themselves swamped, and only escaped in time. Now they wanted to save a few of the things which previous to their flight they had piled on shelves out of reach of the water.

Our poor abode was perfectly desolate. All the lower rooms had been flooded, and of course even yet the garden is a pool. Looking under the lifted boards in the dining-room, I saw water touching them still. But we are very thankful the house has been spared. Most of our belongings are uninjured, at least so far as we have had time to see. My baby-organ was safe. After giving up one's things it was lovely to get them all back.

When we got home that evening we found Miss Porter here. She had been away in an outlying village, and literally had to fly for her life. An hour or so after she got out, the road was impassable, and many were drowned. One whole boatful was swamped, and all perished. A girl was seen floating down, her dark hair veiling her white face. Nobody could reach her, and she was dead. We have not heard half yet, for the roads have been blocked, and yesterday no communication could be passed in or out. Oh, how dreadful it is for the thousands who have lost their little all, and for the poor frail old men and women—saddest of the sad!

Jane has been away at a little village four or five miles from here, where we feared there might be need. She has come back much distressed. The whole

place was a sea ; only the upper rooms were yet livable in. Poor women and children sitting quietly and literally starving ; no way of getting food ; nobody to bring them away. She heard one old woman say to a little child, "See ! look at the foreigner. She will bring us rice." But they didn't beg ; it was simple, hopeless misery. She found twenty-three families in this state. And all round it is the same. We don't know what to do, or how to help one out of every hundred. Oh ! if we could only telegraph home, I'm sure you would send us something. We are gathering all we can, but it's not half enough. The destitution is a very great deal worse than ever it could be in England, because of course there are so few to do anything. There is just *nobody* in these scattered hamlets.

The Christians are taking it well : not a word of complaint, only earnest efforts on the part of those who can make them to help others. They are so cheery over it all, or try to be ; for, gasped one, as we tugged her through a torrent of mud—"I want to joy and be cheerful, *but—I can't !*" and a moment later, after struggling into a groan-tinctured grin—"If look sad, people think Christians not happy in their troubles, so I smile !!!" which was the most practical attempt at obeying the precept "Rejoice evermore" I had ever come across. Please don't forget the great "Ask" of this letter. Just now hearts are touched and awed. Open doors are once again around us. Do ask that in His name we may enter in, and that many may through their great sorrow and need find the Living Comforter.

CHAPTER IX

Out of—Into

"Do not conceive of long journeyings; when thou believest, then thou comest; for to Him Who is everywhere, men come by loving, not by travelling."—ST. AUGUSTINE.

*"I was poor yesterday, but not to-day,
For Jesus came this morning, and took the 'poor' away."*

November 9.—We have come for a few days' missioning, to a large village, which Mr. Buxton is anxious to help by fortnightly visits from Matsuye, and it is to be our Trust. Master, we take it from Thee. Cleanse us now, that with pure hands we may bear Thy holy vessels. Baptize us now, that with burning love we may witness unto Thee!

It is evening. From the room below the scent of incense rises. We can hear them praying their powerless prayers. From our window we can see roofs, each covers a heathen house. On our way thither we passed many an idol shrine. I counted nearly fifty, and then stopped, sick at heart. Just outside this great heathen village, stands a tall stone Buddha. We looked at it and thought of Gideon. And now, alone in the quiet room, in the dim light, I think, pray, think—

*"Then with a rush the intolerable craving
Shivers throughout me like a trumpet call—
Oh to save these! to perish for their saving!
Die for their life, be offered for them all . . .!
Therefore, O Lord, I will not fail nor falter.
Nay but I ask it, nay but I desire,
Lay on my lips Thine embers of the altar,
Seal with the sting, and furnish with the fire.
Give me a voice, a cry, and a complaining—
Oh let my sound be stormy in their ears!
Throat that would shout but cannot stay for straining,
Eyes that would weep, but cannot wait for tears.
Quick in a moment, infinite for ever,
Send an arousal better than I pray,
Give me a grace upon the faint endeavour,
Souls for my hire and Pentecost to-day."*

* * * * *

"Oh Honourable God, I did not know before about Thee, but I know now. Oh! I did great many wrong things. Please take that sin away. Please make me to show people Thy glory." So she prayed,—this dear one who was to be our First, and from the little group kneeling around came a soft "Amen."

For this was her first prayer to the true God, and only He knew how much it meant. One seemed to almost understand its purport, by sympathy, at the time; and afterwards M. San gave it to me, as I have written it. How glad we were!

Last night we spoke to a little company of women. We told them of the Father's love, love for *them*; then asked if any would trust that love just now? But there was no response, and disappointed, we came away; for we had asked that we might "so speak" that some one would believe, and come.

But to-day, while we were out visiting the "Jesus houses," scattered here and there like stars in the darkness, we got a message to say that one whom we had noticed as seeming impressed, had gone home to think; so much "her heart had heavily longed" to hear more, that she had given up a day's silk-weaving, so that she could have time to listen; would we go to her? So we went.

She told us that serving her gods had not rested her. She could not "lean upon them." Our God was so strong, so good, she wanted to trust Him. After a long talk and prayer, translated lovingly by M. San, sentence by sentence, we had a silent time; and then came the low, half-frightened voice, like the bleat of a lost lamb as it feels the shepherd draw near. She was found. Think of His laying her on His shoulders rejoicing! Think of "the gladness of making God glad!"

Out of—into: what does it mean?

According to Sir Monier Williams, *Out of hopelessness*, dreary, profound. Buddhism says, "Expect a never-ceasing succession of evil worlds for ever coming into existence, developing, decaying, perishing, and reviving, and all equally full of everlasting misery, disappointment, illusion, change, transmutation."

Out of lovelessness, lonely and sad. Suppress and destroy the desires and affections utterly: aim at inaction, indifference, and apathy, as the highest of all states.

Into? Ah! who but the Eternal Source of all hope and love can tell us what is wrapped up in His own word-picture, "*Out of darkness into His marvellous light*"?

And truly the little company of His redeemed here are showing forth His praises. We heard of one who, when the price of rice doubled after the flood, sold it at the usual rate, and so daily lost what to him was a considerable sum (invested it rather in the bank of heaven). For how could he, a Christian, gain through the suffering of others?

A simple question, but one which involves large issues. Think of the result

were the same principle applied to the laws which govern the commerce of Christian England. Not quite so much rum would be shipped off to Africa, and perhaps the opium question would find a speedy solution.

And there is another, scientifically inclined, who a year ago lived for the "ologies." But life became more real for him, its purpose more intense. Perhaps he reflected that in the great hereafter the flash of a moment would perfectly reveal all and far more than a life-time could but dimly decipher, and that the one little span between the two eternities might be more worthily filled up with "the things that abide." For he let all go, yielded himself, mind and money, to God and His service, built a little preaching room, and with his wife helped to form a centre for the little circle, which would have rejoiced the first great missionary, and does, I expect. Would it be too heretical to draw comparisons here? Perhaps it is better to let the Christian scientist, literate, or otherwise intellectually absorbed, do it for himself.

*"Only one life—it will soon be past—
Only what's done for Jesus will last."*

Of one other, one of the Lord's prisoners, I must tell you. We found him sitting cramped up on the floor of his little room, just shining the love of Jesus. Most gleefully he told us how Buxton San had deigned to send him the honourable holy Book, and that its good words made him glad.

His wife carries him to the meetings upon her back occasionally, and thereby hears the Gospel as well as sees it in her husband; but she clings still to her old gods. Will you pray for her; I think were she brought in the dear old saint's cup would run over!

I am writing now in one of the long waits incidental to most travelling in the East. Since the great flood which wrought such havoc far and near, the bridges have been impassable. The very temporary ones we crossed to-day are in an extremely shaky condition; the roads are in some places lost in swamps, and everything is in a state of upset.

We have arrived at the little town on the lake where the steamer for Matsuye starts; but as the wind is very high, they are holding a lengthy discussion as to the danger of going. These little cockleshell things would not stand much roughing it; but I hope they will risk it. We must not miss to-morrow's work; and though there are kurumas to be had, they don't want to go, the road is so bad.

I am sitting on the floor of the very chilly little hotel, trying to dry my wet things over a scrap of a hibachi, and in the intervals of comparative success, write to you. Just behind me is the "honourable place," whereon are arranged upon a slab of wood some golden persimmon, a spray of blossom, and a bowl of the ever-present incense. It is the anniversary of the "deigning to cease to become" of

some relative, and these are offerings to his departed spirit. Above them hangs a roughly drawn picture of a Buddhist celebrity. Candles are burning with a sickly glimmer beside the bright flowers. There is an unreality about it, a hollow form, with nothing inside. In the next room is the shrine, set into the wall, and ancestral tablets are ranged within; and there is a little gilt idol with numbers of arms and hands, the goddess of mercy. Lamps swing before it, and when night comes they will be lighted, prayers will be chanted by any specially devout members of the family, and so the day will close in this and in every house in the town. For from this village comes the saddest of all cries, the cry of silence—the silence of death.

You who can resist the half articulate pleading of many and many a heart to-day, can you resist *this*? From millions of voiceless souls, it is rising now—does it not touch you at all? The missionary magazines try to echo the silent sob. You read them? Yes; and you skim them for good stories, nice pictures, bits of excitement—the more the better. Then they drop into the waste-paper basket, or swell some dusty pile in the corner. For perhaps, “there isn’t much in them.” Very likely not; “there isn’t much” in silence any more than in darkness, at least not very much reducible to print; *but to God there is something in it for all that.*

Oh! you—you, I mean, who are weary of hearing the reiteration of the great unrepealed commission, you who think you care, but who certainly don’t, past costing point, is there *nothing* will touch you?

Just so far I had written when we heard we could get on, and now a few days afterwards this has come to pass. This morning one of the little lake steamers started from one of the villages at the upper end, and arrived here all right. When the people were getting out, a sudden rush overbalanced it, it fell to one side, turned over, and all except ten or twelve of the thirty or forty on board were drowned within a few yards of land. One can think of nothing save those still forms lying down by the water’s edge—this morning so full of life, and now *dead*.

Coming down to Yokobama for our meeting, we passed through the crowd of many hundreds gathered upon the bridge where a view of the scene was to be had.

Round a heap of matting stood a group of careless gazers, underneath it lay those who had just been got out. Except upon the faces of a few who were wildly trying to get to the place where the bodies were being carried—and these were grief-stricken indeed—there was nothing of awe, nothing of sympathy, only an excited curiosity or “can’t be helped” expression. Life is worth so little to those who never heard what a price was paid to redeem it.

Dear helpers-together, all of you, will you ask this for us, as your Christmas wish, and I will ask for it for you, as mine—that we may work while daylight lasts; for the night cometh when no man can work.

Yokobama. Matsuye. Nov. 29.—Our home is at Akayama now, but M. San

and I come down daily for visiting and meetings, our children's is just over. Imagine yourself fronted by forty or fifty restless sprites: your vocabulary, you remember, is limited, your interpreter gentle. The *girls* who sit behind of course, as inferior beings, are docile enough, but their baby-burdens require occasional shaking up and down. The *boys* are not docile at all. They are ingenious, though, and can cause distractions manifold. And yet something gets done. Some of the little girls, we trust, do simply and truly believe. We cannot get very close to them; one day we tried having a talk with those who waited behind, but it resulted in their being kept at home for a fortnight afterwards.

There are several things in my mind for you, but just overhead is a rat, he is gnawing a hole in the low ceiling, and I cannot dislodge him. I have shaken the beams, and thundered at them, till I deafened myself, the creature knows he is safe on the other side and works away undaunted.



A Hibachi Explosion.

You have often heard of *Hibachies*. Here is one for you, the young lady has by mistake dropped a chestnut into the charcoal glow, hence the explosion. I can sympathise with her, having once done much the same,—one never does it twice.

We have been visiting in the house of our old friend who has fallen on sleep. His widow hears with interest, but we fear the house will soon be closed, for the relatives upon whom she depends are exceedingly opposed. To-day our reception from them, was a flat refusal even to listen. So it is not always as some would fancy, a drink-it-all-in receptivity. Satan is neither sleepy nor kind, as he surely would be, were *that* so.

My new Japanese brother, P. San, and I, are studying Joseph this week. A marginal reading struck us in passing, Genesis xlii. 23: "They knew not that Joseph understood them, for an interpreter was between them." An interpreter may typify all manner of helps, useful and necessary, but nothing must come between, if we would know our Joseph. "There stood no man with him while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren."

It has been coming to me of late, that our Master's words about gathering up the fragments that nothing be lost, may touch more than life's loaves and fishes. I think I must gather some Love-fragments up, and give them to you, or the wind of Forget may blow them away to Oblivion.

A homesick day. Such days do come at times—a day when everything seems set to Tennyson's "Break, break, break, on thy cold gray stones, O Sea"! I was having my Japanese lesson, "But O for the touch of a vanished hand!" came to my lips more readily than the verb I was struggling through. There were some flowers on the table, and to gain a moment's respite, I turned to look at them, but the flowers were roses, their scent was the scent of home, it was the last straw. Just then a whisper came. "*Watch, my child; watch for what I am sending you!*" What could it be? Was it something to tell me His love was near? So I watched. That afternoon a parcel came from one of our band who had been out in the country. Inside, was a motto worked in white letters on bright Turkey-red. "FAITH IS THE VICTORY!" She had made it during her little tour, and sent it for a surprise. Can you think what it meant to me?

A few weeks passed, and I wanted some Testaments to leave in the hotels of the villages through which we passed, but at which we could not stay. I asked for £1 to buy them. Next mail brought me just that sum, from an old school friend, it was "to do what I liked with." Was it not just like Him?

One more—and these are only samples, so to speak, of many more which one cannot write about. This one may sound small to you, but it tells of a Care which is not small, though it cares for the smallest things. One evening, chancing to be alone on one of the lake boats, I sat on deck, with a gentle-faced lady traveller, and taught her "Come unto Me." She had nearly learned it, when a stranger came, a respectable-looking man, he sat down beside us, appearing to want to listen. A sudden roll of the little boat jerked my purse out of my muff, wherein it was insecurely lying, it fell on the deck, I turned to pick it up, but it was gone. The man jumped up, shook his dress, opened his sleeves, declared I might search him if I liked (which I didn't), and gathering his belongings into a bundle, prepared to make off. The surprise quite deprived me of suitable words. So I looked up, and straight down the answer came. The man, still protesting vehemently, and just upon the point of disappearing below, wheeled round, put the purse in my hand, and fled. The cabin was full of men. I could not have found him, even had

it been practicable to try in the dim light, so had he not been touched by that invisible hand, nothing could have been done. Once more, was it not very like Him?

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November 30.—For some time we have been trying to find out who in the surrounding streets are willing to listen to our message, and here, as at home, we trace the trail of the serpent. With one consent they begin to make excuse, and flimsy as such excuses invariably are, they are terribly impervious. Only a few care to know more, now that the novelty has worn off; but for these few we thank God, and take courage. If we go after dusk they will listen, the evening being a free time, and also one when less observation is excited.

See us then going out in the Eastern twilight, which so swiftly changes to darkness, along streets unlighted except by the gleam from some half-shut shutter, carrying perhaps a paper lantern, if wind and rain allow of such luxury.

We had six or eight names in our list, and did not know which to take first; but we asked the Lord, who knew the hearts He had prepared, to guide us straight to them, and His answer was worth the sharing.

At the first open door in the long dark street we stopped, and M. San said, "This is a house where they will hear." Was it His choice for to-night? A voice from within said, "Honourably deign to enter;" and we were answered. Soon our muddy shoes were dropped off, and ourselves established upon the mats. We bowed all round, and surveyed our congregation. Lying upon a futon spread upon the floor was a wan face, and a head like a spring-cleaning brush, an old man or a woman, I hardly knew which—crouched over a diminutive hibachi. Kneeling before the family shrine, arranging lilies for the Buddha's benefit, was one who looked as though he could think. So much we saw by the dim glimmer of a taper floating in a brazen oil-saucer which swung before the little gilt idol, hidden among its lovely offering of fair chrysanthemums.

We told them of our God, who loved them, and they left the "Light of Asia" in darkness that we might have its lamp to read by. To two of our little audience the story was utterly new, and they laughed at the absurd conception of such a God, for to them the very title of divinity presupposes the extinguishing of Love. The sick man was amused, the very venerable, distrustful, but the other had the "heart prepared."

A friend of his was a Christian, though from all accounts a doubtful one, and he had lent him a Testament. He admitted that the great Teacher enshrined therein spake as never man spake, but denied the possibility of obeying such commands as His. Then followed a shower of questions, so I prayed to the God of heaven. Can you realize, I wonder, the need of such an hour—how, when one's helper is interpreting the last sentence, one looks up and waits for the next in such

absolute dependence, that were it not given word by word, as to a little child, one dare not speak at all?

The crucial point was the difference between Buddhism and Christianity. As one passed from contrast to contrast, each stronger and more striking than the last, until one reached the climax and spoke of the mighty chasm eternally dividing a dead creed from the living, life-giving Christ, his attention was rivetted. "True, true, it must be true," he exclaimed at last. "Buddha died; we know it. How can he help *us*, who live to-day? He may say, 'Be good;' the power to obey he cannot give;"—and long he pondered over the words, "Saved by *His* life."

There was a pause, and then, looking deep into my eyes, as though he would fain look through them, into the soul behind, he said what I shall never forget, and for this I have told you the story—"If this is so, you are as an angel from heaven to us; but if it is so we want to see it lived, and"—but the innate courtesy of the East checked the half-uttered, "*Can you show it to us?*"

Then and there, we knelt, and prayed; and when we rose he told us how he felt "in his heart we were speaking from our hearts," and how he wanted "to go to the depths of the depths" of what we had told him. Then came what gladdened me: "If, indeed, I come to believe it, I will tell my wife, friends, everybody. You come from a very far country to give us good tidings. If we find them good for us, we must share them with our people."

And so we came away, praising Him who goeth before, even down the dark streets of the dark cities of dark Japan.

We have to meet many and varied phases, and shades, of thought, and culture, from the simple credulity of the peasant, who "worships" the house and garden, and all belonging to the dwelling of the "foreign barbarian" who gave him rice in the flood-time, to the superior incredulity of the scholar, who worships nothing, and studies John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer. But from however diverging points of vision each may look, all are as one great EYE, watching to see if we live what we teach. Can we, do we *show it to them*? If we cannot, we had better go home, for, kindly and sympathetic in all other judgments, can we wonder if here they are keen and uncompromising?

CHAPTER X

Birthday Gifts

"Make me sensible of real answers to actual requests, as evidence of an interchange between myself and my Saviour in heaven."—CHALMERS.

"I believe in the Holy Ghost."

December 1.—A few months ago Mr. Buxton gave us a Bible Reading upon the Victories of the Holy Ghost A.D. 33 to 65, and the question has been forcing itself upon us, why not in A.D. 1893, and till He come? Is it because "we are not willing to be made invisible by the investiture"? And another thought is being borne upon me. The deep importance of the five great "*If's*" which embrace all other prayer-and-answer conditions, each of which includes all. They seem to form a five-linked ring, each link depending upon, and fitting into the other.

John xv. 7 touches our life in Him and His in us.

Matt. xviii. 19. Our life with others. It must be "clear as crystal." We cannot "agree" with them, if there is anything unloyal or unloving between.

Mark xi. 23 touches our own soul-life. There must be truth in the inward parts about this thing.

1 John v. 14, 15. This touches the circle of the Infinite. We do need to know God *well*, if He is to be able to make known to us what is, and what is not, His Will.

John xiv. 14. "In His Name." How much it means! And the answer comes back folded up in that beautiful Name; "with Him also" (only what can be given *with Him* can come,) giveth He freely all things.

We want to know more of all this. We want to live so close to Him that He can confide in us, as He could in His prophets of old. "Surely the Lord will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets." He made known His *ways* unto Moses, His *acts* unto the children of Israel. "The servant knoweth not what his lord doeth, but I have called you *friends*." Abraham—God's *friend*, "shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I do?" Oh for the life of dwelling deep in the secret place, where earth's sounds fall faint, and God's voice whispers His secrets! This must mean giving up a great deal more time to quiet with Him, than one used to think needful—which means letting many other things

go—one's reputation, among the number—the loss of all things—*that I may know Him!*

* * * * *

December 20.—We have been learning something quite new of late, shall I try to tell you about it? I cannot explain it, I can only tell you simply and truthfully of it. Perhaps it may help some soldier-soul in some lonely out-station, the very vitality of whose faith is being touched and scorched by a fiery dart, to have one more little witness-word to the fact of facts that *God is*. Proof positive have we, proof tangible, visible, utterly unanswerable, for, in old-time phraseology, "Is He not the Hearer *and the Answerer* of prayer?"

We were gathered round the breakfast table one morning when the question was asked, "What can we agree for as touching our village to-day?" Last time M. San and I had gone, we had asked and received *one*; but surely our King had a still greater gift waiting for the faith which could rise to it. Could we not believe for *two*? Four of us felt we could. A few hours afterwards we started.

When we arrived, things seemed against us. H. San, the grave and elderly catechist in charge, called to "Sōdan" us on the subject of after-meetings (we had attempted one of the mildest description last time we were there); and before he had got half way through his circumlocution I had absorbed the fact that our, cautious friend was alarmed at the idea of being too definite, and we must be very careful. Being juniors, of course we bowed to his seniority, and the evening passed as gently as possible. I wondered how the Lord was going to keep His promise, but knew it would be all right.

Next day He began to work. Our dear "first one" of last time, brought a friend to us who wanted to know how to be a Christian. For a long time we explained in the simplest way the simplest things, and over and over again we sang the wonderful words of life. At last she understood, and, praise Him, believed. We led her to His feet, and left her there.

And now we wanted our second, so we asked Him to take us straight to her. As we rose from our knees the sliding door slipped back, a premonitory cough announced a visitor, and in came H. San. In less time than I could have believed possible, he had got through his polite preamble, and was in the heart of his subject. The old lame man's wife wanted to see us. She had never come to the deciding point, but knew the truth well; would we help her? Gladly we went at once. All the time we talked to her the good H. San prayed for us. There he knelt, or crouched rather, his head buried in his sleeves, steadily praying, till we could turn and ask him to praise instead, for she had come.

Next morning we came home, and the four who had "agreed" loved the Lord all the more "because He had heard."

A fortnight passed; again we were going. And this time a strange thing

came to pass. When I went to Him, asking Him to tell me what was in His heart for the place, the answer was, "*Four souls.*" From the home-view point hardly a startling one, perhaps, from ours very much so. And yet the Gospel had been taken there a year ago. A faithful little band of eight or nine had been witnessing brightly, and from time to time sowers had been sent forth from Matsuye, who had scattered the life-seed in faith, and watered it with prayer. What if in the thought of the Great Husbandman the time for the upspringing of the blade had come? What if He could do no mighty works *there* because of our unbelief? But *four*? It seemed too much; still the impression deepened that it was of Him, and the conviction came that one other would be able to "agree," and so the condition would be fulfilled, "If two of you." It was so. Then one of our Japanese brothers felt he could believe for two out of the four; and thus garrisoned with the prayer that prevails, for this kind of "agreeing" goes deep, we set out to conquer, in His name.

A kuruma ride, at a slow man-trot, over roads deep in snow and sand, but not a mile too long was it for the all-essential quiet with the Captain upon the eve of battle. Pastor Stockmeyer says that when we are speaking to a soul for Christ all the powers of hell are against us at that moment, and we must "be all the time under the blood;" and surely this is true of the hour before and the hour after we storm the citadel, than which none are more profoundly solemn, except the central one of all, when the forces invisible meet, and there is the shock, the recoil, the moment of pause intense,—and then the triumph song!

When we arrived, the Christians met us as usual. We told them of the four who were to be delivered, and they were very glad, but saw lions in the way. To begin with, where were they? We did not know in the least, but told them God did, and they all promised to pray. Then we went to the meeting. Very few came, and it was very flat. That night we sandwiched ourselves between our quilts, warmed by the curious brazier-in-a-cage arrangement they have here, and slept, to wake expectant.

With the dawn a post arrived, and a post-card was given to me. It was from one who, being away at the time, knew nothing of our specially large request; but she wrote:—"I am asking for a marked blessing for you for your birthday gift," and then I remembered what I had been almost trying to forget, that it was the 16th of December, my first birthday away from home. But the dear ones there were not forgetting. As we rose, even-then, they, going to bed, were thinking of the "to-morrow," so far away. They too were asking for "marked blessings," God's beautiful "very best," and I wondered no longer at the strong prayer-leading of the last few days. It was God answering home birthday prayers beforehand.

And yet that day was not an easy one. It was the busy season, and nobody had time to be saved. Hindrances sprang to meet us wherever we went, obstacles

great and small faced us, excuse after excuse was given in the different houses to which our perplexed guide took us ; and at last, baffled and tired, we were fain to return to our hotel, and rest for awhile before the evening meeting. One more house we tried. There they seemed pleased to receive us. They got us tea and cake (which I devoutly wished anywhere), and they talked a great deal about very little, while we sat there, as if under a spell, as helpless to help them as if we had been a thousand miles away. One could almost see the devil, one could almost hear him laugh.

And then came thoughts, the "wiles" which cling, and twist, and entwine one. "So much for being sure of the Shepherd's voice. Next time better wait and see, before telling everybody. You can't expect conversions every time you come. It's quite presumptuous. Fancy going back to Matsuye empty-handed ! What a pity you told them about the 'Four' !" But worst of all was the fear I had missed His will after all. It looked very like it.

Was He trying to teach one, that not by might or by power, not by time or opportunity, but by His Spirit only, God's victories are won ?

The precious afternoon I had unconsciously counted so much upon was gone ; I had got to the very end of my resources. Prayers and pleadings alike seemed to fall back upon one. The listeners just sat and gazed and smiled, and felt nothing. With a sort of blind longing to rush away into the darkness and lose oneself in the snow, and forget it all, I was rising to bow myself out of what seemed like a prison of mocking spirits, when there was a sudden sense of a presence gone, of a Presence come—let those doubt it who may—and in that moment of the wind and the waves His voice spoke its "Peace, be still," and there was a great calm.

We sat down again, and a hush rested upon us. Then almost without preface one of the women, who had been listening carelessly enough before, said quietly, "I want to believe." While we were talking to her, a young man came in and knelt down. Within half an hour, mother and son were both Christ's. As if under a spell before—as if in a dream now—we were simply awed unutterably. God was so near.

Then we came away, and as we passed one of the Christians' homes, we went in to tell them. They said they had one more waiting for us at the preaching room : would we go to see her at our honourable convenience ? She was another brought by our "first," and she, too, trusted Jesus, and was saved. Oh ! it is so easy to write, so easy to read, but so tremendous *to be*.

By this time all the Christians had assembled. We told them we knew God's fourth must be somewhere, and one, the son and brother of the two who had been brought in, exclaimed, "Why, it must be my wife. She wants to be a Jesus-person, but she is away at her own village. We cannot get her to-night." At once we knelt, and asked that He would give us this one more, before we left the place. *How*, we did not stay to think.

Birthday Gifts

81

Next morning early a message came to say the wife had unexpectedly returned. We went straightway to see her. Before her family and relations, she confessed her desire to be a Christian, and there and then she too "was illuminated" (a very literal lighting up, out here !). And they all, with one consent, praised the Lord, and sang the chorus we had taught them :—

*Jesus gave His life for me,
Jesus gave His life for me,
God loves me, loves me, loves me, and I love Him.*

It was all done with such absolute ease. Our part was simply to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Time, too, or its absence either, mattered nothing to the King of eternity. Truly we learned that

"Little is much if God is in it,
Man's busiest day not worth God's minute."

As we wished them good-bye, the mother said, "By the grace of the Honourable God we laugh merrily this morning;" and since then they have written, "Do not be anxious for us, His love is dropping down upon us. Please soon return, and lead us more."

Finally, just before we were packed into our kurumas we farewelled the old lame man and his wife. They pointed gleefully to the now empty idol shelf, and told us how they had burned their gods, and smashed with a poker the unburnable ones; and again we sang our chorus, and praised Him who had been the Doer of it.

"It is so cold, you will not want to come back to us," said the kind people as we parted; but we were much too glad to mind anything that morning. I never knew joy was such a warming thing. The glow of it lasted all the way home, and it has not faded yet.

And now are you not glad too, and isn't it worth while praying to such a God as ours? For I cannot too strongly emphasize that this, and every bit of blessing we may ever have, is distinct answer to distinct prayer. Two of those who visited this village in early days are in England now. One of them (Mr. Buxton's sister) has, he tells me, never ceased to pray for it. I am sure dear Sarah prays too. So we have two at home, and two out here, both among the pioneers, who pray to purpose for it. And almost every mail brings me a letter from some one perhaps unknown, at home, which tells of definite prayer, sometimes monthly or weekly, and sometimes, praise Him, even *daily*. Thank you all, dear ones, so much; so very much!

Oh, it seems more and more true that infinitely more important is it *to know how to pray* than to know how to work; ask that we here, when the consciousness

of our "no might" is so forcibly borne upon us, may enter deeper than ever before into its realities.

And should there be any sorely pressed—"fightings within, and fears without:" there are such out in the battle front, God knows,—will they not look up, and sing a Hallelujah? Behind the darkness of heathenism, yea, through it all, His sun shines still.

From those at home who "hold the ropes" we ask for the prayer that upon each one of us the holy hush of His Presence may rest, that we who bear His vessels may be clean, self-less, "clear as crystal;" and ask this too, that across every day of our new year may be written in letters of light, "*He goeth before,*" till He call, or till He come, "very far better," gloriously best of all.

CHAPTER XI

Christmas and New Year in Sunrise Land

*"Coming, coming! yes they are
Coming, coming! from afar,
All to meet in plains of glory,
All to sing His praises sweet.
What a welcome, what a meeting
With the family complete!"*

J. WAKEFIELD MACGILL.

January 12, '94.—"Still upward, still upward, still upward." So may it be for each of us, till the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with the voice of the Archangel and with the trump of God.

*"Rejoice, rejoice, our King is coming,
And the time will not be long
Until we hail the radiant dawning
And lift up the glad new song!"*

The "blessed hope" was real at home, but is ten-fold more so out here, where one sees a little of what this poor world can be without Him. Our Christmas was full of the thought "He is coming. Hallelujah!" How glorious to be His witnesses—sent forth by the Holy Ghost! As we sat on the trunk of a fallen pine on the crest of the hill, and looked at the valley at our feet, with its forty thousand for whom Christ died, we thanked Him for thrusting us out where the need was so great, the workers so few.

We thought very very much of you all, and we sang over and over again—

*"In the homeland far away, bless our loved ones, Lord, to-day,
Those for whom we ever pray, we're believing.
Keep them in Thy secret place, nourish them with daily grace,
Till we meet them face to face, all rejoicing!"*

We thought of your *missings*, but what if the blank unfilled in the home below means a blank filled up in the Home above? What if in looking round His gathered ones, in the glad Home-time yonder, He shall see *one more*, because for you through the "little while between" there was *one less*? Would it not be well worth

while? Never, never shall we be sorry then, that we had "Nothing too precious for Jesus."

Dear Florence came on Christmas Saturday, so she was my special Christmas present. Soon afterwards Mr. Consterdine arrived, after a wearisome journey round the coast. You will like to hear of their welcome meeting which was also the annual gathering for all the Christians.

After a service in church, they came up to Akayama. I wish you could have magic-mirrored us then, for there could not have been a gladder, prettier sight.

The rooms were adorned in Japanese style. A great fir branch and a spray of cream camellia, stood in a vase in the hall; in another some exquisite crimson bloom. Brilliant berries in a large brown jar brightened one room, and another had touches of crimson leaves and pure white blossom. A willow branch, hung with pink and white trifles, was caught in the corner facing the entrance, and above it was written "*Welcome and God bless you,*" while "*Unto you is born a Saviour*" shone out in red letters, lighted from behind. The white matted floor was covered with rugs, the gayest obtainable, and in little groups and circles sat the happy company of His redeemed from among the heathen. Oh, don't you think He must have joyed over them with singing! His own, His sheep that were lost! And to think that over every one of the hundreds the song had been sung in heaven. It was good to remember that!

The evening began with supper served in neatly fitted boxes. Then came the meeting of welcome, and finally we all sang,—

*"Awake my spirit and be brave,
And go on strengthened with Almighty Power.
The Crown of Victory waits for us!"*

Tea and cakes, blue, pink, crimson, and green, closed the proceedings, and we parted, to meet next morning at 7 o'clock for a little prayer time, before separating, perhaps not all to meet again till the Meeting in the Air.

I had a very sweet letter from one of our dear Seven, of whom I told you. Oh, what a crown of rejoicing they are! She writes, "Don't be anxious, don't be troubled; I am safe in the love of our Honourable God."

* * * * *

A few days ago a message came to us from an old woman who was very ill, and very unhappy. "To hasten, deign," she said, so we straightway hastened to her. Poor old lady, she greeted us eagerly, and though very weak begged us to explain about salvation; once, long ago, she had professed it, but had never clearly understood, and now felt herself drifting out into dark waters.

Usually we cannot do more at first than lay the foundation for subsequent personal dealing. There is so much to be cleared away before the seed has a

chance to grow, but this time I felt clearly that we were to lead her to Jesus and believe for her immediate salvation. And praise Him, so far as we could see she did indeed intelligently trust and receive. Before leaving her we taught her the text, "He loved me and gave Himself for me." "My memory is old," she said, "please write it out, for me." And M. San wrote it in large clear characters. She donned a pair of spectacles, and read it over three or four times, "*Now* I shall not forget," she said. "*Me, even me* He loved!"

We left, promising to call again, but they will not admit us. It seems the house belongs to her son, a strict Buddhist. He was from home the day we were sent for, (how glad I am we went *at once*!) When he returned, and heard about our visit, he was indignant, and decreed that our first should be our last. But we will not fear for the poor old soul. Our Saviour is able to keep!

* * * * *

You remember our Yokobama children? We had a treat for them last week, about 100 came, *tea* being the attraction. In the evening we had a magic-lantern, and the place was crammed with men and women, standing and pressing round the children. One of our Japanese helpers, a very earnest boy, explained the pictures of the Parables, and we had hymns and texts from the boys and girls in turn, and then all together. It was so nice. Too nice to be left unmolested. A poor wretch, far gone in saké, was sent, and then a set of rough men and lads, to break up the meeting. They gathered round the door and threw in snow and mud. It was dark outside, and nobody could see who was there. I wanted to go out then and there, and try the effect of a surprise, but the helpers would not let me, and indeed I had enough to do inside, for there was a general rush back, and the little ones were in danger for a minute or two. None were hurt, praise Him, and it was all over soon. But oh the confusion! The wooden sandals always left in the porch, were here and there and everywhere, and the possessors thereof were much perturbed.



Two of our Children—A Back View!

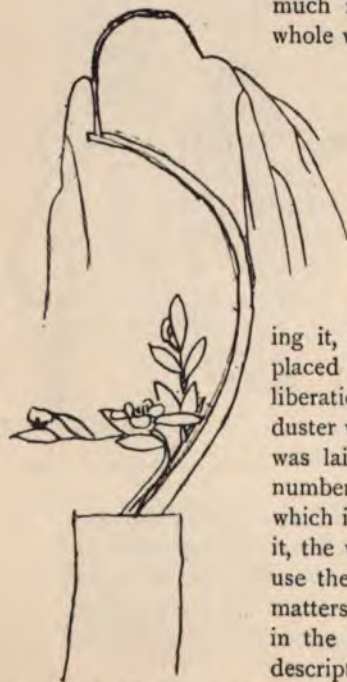
Being the New Year, most were in the finest of finery; upon such the ordeal was severe. One gentleman, who had come to see the children's pleasure, had on beautiful crêpe and silk. He was sadly splashed, but, in his kindly fears for us, he quite forgot himself. After a considerable quantity of crockery had been smashed, and a general *mêlée* produced, the rabble rushed off, and we were left in a state of bedragsmlement and peace.

Upon the presence of the aforesaid gentleman hangs a tale. The first three

days of the New Year are devoted to cards. Dressed in its best, the world turns out and calls upon itself. If you desire to be specially polite, you pay a proper visit. But your card left in the box, fastened either outside, or inside the door, counts as a casual call, and is accepted. Not to call at all would be rude, the sin of sins in Japan.

One afternoon M. San and I were going our rounds among the streets where we had been visiting lately. Family parties were the order of the day, and as these were not Christian houses, we did not like to intrude; (other than evening visitation not being usually appreciated by such.) So we left cards and passed on. However in one place they heard us coming, and invited us in; after the necessary amount of pressing had been vouchsafed and responded to, in we went.

The family, old grandparents, married children and their friends, were gathered round an immense lacquer tray laid upon the floor, on which were thirteen dishes. The ceiling was hung with branches laden with tiny oranges. Fresh flowers and bowls of rice lay before the ancestral tablets. A vase of single camellia and a bare drooping willow branch, stood upon an ebony stool, (it looked much more interesting than the accompanying sketch.) The whole was lighted by a small brass lamp, of antique make, hung among the greenery.



Camellia and Willow Branch.

After the elaborate bowings all round, and an immense amount of gasping—for in Japan it is polite to be breathless—ceremonial tea was served. First, the hibachi and kettle were brought in, and set in a peculiar position before the master of the house.

Then a little cabinet containing the various bowls, the cloth for dusting them, the brush for stirring the mixture, (a sort of dusty powder) the spoon for measuring it, and the sacred case for containing it. These were all placed in a certain, and very distinct order, and with great deliberation he proceeded. The turn of the bowl, the way the duster was folded, and unfolded, the angle at which the spoon was laid down, the twist with which the kettle was raised, the number of times the concoction was revolved, the gesture with which it was handed to me, the bow with which I had to take it, the way I had to hold it, and last, but not least, the grace (I use the word advisedly,) with which I had to drink it—all were matters of extreme importance. The beauty of the whole lies in the perfection of the minutiae. So perhaps a more detailed description would be risky. I drained the yellowy-green lukewarm portion to the bitter end, returned the bowl, was grateful

—and relieved to have it over. Then they carried the great tray to the further end of the room, and prepared to listen with courtesy and interest to our message. Since then we have called several times, and though there is no sign of heart change yet, they always welcome us, and always listen. The young wife is very



The grace with which you have to drink it!

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Is the Kotat's-hole, in the floor, here used as a hibachi. | 6. Measuring Spoon. |
| 2. The Kettle. The Spoon lies beside it. | 7. Brush for mixing the mixture. |
| 3. Kettle lid. | 8. Jar for cold water for Kettle supply. |
| 4. Bamboo stand. | 9. The lid thereof. |
| 5. Teacaddy. | 10. The Honourable Ceremonial Tea. |

kind to me. One day she said, "You wear our dress to tell us you are our sister, we understand, and our heart answer back, we are your sisters!"

* * * * *

A long cold day. M. San and I have come up the lake to wait for, and welcome Miss Hilda Spicer, and Nurse Evans, who are due to arrive very soon. How cold they must be, coming over the mountains, in kangoes, through the snow! No way of getting warm, and no possibility of comfort!

We, even indoors, are bitterly cold, and neuralgia has come in full force, so I have given up trying to study, and instead, have been waiting upon the Lord about our village to which we go next week. Oh to know how to pray! Surely we are verily babes in prayer. We have not as yet gone ankle-deep in the waters He meant us to swim in. The saints of old, who could win great things from God, seem to have known an intense absorption in Him, rare with us. What has changed? Things eternal do not change. The keys which open the treasures are not more easily turned, the powers of evil are not less strong, souls are not less precious. What then has changed? Have we?

I look round the bare little room. The paper windows are soiled and worn. The walls are dull and colourless. A feeble oil lamp is trying to burn, it smokes, and the shade is blackened. The mats feel damp and chill, we are tired of sitting on the floor in the cold. There are people in the next room, ordinary people—fond

of talking and laughing all together—commonplace souls. *Souls!* oh they have *souls!* How much do we care that they have? We have tried to talk to them to-day, and one has seemed interested, but they don't want to listen any more, and we can do nothing but pray. Oh to care, with a deeper caring—to pray with Diviner power!

. . . It is quiet now, the men's loud voices have ceased for awhile, the smoky lamp burns low—longings are finding words, taking shape—I am writing them down in my lesson book, just as they come, all fast and thick, struggling up, leaping out—

Oh for a passionate passion for souls!
 Oh for a pity that yearns!
 Oh for the love that loves unto death!
 Oh for the fire that burns!
 Oh for the pure prayer-power that prevails,
 That pours itself out for the lost;
 Victorious prayer in the Conqueror's Name,
 Oh for a *Pentecost!*
 Infinite Saviour, in mighty compassion,
 Take Thy poor child to-night;
 That which she hath not in tenderness give
 her,
 Teach her to pray and fight.
 Cost what it may of a self-crucifixion,
 So that Thy Will be done;
 Cost what it may of a loneliness after,
 So only souls be won!
 Jesus, my Saviour, beyond telling rare
 The jewel I ask of Thee:
 So much it meaneth, this talisman, Prayer,
 Wilt Thou not give it to me?

Intensely, *intensely* I long to know,
 Deep into this solemn thing:
 Intensely, *intensely* I long to go
 All lengths with Thee, my King!
 And now in the hush of this solemn hour,
 I would lie at Thy feet, oh Christ;
 Whilst Thou, all majestic in love and power,
 Dost keep with Thy child a tryste.
 Thyself, unveiled, in Thy beauty fair,
 Would dazzle these earth-born eyes;
 But oh, one day I shall see Thee there,
 In the glory of a surprise!
 Thou art speaking now—dost Thou give to me
 A choice, as in olden time?
 Dear Lord, wilt Thou put the end of the
 rope,
 That pulleth God's prayer-bell chime,
 In my little hand, *Thine enfolding, so*
That nothing may be of me?
 When it soundeth above our Father will know,
 'Tis rung, O Beloved, by Thee!

CHAPTER XII

Unto Him be Glory

*"God's goodness flows around our incompleteness,
Round our restlessness, His Rest."*

MRS. BROWNING.

*"Our Lamb has won,
Let us follow Him!"*

ZINZENDORF.

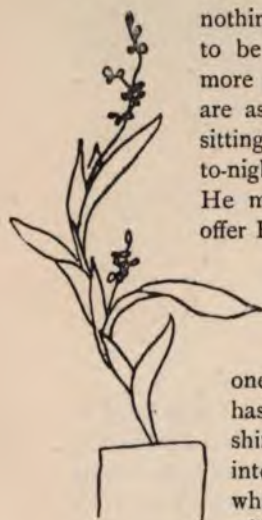
OUR latest arrivals have reached us safely. They appeared at the little hotel at last, looking more like animated snowballs, than anything human. Fortunately they seemed to take kindly to enduring hardships, but one could not help wishing for a good English fire to blaze a welcome for them. We had given them up for the night, and the kettle seemed disinclined to boil again; but no fires, delayed cups of tea, and all the sundry inconveniences of hotel-life, at night, in winter, were cheerfully accepted, and we finally laid ourselves down to sleep, each on a quilt radiating arms-of-a-starfish-fashion, round the *kotats*, and slept—or not, till morning.

A *kotats*, by the way, is a *hibachi* in a frame, or sunk in a hole in the floor. A quilt is thrown over it. Under this quilt your lower limbs may creep, and you bake below, and freeze above; the alternative being to sit huddled up on the top, simmering, and shivering by turns. At night it is placed at the foot of the quilt upon which you lie, another quilt covers both it and you, so that none of the heat is lost; it steals up, and envelops you soothingly, and for once in the twenty-four hours, you are warm all through. There is no fear of asphyxia, the draughts circling peacefully round, take care of that, and the worst you have to fear from the charcoal fumes is a headache in the morning. You may choose between it and a cold. One cannot have everything!

Our new friends are rich in bright choruses, which do us all good. Coming down the lake we sang—

"'Tis Jesus in the morning hour, 'tis Jesus all the day,
'Tis Jesus in the eventide, 'tis Jesus all the way.
So—'tis victory in the morning hour, 'tis victory all the day,
'Tis victory in the eventide, 'tis victory all the way!"

How much it helps one just to turn from everything, and sing! Many a time in this land of false-god praise one feels sore to think there is none for Him. As one passes along the street one knows that unless one's own heart sings, He hears



nothing. The thought stirred me once when Florence and I happened to be rather drearily inclined, and sat silent in the darkening room, more given to mope just then than sing. (Missionaries! Yes, they are as human as you, don't *you* ever feel like that?) Well, we were sitting thus, when suddenly it flashed upon me that if *we* were dumb to-night, no praises would rise to Him for streets and streets around. He missed so much for us once, must He miss anything we could offer Him now? Surely not! So we sang, brightened up, and went to bed quite happily. "Evil spirits dark and strong *fly* before bright melody." "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me."

* * * * *

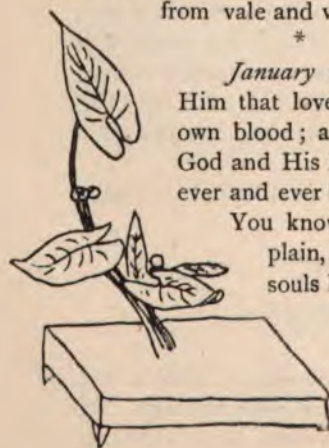
The streets are crowded, it is another Matsuri. You have seen one already, so I need not re-describe, but one new thing this fête has shown me, never seen in all its beauty by me before. Quiet shining places are dotted up and down, elsewhere coloured lights intermingle in a bewildering blaze. Here, there is only the clear white of shaded lamps; and the people who pause to gaze seem stilled by the loveliness. They are looking at the Ceremonial

Flowers. An arrangement so exquisite, so perfect in grace of line and colouring, so intricate in strange symbolic meaning, that the less remark one hazards, the better. These sketches do not give the faintest idea of what it really is. It must be seen, to be known, and studied to be appreciated. The loud laugh is hushed here, the rough voice softened. If only one might feel they were looking "through Nature up to Nature's God," but they are not. They cannot hear without a preacher, and to these thousands thronging in from vale and village, no man has ever preached.

* * * * *

January 22, 1894.—Unto Him be glory! Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood; and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever! Amen.

You know how of late, in a way I cannot explain, certain definite numbers of unknown souls have been laid upon me before going to mission at our village; first *one*, then *two* (four of us agreeing), then *four* (two of us agreeing); and now *eight* was the number given to me by Him. For a fortnight this distinct prayer-





leading lasted, and with it, as last time, the assurance that another, the one who is ever ready to lead us on unto the deep things of God, would receive discernment as to the mind of the Lord upon this point ; and though one almost feared to face so great a thing oneself, much less *spe*ak of it, so strong was that strange pres-

sure, that one had no choice but to "believe and receive and confess it," and thus win the two-fold Victory-Prayer.

All was as He had said, and we started, M. San and I, very helpless in ourselves, but strong in the Word of our God.

Sweet and clear like the chime of a bell, my dear little Keswick watchword rang in my ear all the morning—"He goeth before"—and when we came within sight of the village among the hills, another note was added—"He goeth before you into—" ; "*there shall ye see Him.*"

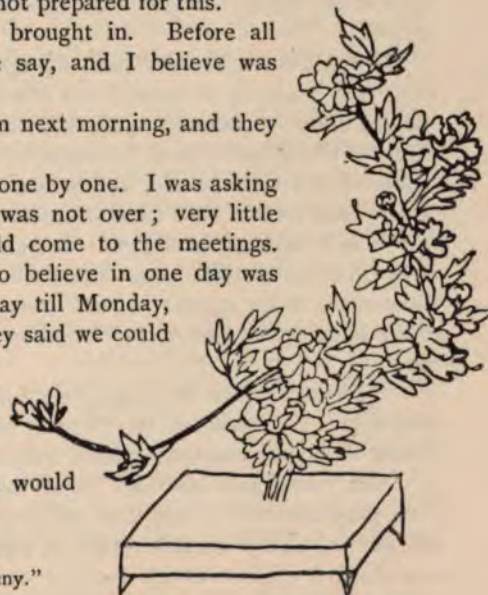
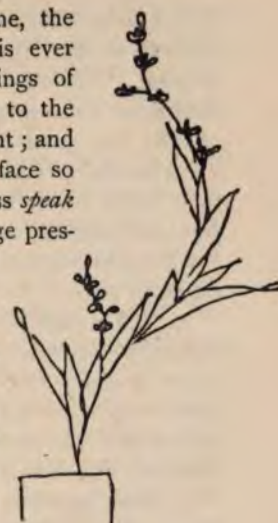
The first thing was to tell the Christians. Their faith had been strengthened by the four of our last visit, but they were not prepared for this.

That night at the meeting, one was brought in. Before all present she "confessed," as the Japanese say, and I believe was saved.

We asked them to come to our room next morning, and they came.

Sitting all round a kotats, they spoke one by one. I was asking for an impossibility. The busy season was not over ; very little visiting could be done, and very few would come to the meetings. Even were it not so, for such a number to believe in one day was too much to expect (here I offered to stay till Monday, instead of returning next morning, but they said we could arrange for no meetings, so it would do no good)—better pray for a "blessing : " then there could be no disappointment ! To pray for things and not get them was a "very bad happening." But that would not do.

"Whoso has felt the Spirit of the Highest
Cannot confound, nor doubt Him, nor deny."



And I knew that He wanted our united faith, as the faith of one, to rise to the measure of His purpose, and honour Him by bringing Him a petition worthy a king to grant. So we read over the five great prayer promises, each with its If-Link, and then there was a long silence.

At last, good H. San slowly spoke: "You are a Jesus-walking one; if His voice speaks to you, though it speaks not to us, we will believe." But more than their belief in my belief was needed; and we turned to Zechariah viii. 6, and to Jeremiah xxxii. 27 and 17, and simply faced those grand fearless faith-challenges—Rock truths through two millenniums, while not a word was spoken except heart-words to Him.

"*Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, SHOULD IT BE MARVELLOUS IN MINE EYES, SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS?*" "*Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh, IS THERE ANYTHING TOO HARD FOR ME? . . . Ah, Lord God! Behold Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched-out arm, AND THERE IS NOTHING TOO HARD FOR THEE!*"

These men are very far from being credulous, but they are extremely convinceable; so they saw the reasonableness of *expecting* miracles from a miracle-working God, and as a result of a miraculous Pentecost. They kept their Bibles open at the verse, "Should it be difficult in *Mine* eyes?" and then they knelt and prayed.

To get them to this point through the medium of interpretation, was not a thing one could do of oneself, and one had just to throw oneself upon His power, leaning upon it, counting upon it, in a way I cannot describe. Quite visibly the "Energy of the strength of the might which He wrought in Christ," wrought in their hearts as they waited there, and before they left us they had "agreed."

Within half an hour I could hardly think, with acute neuralgia. I don't know how long it lasted, but before it had gone a message came to ask us to go to the chief Christian's house, to see some who were waiting there. As the bitter wind, snow laden, swept against us, and strength of mind and body seemed *nil*, the truth of the home-learned sentence, "All God's biddings are enablings," was proved once more.

"Please tell just the beginnings, only of God, not yet of Christ." Obediently we began. We spoke of the Creator and Preserver, and His power and love; the Father—God, who had made man, watched over him, loved him all his life long.

But "witnesses unto *Me*" must mean more, so we tried to unfold the great Love-plan, and told of the dear and present Saviour, who loved us and gave Himself for us. Then another came in, and we were going over the story again when something I cannot at all describe came over those who listened, and we who spoke, and the Christian who prayed. He afterwards described it as the "im-

pression of the Holy Spirit." There was perfect silence, then they prayed, folding their hands and closing their eyes, as they noticed we did, praying for forgiveness for their "heaped-up sins," praying for the pity and love of this wonderful Saviour. The solemnity of that moment fades for you as I try to put it down in black and white, but it was something I shall never forget.

The next hour was spent with some who, though they were interested, did not at all wish to decide. One, a young girl to whom confessing would mean much, came close to the line, but did not cross it. She asked us to call to-morrow: we promised, and came away. These people seem very real, perhaps because it is not an easy thing to be a Christian in Japan. Slowly I am learning that if the Holy Spirit has done the work of preparing the heart, very little pressing is needed. It is just here one is in danger of offering strange fire—substituting human persuasion for Holy Ghost power. May He keep us from such deadly dangerous sin!

Then we were guided to the house of an old woman of many prayers. A year or so ago, when Mary and I. San went first, there was no room for them in the inn. Being Jesus-people, they were welcome nowhere, and tired and wet they searched in vain for a resting-place. This old woman saw them, had pity, and gave them food and shelter. Ever since she has been prayed for; but though admitting it was a "good doctrine," she still clung to her idols, and professed no desire to be saved. You may picture, if you can, how we felt when, after a few minutes' talk with her, a change passed over the kindly listless face, the dim eyes lighted up. She seemed to awake all over. It was as if the sun had suddenly shone forth, chasing away the mists of a life-time; she clasped her hands, and prayed.

To one more house we went that afternoon, the same where the three had come to the Saviour last time we were there. "This is a holy room now," they said. "We do not sleep on these mats, as we used to do, but only in the other rooms. We keep this one for God. We sing all together, morning and evening, sitting round the kotats, and even the little ones can sing too;" whereupon they wandered vaguely into what was intended for a hymn, the words only being recognisable—and they all seemed very happy.

But the old grandfather and great grandmother were still outside the circle. They told us she was in the house, and asked us to talk to her. Yes, her heart was not resting yet. She wanted rest. Her gods had not given it to her; she would trust our God. Twice before we had tried to lead her to Him, twice we had failed; now she came of herself, and He who said, "Come unto Me," in no wise cast her out. The grandfather was out, but would return late that night. We promised to come and see him, and they all promised to pray, that he might at last give in, for until now he had been holding out strongly against the foreign doctrine and all concerned in it.

We had barely time for a hurried supper before starting for the evening meet-

ing. Nobody came except a few children and the Christians. Then the question I had never questioned before, rose in my mind, "What was the difference between a grown-up soul and a child's soul in God's eyes—*was there any?*" No! of course not, and yet the thought of trying to win one of these little ones had quite a startling effect. How could they understand? How could they hold their own against all the others? Did it really come to this, then, that there was no use in seeking to win a heathen lamb, though a heathen sheep was such a precious possession? But that could not be. "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" . . . So we had a children's meeting.

Very quietly the boys and girls listened. When their time was up, they went away, still quietly, two only staying behind. And these two were genuinely anxious, the boy, a fine little fellow of ten or twelve, covered his face with his hands and sobbed. Even cautious H. San was greatly moved. "It is the Holy Spirit, He is here," he said, and they gathered closer together, and prayed. There was not the least ripple of excitement, but they were immensely in earnest.

M. San has a winning way with children, and part of her training with Miss Tristram was in Sunday-school work; and she talked to these two dear little ones until she was sure they quite understood what was meant by "loving Jesus." And then they prayed, following her lead; and so the Good Shepherd gathered His lambs with His arm, and carried them in His bosom.

Then we found that the boy was our chief Christian's little son. Father and mother were both there, and oh! so pleased. The girl had heathen parents, and would have to bear much petty persecution; but she seemed so trustful, that we could not fear for her. With sweet gravity they sang the "wheel chorus," so called because it goes round and round like a kuruma wheel, "Jesus gave Himself for me," and then—

"Even though our dwellings are far separated
We meet in the presence of our loving Lord God."

And last of all the chorus of the day—learned *by heart* at last—

"Faith is the victory,
Faith is the victory,
O glorious victory
That overcomes the world!"

By this time it was late, and I wanted them to praise for the whole eight. This meant taking by faith the one yet unwon. This was a new idea to them, and they pondered over 1 John v. 14, 15, till they had absorbed something of the wondrous truth therein contained. Then each taking one of the eight, and praying for him or her by name, they asked for the strong keeping now so needed, and praised for the glorious salvation that day bestowed.

And then we went to win our last, the grandfather aforesaid, a proud old man—for fifty years a slave to sin, so he told us, and we read it written on his face. But for three days his heart had been heavy, and now he was ready to humble himself before God and man, and confess himself a sinner. We gave him 1 John i. 9, telling how the very desire for the sin which had entranced him and enthralled him could be utterly cleansed away. Kneeling there before us all, looking straight up with fast-shut eyes, he prayed aloud, "Honourable God, deign to forgive, deign to wash," and the whole family joined in a thanksgiving which must have made Him glad.

It was nearly midnight; but the Christians were still waiting in the preaching room. They piled fresh charcoal on the hibachi, and we watched the red underglow touch the black mass above—kindle, transfuse, transform it—and solemn thoughts came which I cannot write here. And at last we got to bed, and fell asleep in the peace that deeper goes than any weariness.

Next morning a message came from the girl, upon whom we had promised to call. She was ill and could not see us. And as they told us this, and we remembered that exactly *eight* was the number laid upon us, and exactly *eight* the number given—not even this one over—a profound sense of the reality of things unseen came over me. A sense of their eternity and majesty—and to think one had, as it were, touched them so—"Behold now I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, who am but dust and ashes!"

And then the dear Christians came and said, "Our faith was weak: we are ashamed," and I told them mine too had been just that, and I too was ashamed; though I had believed (because I could not help it) that we should have those eight, I thought it would be hard to get them in so short a time, and my proposal to wait sprang from a desire to give God two days longer to work His miracle. So joy in the riches of His grace was mingled with sorrow for our own faith-poverty. As one looks at the grandeur of His purpose, and the littleness of our power to enter into it, one feels very low.

I remember hearing Dr. Andrew Bonar speak on Ephesians iii. 17-21, at his last Bridge of Allan Convention, and he, who knew so much more than most of us there of the breadth and length and depth and height of that love which passeth knowledge, told us how he thought we were not so much humbled by looking down at the miry clay and the horrible pit, as in looking up at the mountains of blessing which might have been ours, the great things God longed to give us, but which we had not taken. And now I know how true it is.

The ride home was so cold that our poor kuruma-men could hardly run. Over and over again they stopped, declaring they could not go on, they had pains in their honourable insides, they must try the reviving effect of tea, and smoke. For hours we slowly froze, but the heart-warmth lasted all the time, and the joy

was past all telling. Surely some of you at home must have been praying *strongly* for us then. We shall know when we meet at Home.

It is Friday, the 26th, to-day, a week since that day of "Magnificent Deliverances." I have been off duty ever since. This sort of thing takes it out of one. . . .

And yet to His praise I should tell you that this time He gave in His love a deep new peace, a calm reliance upon Him, upon Whom lay all the responsibility, which excluded strain and struggle. There is much, He knows, one must mourn over: one's very prayers need cleansing, but how one thanks Him that His "Goodness flows around our incompleteness," and to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved, let us ring it forth once more—"unto Him be glory!"

CHAPTER XIII

Co-Workers

*"Not mine the work, but Thine;
Or rather wondrous grace—
'Tis Thine and mine!
Thou knowest not indeed
Nor want of us nor need,
That ne'er can be;
Yet how Thou dost delight
And even condescend
As Friend with friend—
Still freely to invite
Man to co-work with Thee."*

Matsuye. Feb. 8, 1894.—You may like to hear something of what we are doing now. As soon as the deep snow had gone, and we were able to get about, Mr. Buxton sent one of his helpers with me, and we went to a village up the lake, where we had once given rice in the flood time.

The chief of the village was most kind, and told us so great was the distress just then, that the Mikado had sent 2,000 yen (£250) to the province of Izumo, which, however, when divided among the hundreds of needy villages, would only allow a few shillings to each. He sent an old man with us, to guide us through the waste of rice and cotton fields to a little hamlet near the water's edge, which had been all but swept away. While this was being arranged indoors I had a swarm of children round me outside, clamouring for looks and books. I tried to tell them something even in the few minutes, but they had never heard at all, and with puzzled faces asked each other, "What God is she talking about?" A God who is living and loving is a bewilderment to those whose sole conception of such a being is connected with death and dread. Poor little things! One could only teach them a simple text and chorus in colloquial, and leave them so. We should like to send some one to this village, but there is no one to spare, and all round us are hundreds darker still. Disentangling ourselves from our noisy body-guard, we followed our guide to the hamlet in ruins. A few of its scenes may picture all.

An old couple homeless, poor, living in a shed made of rough boards plastered

with mud, their *all* lost—their selves too old and too weary to work, waiting quietly there, in the dreary cold, for the drearier end, which could not be far away. It is on the old and the frail the flood has told most heavily.

The other day one of our workers visited a little court, where she had gone with rice six weeks before. Missing face after face among the aged poor, she asked were they ill? Oh no, it was only that they got wet, and cold, and hungry, and at last they “deigned to cease to become.”

And now we saw a woman very sick and very weary. No mats, no quilts, only a few tattered rags all through this bitter winter. There she lay, on the hard bare boards, *comfortless*. How should we like *our* mothers to lie so? She, too, is somebody's mother, dear, perhaps, as ours. The people did not like us to see her. “We cannot remove her body,” they said, feeling, with all the sensitiveness of their race, how it must look to us. But thanks to your help, she need lie so no longer. To-night quilts would be sent to her, and we told her they would be presents from the true God, who loved her. “Who was He?” She had never heard, never once. We thought she believed a little, for she asked how she could thank Him, and was so surprised and pleased to hear that she need not try to clap, (for “much strength have I not”), because He was so close to her that He could hear the little whisper of her heart. We left her repeating over and over again the strange new words, “Loves me, loves me.”

Another, a family this time, living in a hole we should not care to ask a dog to sleep in. Across the path lay their old home, the soft thatch in mossy patches, strewn about the little garden; not a vestige of the upright about the place.

Sadder still, up among the bamboos on the hill, a hut of wood and straw, a lonely man within, home gone, means of making a livelihood gone, wife and children gone, hope a dream of the past, only despair ahead. He bore up bravely, till a question about his family touched too sore a spot. “I cannot keep them any more,” he said; “my little ones I cannot have,” and he broke down and simply cried.

Once more, and again an old man and his wife. They had “removed their residence,” explained my helper, rubbing his spectacles vigorously. He is not an emotional youth, but I think he found it as hard as I did to keep the tears back; it was all so very desolate. Heaps of rubbish, broken shrubs, bits of their treasured matting carried off by the swift rise of the water, drifted back to them now soaked and useless, fragments of furniture and pottery, scraps of prayer-papers too, and drowned and deserted idols. There they were, the two old souls who had held their own against wind and tide for many a year—stranded at last, a helpless wreck, upon rocky shores. Uncomplaining, too, bearing their woes with that dumb patience we only see among our Christian poor at home.

“How was it the flood came?” we asked them.

Listen to the answer, think till you feel, feel, till deep into your soul the iron has entered.

"Often, often we gave our gods rice and cakes, often, often we prayed; but somehow we offended them. They were angry, and sent the flood; but we do not know what we did wrong, only they were angry." Like little children in the dark, with poor weak arms upraised to ward off cruel blows, coming they know not whence or why; so it seemed to me.

To all those whom we saw that day the good tidings were new or almost so. One man had been given some tracts by Mr. Buxton as he passed along the road—more than the little they told, he did not know.

In some of the houses specially large offerings lay before the gods on the shelf or in the shrine, in mute appeal for pity and help, but in others there was no sign of any worship. "*They are no use,*" said one old man, "*they did not hear, I pray to nothing now;*" which is the deeper fall to pray to the Buddha or to nothing at all? Almost as many here do the one as the other, some because they have found out like this old man that "they are no use;" some because they have heard enough of the true to loosen their faith in the false; and of Japan, as of India, it is seriously true—"If Western thought and science merely act as dissolving acids, and destroy all faith in religion, a terrible chaos may be predicted"—which may our God avert!

And now a little bit for the children. One day we were away in a village some distance from Matsuye. We had walked about a good deal, and were rather tired. Nobody seemed to want to hear our message, everybody had an excuse, and we were beginning to feel disheartened. Was it any use at all? Just then some little children saw us, and cried out, "Look, look, Jesus is coming! Jesus is coming!" We knew it was only in mockery, but all our tiredness flew away at once, to think that when *we* came they should say *He* was coming! for it was true. Along the narrow path among the rice-fields, I seemed to see Him walk before us. Before we came to the slippery bamboo bridges, He had crossed them. Sometimes we turned a corner—He had turned it first (so He met what was on the other side before we did), and so it was all along the way, only really and truly and not make-believe at all, for He says that "when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them."

And this was what I said to Him then, won't you say it too? "Lord Jesus, please help me to follow so closely to Thee, that wherever I go even the little children may feel *Jesus is coming, Jesus is coming.*"

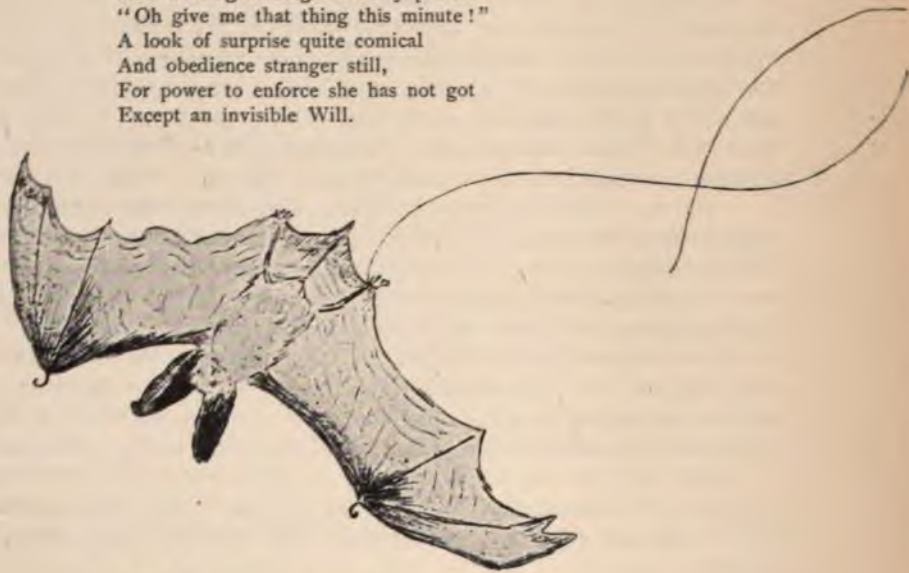
One more little story, just for you—it happened as we were going to our village to tell the people about the great salvation they need so much, and know of so little—and it goes of itself into jingle for you.

From Sunrise Land

THE TALE OF THE BAT.

ONLY a poor little frightened bat,
 And that was all,
 Swung at the end of a piece of string,
 Tossed like a ball.
 And the thoughtless children laughed to see
 It quiver and struggle helplessly,
 And danced and shouted in cruel glee,
 As they twisted the twine again,
 It was only a bat, what matter that
 It suffer a little pain?

A sudden stop. Comes a kuruma,
 A foreign barbarian in it.
 And in mingled English and Japanese—
 "Oh give me that thing this minute!"
 A look of surprise quite comical
 And obedience stranger still,
 For power to enforce she has not got
 Except an invisible Will.



They bring her a queer old rusty knife
 And a pair of curious shears,
 And watch while she cuts the cruel cord
 And soothes the creature's fears,
 But they hear not the cry uprising now
 —"Thy dumb things are suffering so—
 When wilt Thou take Thy great power and reign
 And peace like a river flow?"

* * *

Wakening up 'mid the shadows of night,
 Dimly feeling after the light—
 How can we best unfold it all?
 What shall we say to make it plain?
 Holy Spirit, our power is vain;
 Helpless to help, on Thee we call:
 Shine, oh shine in these hearts to-night,
 Witness of Jesus, the dark world's light!

* * *

Of the power of sin and its danger,
 The Deliverer mighty to save
 And able to keep, we spoke to them
 Through the picture the Bat-Story gave;
 They looked at the winged-mousie nestling
 In the soft warm fur of my muff
 And whispered—"Yes we understand it,"
 And we knew we had said enough.

So we sang to them and they listened,
 "'Tis the hymn of the Bat," they said,
 For it echoed the self-same message;
 And then from His Word we read
 The wonderful old invitation
 "Ye weary ones, come unto Me"—
 And we told them how Jesus loved them,
 Yea loved everlastingly.

And among the women who listened
 Was one who was tired of sin,
 But she had not come to Jesus,
 For her faith was very dim.
 And the simple story touched her,
 And her doubts all floated away,
 And she prayed—"O God, please save me,
 As the bat was saved to-day!"

Very soon in the Angels' presence
 There was joy and the music of song,
 And the Saviour-Shepherd led it—
 "Rejoice with Me friends, for long
 I have sought, and now I have found it,

My own, My sheep that was lost!"
 Yea, let us rejoice, remembering
 Its worth to Him by its cost!

Others had sown the good seed before,
 To us was the harvest given;
 Sowers and reapers rejoice together,
 Rejoice with the Angels of Heaven!



From the Rice Harvest

From Sunrise Land

Dearly He loves His wandering ones ;
 Oh, can we be glad enough that
 One was a little bit helped to Him
 Through the baby-tale of the Bat ?

February 9. Evening.—Home from the preaching meeting. At the close there was a little disturbance : and on our way back a great yellow cur was set at us. But by dint of turning round, and opening our umbrellas at his nose, we got off whole. Native dogs, even from a Japanese, and therefore charitable point of view,

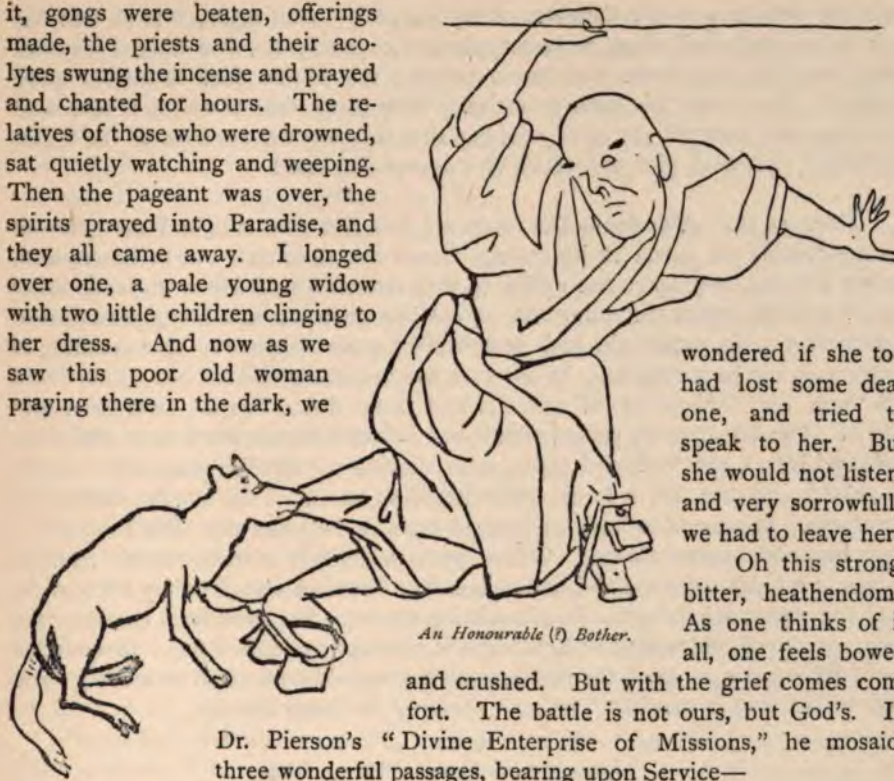


From a Native Point of View.

are not a desirable race. Here are a couple of comical cuts, by way of corroboration.

We saw a sad thing as we passed the bridge. An old woman praying towards the four points of the compass, bowing and clapping towards each, and ending with a prolonged prayer, facing the spot where the boat sank some time ago. It recalled to me a piteous scene I witnessed then. A platform was thrown out, idols set upon

it, gongs were beaten, offerings made, the priests and their acolytes swung the incense and prayed and chanted for hours. The relatives of those who were drowned, sat quietly watching and weeping. Then the pageant was over, the spirits prayed into Paradise, and they all came away. I longed over one, a pale young widow with two little children clinging to her dress. And now as we saw this poor old woman praying there in the dark, we



An Honourable (?) Bother.

wondered if she too had lost some dear one, and tried to speak to her. But she would not listen, and very sorrowfully we had to leave her.

Oh this strong, bitter, heathendom! As one thinks of it all, one feels bowed and crushed. But with the grief comes comfort. The battle is not ours, but God's. In Dr. Pierson's "Divine Enterprise of Missions," he mosaics three wonderful passages, bearing upon Service—

"For we are labourers together with God. . . . We then as workers together with Him." 1 Cor. iii. 9. ch. vi. 1.

"And fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." Col. i. 24.

"When the Comforter is come, even the Spirit of Truth, He shall bear witness of Me, and ye also shall bear witness." John xv. 26, 27.

Co-labourers with God. Co-sufferers with Christ. Co-witnesses with the Holy Spirit. Surely in such a marvellous Partnership, success is assured, unless marred by failure on our part. Our responsibility can only be to keep in touch. The burden which would crush us, passes then to Him. And yet there is such a thing as the burden of souls. What one of old knew, when he cried,—“O that mine head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and

night for the slain of the daughter of my people." And again, "If ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride, and mine eyes shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the Lord's flock is carried away captive." Paul knew this heart-ache too. "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the Cross of Christ." Oh God, give us love which can care like that!

* * * * *

February 10. Morning.—The roads are in a bad state still, and the hours of toss-and-tumble we spend in itinerating, tempt one to launch out in description. Suffice it to say, they leave one willing to wish oneself a jelly-fish or an indiarubber ball or anything under the sun or sea, except just what one is, a being possessed of a nervous system, ganglionic, and cerebrospinal quite complete! The mending of these roads has been curious. In one case where nothing was left but a hole half a mile long, they laid masses of camellia and laurel down, heaped sand over, and trod it. The first time we passed after it was finished, the poor branches with their buds and leaves, still fresh and green, were sticking up through the sand. Again we passed, and now only a feeble few fluttered up at us. I did not like to trample over them. It seemed so hard for them to have to die when they didn't want to—poor beautiful broken things! Others were mended in a more prosaic manner. Heaps of rubbish collected and tied in bundles, formed a sort of lumpy foundation, mud and stones did the rest. Roads skirting the hills, and sometimes cut deep into them, are paved and walled with "stones of rolling," to quote Ezra. It reminded me of Bible times to watch the tireless patience and skill exercised in moving those large blocks, and in carefully "rolling" them up the steep hill-side.

* * * * *

"Burn, burn, O Love, within my heart,
Burn ceaseless night and day,
Till all the love of self and sin
Is wholly burnt away!"

That is our prayer as once more we look forward to a few days with our village people. It is such a solemn thing to work with God—our holy God. Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify Thy Name? for Thou only art holy! The more one realizes that unspeakable holiness, the more utterly one abhors and "retracts" oneself. Praise Him for a patience which can sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, that we may offer an offering in righteousness, "*then* shall the offering . . . be pleasant unto the Lord."

February 17. Night.—Back again, and once more with hearts full of praise for blessing which lays one very low, and yet lifts one into the heavenlies.

The evening we went, we had our usual meeting for the Christians; one who had not decided, came in, and listened. When it was over, he said he would like to

"believe to-morrow." "Delay no time, delays have dangerous ends." *To-night*, it should be, we felt; and praise God, after a long time of talk and prayer, to-night it was. The Christians knew him well. As so often before, we were only helping across the line one whom they had led up to it. You remember the question some one asked the stone-breaker, when at length his stroke took effect—"Which blow broke the stone?" "Faith! It was the first one, and the last one, and every one between!" I often remember that, here.

Next morning we all met again for prayer. The Word He had given me was 2 Samuel v. 18-25. For each new battle there must be new inquiry, new guidance, if there is to be new victory. "As we have done, so we shall do," is not a rule in God's army. We cannot march until we get the Captain's marching orders. And we need not try to fight (if we do it will end in failure,) until we hear the distinct "sound" of the Lord, for only then do we know with certainty that He is going out before us.

This came with practical force to us all, for perhaps the feeling had been afloat, that it would be this time just as it had been before. But no soul-number had been laid upon me. It was to be quite different.

It *was* different. That evening's meeting closed in a scene I shall never forget. About half-way through, it simply broke itself up. The Christians drew up in a corner and prayed, the few anxious ones who were there in another and listened. It was awfully solemn, solemn beyond all words. At last upon one and another light broke: one by one, they prayed aloud. Oh that first prayer! Did ever mother listen more intently for her child's first cry, than we, that night, for the birth cry of those souls?

Then followed a praise meeting. The joy of the Christians was beautiful, as nearly akin to His, I think as anything human could be. And there was the Matsuye gladness to look forward to; deepest and highest of all, there was *His* to know, and rejoice in. Oh it was almost too much—joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Will you not pray for these new-born babes? Ask that they may grow strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Ask that they may be no lukewarm half-hearted believers, but real, red hot, blazing firebrands—fired with the fire of the Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER XIV

To Osaka and Back

*"He fixed thee 'mid this dance
Of plastic circumstance."*

ROBERT BROWNING.

Osaka. March 4.—Our party has come here for the C.M.S. Conference, and (necessarily) also, for the renewal of our six months' passports. The present passport system entails a great deal of travelling to and fro, and apparent waste of time, but it must be among the "All Things," and so all right. It is so nice to know there is no second cause. We are scattered among the hospitable Osaka missionaries, I am with Miss Howard, which is very pleasant as she is not quite a stranger.

The Conference opened with a prayer meeting at Archdeacon Warren's house; next morning we met for a beautiful solemn Communion Service in the College Chapel. Then divers meetings followed, and reports were read, some interesting, some not. There is much I should like to tell you of the ingathering among the Aino race, and at Fukuoka, fruit of long and patient sowing; of the work among the lepers, those poor "not human ones," as they call them here; and of bright itinerating work in the snowy Hokaido, in the interior, and round about Osaka; but of all this those interested will read in the C.M.S. report. One little tale, however, I must pass on. During the typhoon which brought the flood last autumn, Miss Ritson was out in a small native steamer, exposed to the fury of wind and wave. All hope was given up, but she prayed earnestly that, for the sake of the poor trembling heathen passengers, they might be saved. And even as she prayed, the boat ran into a creek, and the word was passed down "Safe!" Then she told them what she had been doing, and they were much impressed. They too could have prayed, they said, but their sea-god was on shore, and so inconveniently out of reach. It was an opening, and she entered in, telling them what she could in the time, and teaching them, at their request, a simple prayer. Would it not be a beautiful thing if one of these should be brought to Him, a storm-won jewel, for His joy and hers for ever?

And now the Conference is over, and we hope to start for Matsuye soon.

Among the many impressions left upon my mind, is admiration for the courtesy and charity of the older missionaries, and their readiness to be of service to their younger brethren and sisters. A year in the field wakens within one a wonderful reverence for "old missionaries, men and women who may with honour unbuckle the harness we are just putting on." . . .

It has been decided that our dear Mary Sander must go home to recruit. She has been far from strong of late, but would not give in. We shall miss her *very* much. Another good-bye is near us now, in a few days Mr. and Mrs. Buxton sail, for a few months' visit to England. They are taking their little Murray and Alfred, but leave the Baby San, to represent the family.

From Matsuye, bright news comes. Hilda and M. San went to our village last week, and another soul has been won. How glad they must be! Another over whom our blessed Saviour may see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. Praise Him indeed!

M. San goes on to give me a bit of the grey too—for side by side with the gold, its dull shade always lies.

"I went to visit new houses, but they did not want at all; they never heard before, so I ask them very earnestly to listen till I tell about Him. Though they make no answer, I went on to speak a little, but they did not want, so I could not help them. I was very disappointed. It is very difficult to get people's souls." Very difficult indeed! But the battle is not ours but God's.

" Oh for trust that brings the triumph
When defeat seems strangely near.
Oh for faith that changes fighting
Into victory's ringing cheer;
Faith triumphant: knowing not defeat or fear!"

Matsuye, March 14.—We set forth on Saturday morning last, in all good faith and an innocence truly touching. We were due to arrive on Monday, for two or three days we could manage nicely, in our somewhat circumscribed second class, we meaning, this time, Mr. C. and five of us woman-kind. Our joint cabin was also possessed by three Japanese gentlemen, it was clean, had a shelf running round, and a floor of about 6 ft. x 6.

We dispersed ourselves as best we could, hired quilts, which we spread on the thinly matted boards, concocted pillows out of travelling bags, and when night came, murmured softly "Here I lay me down to sleep," and endeavoured so to do. To which there was a series of preventives. The screw was exactly underneath, every vibration went as exactly through us. The quilts were poor in quality, and did not materially soften the floor. Our portmanteaux were not downy; our Japanese friends began to play a sort of clattering game, and to smoke.

Sunday morning dawned. We arose in various stages of unsatisfied sleepiness, and breakfasted in the captain's cabin, kindly lent for the purpose. It boasted a table, we had brought food, reduced our wants to a minimum, made one teaspoon go round the company, cheerfully used the same knife for tinned meat and jam, and were very comfortable. A little service followed. So homelike and restful, we thought of dear ones far away, and prayed much for you. All day we were steaming through the Inland Sea, a dream of water, and island, and rock. Think of the strangest loveliest blendings of form and colour your fancy can paint, and you see as much as you can see, ten thousand miles away.

That night our troubles began; the wind rose and woke us, it was woeful. . . . Monday we spent in the depths, it was lucidly described by one sufferer as "going up, and going down, turning upside down, and inside out." Three of us contrived a place on deck whereon we could roll in rugs. The rest were too much depressed for even this.

It was strange to pass the Straits of Shimonoseki, where I landed Robinson Crusoe-fashion nearly a year ago. A little life-time seems to have passed since. There has been gladness and sadness too, for part of one's first year is spent in getting disillusioned. But praise Him, He abideth faithful. Thou remainest! Sometimes letters come from friends known and unknown, which make one wish the writers could see straight through to things as they are abroad. For too often, it would seem, an ideal is fancied, existing perhaps in the "Fields of fair romance which no day brings," but certainly nowhere else. The heroics we leave at home. They sound nice, but won't wash. The joy we have, is

*"Not as idle ore, but iron dug from central gloom
And heated hot with burning fears, and dipped in bath of hissing tears."*

Some of us used to think the net on the home-side needlessly fine in its mesh, we do not think so now. The tests seemed hard, we understand them better now, for we have seen what life can be to one who successfully slipped them. They were only steps to those awaiting us here. Stepping-stones to higher, if far sterner things—

*"Machinery just meant to give thy soul its bent;
Try thee, and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.
Then welcome each rebuff that turns earth's smoothness rough!"*

But to return—Monday dropped us in Hamada Bay. At this point, one member set forth her intention to land, and proceed by kuruma. There she stood, in the grey drizzle, in a bedraggled mackintosh and an indented hat, grasping umbrella in one hand, and handbag in the other, a see-if-I-won't sparkle in her eye, resolve in every wrinkle; off she went in a dripping sampan. Night came and we started.

But of progress not a mile. Tuesday saw us where Monday left us. Our bread began to fail. At this opportune moment some one remembered that this boat was notably casual. We might not be home for a week, whereat we began to question the advisability of following the derided departed. But though it grieved us sore to stay in durance vile so long, "full well we knew the loss of pence would trouble us much more." So we waited, thought of St. Paul's journeyings often, and tried to be good.

There were comic touches too, and Florence's yearnings for her kodak got quite monotonous. She longed for it one morning when a calm hour encouraged thought of breakfast, and, attended by admirers in semi-foreign clothes, and heads like well-brushed hedgehogs, I beat up our remaining eggs in a great blue bowl, while the Cook San, eager for information, broke them one by one beside me. Likewise, when we scrambled into dressing-gowns and under rugs, on the corner of our shelf, carefully avoiding a sitting-up posture, lest we should knock our heads against the ceiling. Likewise, when we rolled double, to avoid rolling singly, upon the prostrate world below, to the tune of the agonizing screw, half in, and half out of water, while biscuit tin and frying-pan danced merrily together, and a "Can I do *anything* for you?" sounded hopefully through the din.

Sea-sickness, they say, has three stages—

- 1st you fear you are going to die.
- 2nd you don't care if you do.
- 3rd you are afraid you aren't.

In a somewhat modified form, we experienced those degrees of bliss.

Our cabin grew no larger, but much stuffier. It opened upon a storage place, (the original 1st class) wherein odours more multifarious than spicy floated loose.

On Tuesday we sampanned across to the shore, and landed. On one of the pine-clad heights which encircle the beautiful bay, we found a Shinto temple, where hundreds of prayer papers, planted round, told their sorrowful tale. In the open front chamber of all Shinto temples, nothing is to be seen except a mirror, and perhaps a few old pictures; at the back is a closed room, and in it the emblem of the god or goddess lives, wrapped up in silk, and placed in the innermost of a series of boxes. The high priest only is allowed access to this holy place, and even he not often. No one ever looks at the guarded Symbol, and no one knows what it is, whether a sword, a stone, or a mirror, except the priests, and those to whom they tell it.

We had an impromptu meeting on the hill, for the dozens of people who discovered and followed us. A little C.M.S. work is done here. Two catechists are stationed in the town, but what are two to thousands? And yet so it is every-

where, and so it must be (unless He come,) if the Church does not awake and scatter.

But don't let us wait for glorious improbabilities. Let it be for each of us this—

“At Thy feet I fall,
Yield Thee now my all,
To suffer, live, or die
For my Lord crucified.”

That evening we were hungry, and finished our last crust at supper. We looked at each other, and wondered. Another night of exceeding bitter toss and tumble, but it was our last. Next day saw us home, and we thanked Him for it.

Two lovely sea pictures were given us.

We were lying at anchor in Hamada Bay. Upon the shore-side, the moonlight lay in long wavering lines, every ripple silver-tipped. The other side was in shadow. Then a breeze from the sea stirred the surface of the water. The effect was electrical. All over the darker side, there was a sudden breaking forth into phosphorescent light. Living, dancing shining fire-balls sparkled up from the darkness. We looked at the moonlit reach again, it lay as before, calm and fair, no fire-life visible there. It needed the wind and the darkness to bring it out. We have the one. Oh for the other! The darkness of heathendom may be felt. Come from the four winds, O Breath, and breathe! Then shall the death-gloom be lighted with the life-fire, and these slain souls shall live! . . .

One evening we watched the home-coming of the fishing-boats in the sunset; scores of them, with their sails full-set, sped along from the open into the bay. In one, as it passed us closely we could see a woman sitting at her spinning wheel, quietly working on to the last. And those swift-gliding things, glorified for the moment as the sunset gold illumined them, spoke to us of “the entrance in full sail into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” For so He bringeth them to their desired haven.

“And when we reach the shore at last
We shall not count the billows past.”

* * * * *

March 20.—“Papa, potato, poultry, prunes and prism.” One could fancy our visitor is mentally murmuring that “surface”-forming phrase, so replete is he with propriety. He has come to call, and as no one else happens to be available, I am entertaining him until a better comes. He knows no English, my Japanese is not assured enough to venture much upon; so, after the interchange of introductory courtesies, we relapse into pauses, and I study him. A gentleman, every inch

a gentle man, he would not injure a mosquito, he could not be anything but polite. Given to leisurely ways, given to circumlocution, against decision, in word, tone, or idea, I should imagine, his whole soul slowly rises, and solemnly protests. And yet a fibrous man. One with pith and worth in him. One who thinks—not in our fashion perhaps, but *thinks*, which is the main point. How I wonder if he has ever thought about the one great Question, and carefully I ask him. He has heard of it, would be glad to know more. While I am getting some books for him I. San arrives, and I subside. Presently it is discovered that he has come to cast an adoring look upon the foreign house, if such is our honourable occasion's opportunity. So we take him all over it. Nothing is missed by those quiet, quick, eyes. They observe, among other barbarisms, some badly arranged flowers. Pained, but too polite to express the pity he must feel for us, he gently turns away. No wonder, we are bunglers in the Art; our coolies understand it better than we do, the poetry of line is mystery still to us. And now I. San is talking earnestly. Our friend listens with interest, promises to read and meditate upon this new and strange enigma. Turns over the leaves of his New Testament, while I. San explains its order, and something of its story. And then he bows and goes. Our heart-thoughts follow him. Oh that the visit to the foreigner's house should lead to an acceptance of the foreigner's God. Nay *his* as much as ours, though he knows it not as yet.

The beautiful Spring Blossom is beginning. We have an eight-foot high branch of Plum, just breaking into crimson, in a vase downstairs. Every twig gives one a separate little thrill of delight. The whole is something too lovely for words of mine; and I take refuge in Mr. Fox's—

“Oh, colour, colour, Love's last opulence!
Thy universal language doth enshrine
The mystery of all magnificence,
A supernatural ministry is thine.
These larger forms of speech doth God employ
To shadow forth His Own unshadowed joy.”

* * * * *

Here comes a peasant, carrying a huge bundle of straw rope. He is one of the flood-sufferers, from the village of which I told you. He tells his story, and I remember him—the poor man who sorrowed so over wife and children parted from him. We gave him a start again, he says. (A few pence with which to buy straw to make rope and mats.) Since then the skies had smiled, and so had he. He had got work, his dear ones were with him now, and he beamed, and bowed, and begged me to accept the aforesaid Rope, in token of his never-dying gratitude.

Here then is the rope, drawn by the kind I. San, he gives you the giver too,

and he wrote two tiny Japanese "poems" beside it, the translations whereof I append.



*"Only straw Rope,
But worth more than gold because of
the love it speaks of."*

*"The long distance all unminded be-
cause of past grace for which
thanks must pay."*

He has gone away now ; we talked to him of the God of Love from whom his happiness had come. We gave him books, and as he said goodbye, he asked us to come soon, and tell his people too. We hope to go,—oh if only one were divisible, how convenient it would be !



CHAPTER XV

Not Yet—Ere Long

"God's plans like lilies fair and white unfold;
Thou must not tear the close-shut leaves apart,
Time will reveal the chalices of gold."

March 25,

Easter
Sunday morning

Easter Day in Japan. How
change it seems now glad -
and following the lead of Regions
Beyond - let us claim the Easter
Pleasure - claim it even now -
Christ the Resurrection & the Life
shall yet be Life for this death -
bound land -

Christ shall
Conquer
Hallelujah -
Conquer fair Japan
And the blessed
Easter years
Shall be King
Ere long
So we
May the
Easter
lilies
O'er



the Islands of the Sea
Confident of glorious Victory
Given Christ for Thee!

How is it we so faintly realize the realities we believe? We don't seem to grasp their significance. Our grip of them is loose. Is it because we could not bear the full, grand, force, as yet? Would the vessel break with excess of delight? I have been reading Miss Nugent's New Year's Booklet, "Our Own God"; and *feasting* is a tame way of expressing my enjoyment therein. Sometimes a flash of the glory of things touches one into a moment of "rapture all Divine," (a sensation oftener sung about than experienced!) and one can revel in the loveliness of "our own God," being our very own! Its complement, too—just think of it. We are His own: His very own!

*"His own! Their joy should be to bear His Cross and shame,
 Their cure, to pour for others' wounds a balm,
 Their rest, to labour grandly in His Name,
 To change earth's cry of anguish to a psalm.
 Swift from their clasp should drop all sceptres down
 To free their hands, God's healing cup to bear.
 Swift from their brows lift e'en a royal crown
 Lest God's Name on their foreheads written fair
 Be hidden, and some sad soul miss it there."*

Oh that the eyes of our understanding being enlightened, we may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe which can lift us into ownership in such a God; and transform us, poor unworthy ones, into what His own should be!

Easter Monday.—M. San has been telling me about the old woman of whom I told you some weeks ago, whom we were allowed to see once, and who in that once believed. She died when we were at Osaka, and was buried as a Christian, for she died, simply trusting in Jesus. She remembered the little text she had learned, and which we had left with her, written upon a slip of paper, "*He loved me, and gave Himself for me.*"

Now I understand the impelling to lead her straight to Him, which so seldom comes, or dare be yielded to, in a first visit; it was our last chance.

Will you pray that we may be quick and sure in buying up the opportunities? How suggestive that R.V. mar. is of Eph. v. 16. *Buy up*, as something worth buying. *Wisely*, for bad bargains are possible; *promptly*, for the chance to buy at all may pass before we know, and pass beyond recall. "*Redeeming it out of the hand of the wicked one,*" as Dr. Wordsworth has it, brings to the fore another thought; some one else is bidding for that priceless "opportunity," some one keener to see, and swifter to buy, than ever we can be; unless we are living so near our Master that He can tell us when the chance is coming. Not long ago I missed one. We were in a river boat, behind us tied on by ropes were two sampans. The owner of

one of them climbed into ours, as we steamed along, and stood beside us for a few minutes. Then he dropped into his own again, and began to unfasten the rope. It slipped, the boat overturned, and he sank. When he came up, he was under it, and he could not get it righted; it was a critical moment, we could see the splash and struggle. By this time our steamer had stopped, and the other sampan was off to the rescue. He was saved: but the shiver lasted, and lasts yet, as I think of it. One chance was given us of reaching that soul, we missed it, and before we had realized it had come, it had gone, almost gone for ever. And gone for ever it may be, even now. We may never see him again. Oh opportunities are not toys to be played with as we will!

Pray that we may buy them up ere they go,
 Pray that so one with Him we may be, that we shall know
 Just when to speak, and when to be still, and daily grow
 More and more wrapt in saving the souls He loveth so!

* * * * *

There are some very superior men in Matsuye, for it is an old feudal town, and in it are many of the retainers of the nobles who voluntarily surrendered their powers and lands to the Government in the Revolution of '68. By far the greater number, thus suddenly deprived of all means of support, drifted down the stream to want and woe. Some struggled up, and bravely faced the world again as scholars if not soldiers, and their sons are among the thinkers of wonderful young Japan.

Such a one Florence visited a few days ago. He had been to England, had all our favourite books, could discuss British affairs, and was up in everything, except, alas, the one thing needful. That he respected as an interesting science, nothing more, and the Bible he put on a level with the writings of Confucius.

There are many such men who have travelled through "Christian" countries, and returned to their native land confirmed sceptics—having lost all, and gained nothing, their last state, surely, sadder far than their first.

These scrap letters, being written from the interior, where our work lies mainly among the simple though thoughtful villagers, naturally deal with the things concerning them, rather than with life as it may be elsewhere. But it would not be true to Japan to give this side only, there are great cities, as you know, where Western ways prevail, and the foreign element rules; there are colleges and a national university, and everywhere there are good Government schools. Japan is becoming fast "the Britain of the East," and her Stork may give place to an Eagle before many days are past. Whereat some rejoice and some don't. We Matsuyeites love the "Old Japan" best, and care little for much that is new.

Can you make out what this is meant for? A family party, their goods and chattels, *and their god*, drifting slowly down the river, drifting slowly, who knows whither? For as I stood on the bank, and watched the little sampan and its

strange sad burden, passing down and on, till it slipped round a wooded curve, and was lost to view, it seemed to me that the Idol in its gilded shrine was the moving influence, the active principle there—and no one dreamed that it was so. Those people, the man sculling in the stern, the women sitting in the bows—they thought they were taking their god to a new home somewhere beyond, but was it not rather that it, or the Power of Darkness it stood for, was bearing them swiftly down the river of life, and out to the sea of Eternity? Poor sleeping souls—one longed to send a cry of recall ringing across the water, to spring somehow from bank to boat, and hurl that painted thing overboard! To say anything, do anything to shock them into wakefulness and life! But one could do just *nothing*.



And so it is day after day, month after month, year after year. They are passing out of the world, they are coming into the world faster than we can reach them. This century has seen 60 times as many births as baptisms. Four millions won for Christ, and the heathen population has increased by two hundred and fifty millions. Ten hundred and thirty millions are to-day drifting thus.

We stand on the shores of an infinite ocean, we stretch our arms to them. Some seem to pass us so closely that we can almost touch them, but we strain to reach them all in vain—they have glided past. Some are away and away beyond our ken. Fifty thousand of that spirit-fleet will touch their horizon to-night.

Oh one turns from the thought with almost despair! And yet not so—for His Word abideth. The time shall come when the seventh Angel shall sound, and the great voices say—"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever!"

March 29.—

"Oh could I tell, ye surely would believe it!
Oh could I only say what I have seen!
How should I tell, or how can ye receive it,
How, till He bringeth you where I have been?"

One's thoughts flow hot, like some fiery lava-stream, but something in the very telling seems to cool them down, till they are like that same lava when the fire-glow has left it a mass of expressionless grey. One can only bring Him the poor little weakly told story and trust Him—if in love He will stoop so low—to breathe His own life into it.

And well, thrice well, if He "turn to ashes" every bit of the human in it, if so be it may be a live coal in His hand, alive with the altar fire, quenchless for evermore.

And now for this afternoon's seeing, and a sad enough one it has been, had we but eyes to see deep. *On the surface*, beauty everywhere—the wooded hills fair already with early blossom, villages nestling beneath them, bright with busy life: *under the surface*—death, death, death. We might have been walking in a living graveyard. "*Dead* in trespasses and sins"—those words mean something now.

There were three of us—two English-speaking Japanese and I. We had not arranged where to go to, and had a little talk and prayer over His "Going Before"—a new thought to them, which they took to, with a simplicity which reminded me by contrast of some good folk at home, who are so much too wise to take the Bible literally. When the customary "Where deign to go?" was asked them by any we met, I noticed they answered "Our God's honourable leading's way we go."

At the first hamlet we came to we stopped, and they gave away leaflets and talked to any who would listen, while I sat on a big mossy stone near a great ancient Buddha, and thought of the time when the idols He shall utterly abolish. Some pilgrims came just then, with their rosaries and bells, small idols slung across their backs, baskets of prayer-slips, each with the same meaningless formula written thereon, in their hands. These papers they stick all over the images, a dozen perhaps on each one of the hundred visited, hoping, poor souls, some will reach some one, somehow, somewhere. Forceful indeed are the old Bible verses—"Vain repetitions as the heathen do, for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking," for example, has a terrible point when one sees the thing being done.

After a while we drew a little crowd, and had an open-air meeting, standing under the shadow of the Buddha. The people looked at us in blank astonishment while I played upon my little harp and we sang, and talked, in the simplest fashion, and tried to teach the children clustering round us the few words of the chorus. But they did not care to learn: it was all too strangely new to be even desired. They gazed, listened dumbly, and that was all. Again a Bible word seemed sadly *à propos*, "And lo thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: (not that *this* applied!) for they hear thy words, but they do them not."

We gave books, and left them standing in little knots pondering dimly still.

The next village was a mile or two further on, and here it was much the same.

Nobody seemed the very least interested. They were willing to listen, and responded with the unfailing courtesy of their nation, but of true soul-hunger there was none. Poor things, they had never heard there was anything to hunger for. Praise God, there are Spirit-prepared hearts hidden away in the darkness could we but find them, (and more and more I am impressed with the fact that just in proportion as we are in touch with Him, so He will lead us straight to them;) still there is the work of the herald, as well as that of the ambassador. He hath need of all.

We had a talk with half a dozen women who were sitting on the wayside round a basket of shell-fish, picking the creatures out with long pins, and packing them into unfragrant market boxes. They were close to a paddy-field, too. It was not a savoury spot. I'm afraid while we sang and talked to them I couldn't help commiserating those unfortunate whelks. It was such a very uncomfortable proceeding, and when they kindly offered me one for my immediate refreshment, I wondered how one would possibly do if it came to a question of eating (which it most mercifully didn't). "He giveth *more* grace" had in it a wealth of reassurance unappreciable by you dear home people, who never were offered a snail in your lives, and never expect to be. It would be such a comfort if one could live on native food; but though some of it is very good, it doesn't seem to contain much nourishment, and you have to get through such lots of it if you are to get on at all—not always possible to the not ravenous foreigner. Until He guides otherwise, I am living as all the others do, very much as at home; but to be native all round, is the goal of my ambition. Will any of you who can do it with unprejudiced minds pray about this?

We had another open-air meeting in this village, and then walked along among woods and fields for some miles of further seed-sowing. There was a Fox-Matsurie going on in town, and the country people were thronging to the centre of excitement. Many carried offerings of rice, cakes, flowers, wherewith to propitiate that much-dreaded deity.

Very few refused our little books, and we gave away a great many to those who had evidently never seen one before. And as we walked, we sang a somewhat revised version of "Bringing in the sheaves" (certainly nothing just then, and there, seemed more impossible than a be-it-ever-so-distant harvest), ending, however, with the inspiring chorus adapted to—

*"Bringing Japanese,
Bringing Japanese,
Yes, we'll come rejoicing,
Bringing in the sheaves!"*



*They kindly offered
me one.*

My two dear helpers quite brightened over it, and one felt so glad that though one could do so little (for, of course, though I have said "*we*," it is *they* who really do the work) one could help to sing them through the fight. Over and over again a group would gather, listen, gaze, and move on. How dull seemed each unresponsive face! It was as if the soul was asleep, or a long way off, and needed awakening or recalling. One felt inclined to fairly *shake* them, to clap one's hands as one does on all occasions here when one wants an absentee—*anything* to arouse that dead thing into being. But only the touch of the Living One can do that. How one feels one's impotence in the presence of this colossal mummy of heathendom; a mouse might as well try to overturn the Great Pyramid as one of us seek to win a single soul.

"But God hath chosen"—let us have the thought in full sweep—"but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in His presence."

Ah! there we have it—the sentence of death passed upon *the flesh*, the baptism *unto death*, the dying which lives again in the much fruit, the "*not I, but Christ*" life. One begins to enter into it a little deeper as day by day He teaches one the absolute uselessness, *and worse*, of all fleshly energy. No word from the last Keswick came straighter home to some of us than, "God sends us to the heathen for two purposes, to do them good, and to find a grave for a good self." May He make our self-funeral the greatest fact in our existence.

Not an exciting day, you see. Nothing seemed done, nothing happened. Things are not always "happening," you know, out here, any more than at home; there is plenty of "humdrum" here. We had to leave them apparently just as we found them, asleep in the snare of the devil—

"Bound, who should conquer;
Slaves, who should be kings;
Hearing their one hope with an empty wonder,
Sadly contented with a show of things."

And so I have no harvest songs to sing this time. And the sower's songs are tears. For you must not paint our skies blue always. There are cloudy days too, and days when the heavens above us seem as brass—deaf, dumb, pitiless; and days when all seems lost in the horror of a great darkness, and we can only look blindly upward, and hold on, and lean hard, and know that through all *He loves*. "*I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not,*" comes to one *then* with a power unknown before.

But they are not all so, praise Him! Sometimes the sun shines forth and

chases the clouds away, and the blue comes out again (it was there all the time, we knew, could we only see *through* to it), and we catch an echo of the victory song, and sing it too ; and then, perhaps, longing that those who tarry at home should divide the spoil, we sing it once more to you. Can it be that the eager, instinctive, turning you-wards so, is just a faint far-shadowing of His calling together His friends and neighbours? Or can it be after all a better thing still, even His own saying it all over again, “ *Rejoice with Me*, for I have found My sheep that was lost?”

And so there is often more of light than of shadow in one's home-tellings : in the darkness of defeat and disappointment, one talks to Him alone, in the sunshine of gladness, one wants you too ; only don't forget that there is more, far more, of the one than the other. It is not all “ Hallelujah ” *yet*.

“ We see not yet all things beneath His feet,
Not yet, not yet ;
No cooling hand has quenched earth's fever heat,
As yet ”—

But praise the Lord—

“ Beyond the raging storm there shall be calm,
Ere long, ere long ;
And winter sigh shall change to summer song,
Ere long ! ”

CHAPTER XVI

"Never heard these Honourable Words"

*Never never heard it—
May never never hear—
Unless you go and tell them
Or give what you hold dear!*

Matsuye. April 3.—You will like to hear about our village. We felt distinctly, we were being sent to strengthen rather than to extend the work. At first the Christians were disappointed, for they are very earnest about winning more, but soon they saw the force of it, and arranged for times of waiting upon God. By Sunday afternoon we were so thoroughly warmed through, that all were willing to become fools for Christ's sake, and hold an Open-Air. You can hardly think what that meant to them. It was not till they remembered how often our Lord had done so, that they could quite rise to it. So we set off, singing,—

"In the name of the Lord there is victory,
Now for me there is victory,
Hallelujah!"

After a long walk by the riverside, and under wooded hills, we came to a little scattered village, which seemed half asleep, for not a sign of life was visible anywhere. Could they all be at work in the fields? The Christians looked at each other and at me. Had we come all this way for nothing? It was rather flat. You may imagine how I prayed, for they were weak as yet, specially weak in this new form of witnessing: and a disappointment at the beginning would be trying. We stood in a circle and sang, but nobody appeared. Then we scattered to give tracts to each house, empty or otherwise, and I went on praying. Now they had insisted on my bringing my Auto Harp, carrying it themselves, (which in itself is most un-Japanese) and as I walked along I began to play it softly, more to myself than to any one else, as nobody seemed anywhere. But an old woman came to life, then another; then some boys and an old woman, all attracted by the unwonted sound and sight. In a few minutes we had over a dozen, and in a few more, twice as many. There was no one near to interpret, so I held them as well as I could, and soon He sent a small child who could be posted off to gather the band. Within twenty minutes we were in the full swing of a splendid open-air.

The Gospel had never been preached here before, and the poor astonished people gazed and gazed, as if they did not know what to make of it all.

I think the Christians will go again, they seemed so much encouraged. Even the girls and women, who must have been very tired, said their hearts were so happy that their feet mattered not. They all turned up at the 6.30 prayer meeting next morning, after which we had two more Bible readings, and then we left.

April 4.—It is kite-time. Every boy, large and small, is flying one. From the windows we can count a score or more high up in the clear blue.

By some curious arrangement of string, they make a musical murmuring hum, which fills the air, like the sound of a threshing machine in harvest time at home.

Here is a leaf from a child's ABC book, which will show you how young Japan is instructing her youth, even to their indoctrination in matters knickerbockerish, for don't imagine her little boys are all so painfully English yet.

Ever since January this song of the kite has filled all space, and once I made it myself. For one day a boy of three feet high was flying a monster of six: observing my interest in his operations, he gave me the string to hold, and I made a discovery. The kite only sang when the string was pulled tight. Wherefrom came a question,—what if it be that the tight-pulled string is what makes the music within us? It is worth working out, if you will. Taking the kite to be oneself, the string the "dragging-down" influence, *the something* one is tempted to fret against and from which one would fain break loose. Perhaps even now the music is mute. Can it be that the cord has slipped slack?

Kites to begin with. Fights to continue with. You see I am giving you two classes, plebeian and patrician. One does not often see this sort of thing in the land of amiabilities; but the other day, I came across something not unlike it;



A Leaf from a Child's A B C Book.

and its memory abides. It was so un-British and so Japanese in its expression! Upon the other side of the question I need not enlarge (the dapper little policeman, with a sword at his side, and white cotton gloves on his hands, who promptly intervened, *did* most probably) lest you should be overcome by the Æsopian character of this present communication, so farewell for to-day.

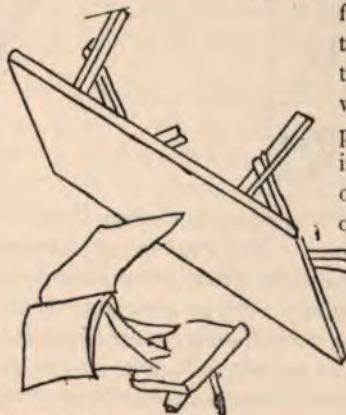
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April 5.—We have been to a cherry-blossom beholding. We took tracts and scattered them among the hundreds who flocked to pic-nic upon beauty. They were always accepted with thanks, and often read at once.

These people have the most delicate sense of enjoyment conceivable, and they express it as delicately. To them, a hillside white with cherry-bloom, a flower shower, with the sunlight



Plebeian.



The Boy has Overturned the Table—hence the Scene.

falling through, touched here and there with crimson, where peach or plum still lingers, is a deep and quiet delight. They come in little companies, and wander among the trees, staying where the view is fairest, to lovingly ad-

mire. Sometimes they bring slight lunches in little lacquer boxes, tied up in coloured handkerchiefs, so that they may spend all day in gentle pleasuring. There is nothing rude here, no boisterous play. They accord to their flowers far more reverence, than many a Christian bestows upon his Christ. As one watches their tender way of handling, and their almost respectfulness of attitude in dealing with them, one cannot help contrasting the rough touch of that Sacred Name. The familiar approach, which forgets that the lowly Saviour is also the King, Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the only Wise God, to whom be honour and glory for ever.

* * * * *

"*Never, never heard such honourable words!*" He was an old man, and he had been listening while we told him of the one true God. This was his answer. We were visiting among some houses, in a bamboo wood on the hill. No one had ever been there before, they told us, and the people asked us in, and listened curiously.



Patrician.

"*One God?* Why there are many—look!" and they pointed to the idols in the little open shrine. "*And He loves us; how amusing!*" Yes, that was the word they used. It sounded so utterly incomprehensible and unlikely. Then the oldest of them all spoke slowly. "*You are children, you have not heard much yet, but I am not a child, and even I never, never heard these honourable words!*" The old man's answer rang in my ear, as with one more earnest assurance that indeed these things were so, we had to come away. How often we hear it said.

Mary had a talk with an old woman one day, as they travelled together, by boat. After she had heard about Christ and Salvation, she asked her how long it was since the Saviour came to the world. Mary told her. "Ah," she said, "that was a long time ago, I never heard it in my youth, when I might have turned, now I am too old to take a new religion; my mother and my father never heard it!"

Oh that more would come! If we believe what we profess, is it not almost like mockery to come so late and so leisurely?

But as one passes on tales which are heart-aches, one cannot forget that those at home who will feel them most, can't come, because they may not. Here is a word of comfort for such. Have you been refused by the medical board, or otherwise kept "by the stuff"? Do you remember that twice over it is told us that they could not go over the Brook Besor? All the same, they went forth to meet Him, and shared the spoil. Is it not true that the point is not so much *where* we are, as *whether* we are where our Lord wants us to be? The work is one, what would become of us, out here, if for one day you ceased to "hold the ropes"? Only, wherever we are, let us pour out our "love like the rush of a river, wasting its waters for ever and ever," and when the King comes back, for ever and for ever we shall rejoice together.

April 10.—We have had an encouragement this afternoon. For the first time the small weekly meeting we hold in a court in the town, seemed to interest itself in our message, and the shyest of its members were more inclined to fraternise.

Sometimes the Japanese way of receiving our advances, reminds me of a scene on the Lakes one winter, not very long ago. Two girls were skating together. They had been talking about various little nothings, and at last one of them ventured a word upon a greater Subject. It was assented to, as were all such harmless roundabout remarks, with perfect equanimity; and so they went on most amiably, till a straight question, as to her own salvation, elicited the astonished rejoinder, "Why! I'm a *clergyman's* daughter!" and suddenly recollecting an engagement the young lady skated off.

But presently she returned. "I've told my Father," she said sweetly, indicating that gentleman, deep just then in the sublimities of Figure Eight-Backwards, "and he says you didn't mean anything, so I've come back!"

Very much so do our friends here at times. While we talk affectionate platitudes, they say, "So it is! so it is!" and like us very much. But face them square, and mark the result, for they are *Japanese*, and by no means common heathen! And then they ruminate awhile, or confer with one another; their natural charity of disposition suggests that perhaps after all the foreigner didn't mean anything, it may have only been her barbarous ignorance of social etiquette, and so on. So they return, which gives us another chance to mean *something*, and do it; and they listen again; perhaps perplexed, perhaps provoked, perhaps, praise God! to be persuaded.

Sometimes one wonders they will listen at all. Think what it must be to hear that all you have revered all your life is pure delusion; that your best has been lavished upon a mere Nonentity, or worse; that everything which to you and your forefathers was esteemed precious, must crumble into dust, if what you now hear for the first time from stranger-lips prove true. Surely a truth so unwelcome would never be received, were there not something Divine behind. But praise Him! we don't come with negatives only. It is rather, "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you."

Florence has good news to give. She and her interpreter were visiting in a family, where the son is a C.M.S. catechist. His grandmother accepted the Saviour, this afternoon; and you may imagine the joy that means.

Could you see the people, feel the deadness, the weight of the death of centuries, you would know that the winning of a single soul is a tremendous miracle. A proof stronger than tons of volumes of Christian evidences of the existence of the infinite living life-giving God. It is hard to understand how any can be half-hearted in belief. Either one must be intensely a believer, or—a blank nothing.

We met some pilgrims to-day. They go from shrine to shrine, they tell us, praying and offering trifles. This seems to be a favourite season with such. They combine pleasure with duty, as usual; and choose the fair spring-time for their weary perambulations.

Mary had a talk with one. He had been going about for three months, from shrine to shrine, hoping to find healing, for he was very poor and suffering. She talked to him of the great Physician, and then, as he was weak with long disease and little food, gave him some money to buy rice; whereupon he pulled a little idol out of his sleeve, and began to pray to it, and thank it, saying, "Oh Buddha! Buddha, hear!"

The poor little acolytes seem to have a harder time than falls to most in this land of lightsome life. For on the surface, Japan is a pleasant place, it is only when one goes deep, and strikes upon something hard, that the dull broken ring of pain tells one, all is not gladness there. The acolytes are often orphan boys, who are given to the priests in early childhood. They have to study hard; sometimes are allowed only a few hours' sleep. We know of one who always had a lighted incense stick, fastened to his hand when he lay down, so that at the expiration of the time allowed he should be wakened by the touch of fire. At last he escaped from this monkish bondage, and now is studying on his own account, among other things, Christianity.

Side by side with profound scholarship is a credulity equalling what one has read of in tales of the Middle Ages. Just lately it appears lights have been seen hovering over the place near the bridge, where so many were drowned; and the story has floated all the way down to Yonago, that these are spirit-lights; the

ghosts of the departed have become uneasy, and are haunting thus the scene of their woe.

We passed a stream one day. Close to it, fastened longwise, upon four bamboo stems, was what looked like a large blue cotton handkerchief. Near it was a little wooden ladle. As we paused a traveller passed, stopped, poured a cupful of water from the stream upon the cloth, waited while it soaked slowly through, and went on. It was a deed of charity. Until the cloth was worn quite through by water thus poured on, a mother-soul must stay imprisoned in the fiery under-world. In some far back existence she had sinned, and Buddhism knows no forgiveness. Poor mother! The sweet flowers blossomed fairly round, they tried to tell of another Love, but their language men knew not. A little bird in the bamboo chirped to its mate, the streamlet murmured on; and wondering many things, we came away.

Yesterday M. San, a young evangelist, and I, went to a hamlet some distance from Matsuye, and held an open-air for the pilgrims who crowded it, *en route* for a famous temple ten or twelve miles further on, whither they told us the gods had repaired for some purpose unknown to them. They could not wait long, and after listening to our message, and learning the chorus, which, to their great interest, I played upon my little harp, they moved off *en masse*, saying thousands of pilgrims had already assembled, and there would be no room for them if they delayed.

And as they hastened on, the thought came to me, why should we not go there too, and witness for our Master? It was such a splendid chance!

But my helpers saw otherwise. It was too far to walk, and kurumas could not be got. The road was rough, and we would be tired out: we could not return that night, and the hotel was sure to be full. Altogether it was impracticable. All of which only made me the more determined to go, if it meant sleeping on the road ten nights, instead of one; as for being tired, what did it matter? Oh don't blame too much. It was an opportunity which doesn't come every day, and only the Devil was buying it up.

M. San was despatched home to tell the tale, and we two set off. We had not got far when the Still Voice, one had not been quiet enough to hear before, began to speak. "I am not going before," It said.

This meant a full stop at once. . . . It was dreadful. First the fact, and then that one would have to tell it. But there was no help for it. Clearly enough, one had been carried on by the energy of the flesh, and not of the Spirit. Turn, we must. So we turned, but first we knelt down on the grass by the side of the path. The thing was confessed and forgiven. How good He is, how patient. "Forgiven . . . from Egypt, even until now!"

At our starting-point we found M. San delayed by a woman who wanted to hear more. Then a man appeared, heard we had given up going to the far-away temple, and suggested a nearer one, reachable by water. This time we asked the Master, before deciding—it seemed to me a special mark of His love to trust one

so soon again—and as all three of us felt it was of Him, we two once more set forth, and M. San, with her revised message, was posted homewards. Everything fitted, everything does, when He is going before.

The afternoon shadows were falling across the landscape; the trying glare, which had dazzled one all day long, was gone. On either side the quiet river, rose banks of high, straw-coloured grass, and then came valley, and wood, and hill. Except when a wild bird broke the stillness with its note, there was no sound save the ripple of the water. It was very still and stilling, and His Presence very near.

And then we reached the Temple, a Shinto one, with its shrine beyond shrine, set deep in the woods under the hill, and approached by a long straight avenue of cherry, in full blossom. Down by the water's edge, and wandering away anywhere it liked, was a little village, a cluster of hamlets rather, primitive to a degree, untouched as yet by Western life.

There the evening ablutions were distinctly in progress. The family tub was in some places set in the open front, with its fire-pipe turned towards the road, for the convenient injection of fuel. The blaze below, and the steam above, with a par-boiled head in the midst thereof, reminded one rather painfully of the early Christian Martyrs, but nobody seemed to mind. In one of these curiously frank abodes, a woman oculist was operating upon an unfortunate sufferer, with a terrible pair of nippers in hand, and a smile of conscious skill on face. Around was a crowd of spectators. Perhaps a little initiation into matters occidental would have done no harm here, but the appearance of a thing in foreign clothes (I had set fire to my Japanese dress, and had to descend to my own,) so disconcerted the victim, operator, and beholders, that I had to beat a hasty retreat, and leave them to conclude in peace.

Then we went to the Temple. Since that day at Kyoto, I have kept clear of such places, unless when consciously sent. To-day was such a time, and we knew He was "going before" and followed fearlessly.

There were a few pilgrims hovering about. They accepted our books, and listened while we spoke a word or two, but I felt there was something more for us to do, and asked might we see the Priest? Much astonished they pointed out his house, we went, were admitted, and saw a young man, his son as we afterwards heard (for Shinto priests may marry), who not only listened most courteously to what we said, but gave us his card, told us his father was out, and asked us to send him our holy Book, promising he would read it with interest. He had heard of it, he said, but not seen it.

We came away praising God for such an opening, truly this had been of Him, for such a reception is not usual in the dwelling of a Priest.

As we passed through the large courtyard in front of the temple on our way back again, we saw what has not left me since.

A thick band of prayer flags, white paper stuck upon slips of wood, ran all round the shrine. "What do they mean?" I asked. Bereft of the honourifics and

humblifics thus was the answer given by our boatman, who, heathen though he was, had come up to help us in any way he could,—

*"If the gods will hear me, and answer my prayer,
I will give a thousand more flags to their honour."*

There were bamboofuls of coloured ones, hanging over the porch, bright touches of colour, blue and pink and yellow, against the weatherworn grey of the wood—they meant just the same.

Then I noticed bunches of sea-weed, brown and green and crimson. They were to remind the gods that the men of the sea had been there, craving their help and protection. Written about everywhere was the one constant unavailing "Oh most merciful! Oh most merciful!"

And lastly I saw what touched me most, a long shining lock of woman's hair: over it was written this brief prayer and promise,—

"Oh most merciful, hear me, and I will give you all my hair!"

Poor sad woman-heart, bringing its pitiful woes to a pitiless non-existence! Can we think of it quite unmoved?

A woman here glories in her hair: and yet at the great Temple of Higashi Hongwanji in Kyoto, I saw huge coils of rope used in lifting the heavy pine beams to the roof, and these ropes were made of woman's hair offered in devotion to the gods.

"A long time ago!" does some one say? Japan is Christianized now!" This Buddhist temple, said to be the largest in the land, was founded in 1602, burnt down thirty years ago, rebuilt within the last few years, and is barely completed yet. Satan has not quite quitted the field.

And yesterday as I stood in that Temple porch, looking at that offering which had cost some one so much, words you have thought of too, I doubt not, rose in my heart,—"Neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing!"

*"All borne for me, and shall my coward heart refuse its best to Thee?
Lord Jesus, take me to Thy fellowship whate'er the cost may be.
A fellowship of suffering but no curse, that cup was drained by Thee.
A fellowship of resurrection joys, and life of liberty!"*

Coming back we had a talk with our boatman. He believed in idols, believed they heard, and perhaps would answer, he had worshipped them all his life, he prayed to them every day. "Have they ever answered you?" I asked him. "Mada," he said, "Not yet."

It was a perfect moonlight evening. But moonlight, though lovely to look at, is cold to sit in, and we were not sorry when at last we were put ashore, and set off for our walk to Matsuye, over roads which seemed rough to our tired feet, through lanes, among woods, and by paddy-fields lighted by pale flitting fireflies and thick with talkative frogs.

CHAPTER XVII

Scraps—Very Much So

April 18. Among the mountains en route for Kôbé.—Here is a tale for the children.

One day, in the great flood, a poor woman lost her husband. It was such a sorrow to her that she did not want to live any longer, and she threw herself into a deep well, and was drowned.

Sometimes in these countries, where the people do not know about God and His "happy land far, far away," they think that by dying with some one they love, they may be able to help him in his long strange journey through the spirit-world.

I do not know if it was so with this poor widow, but we do know that her heart must have been very dark and very sorrowful, and so she did this terrible thing. She left one lonely little girl behind her. The people in her village sympathised so with her, and they collected nearly a pound among themselves, and gave her some clothes, and brought her to Mrs. Chappell of the C.M.S., who has a home for such friendless little children. I need not tell you she was welcomed there.

And now the little flood-child is learning about the Lord Jesus who loved her and gave Himself for her. Are you not very glad, and don't you want to ask Him to make her His own little girl, so that when she grows up, and even before that, she may tell her people about Him, and win them to love Him too?

I don't know her name, but if you tell Him you mean the little flood-child, He will understand.

I am writing while crossing country with our dear Mary, who sails for England soon.

What she is to us is better told than I can tell in the Japanese poem sung by one at her farewell meeting: a very poor rendering—its only merit being its as near as possible literalness—is all I can give you:—

Snow on the mountains melting, increaseth the streams in the valley,
Nightingales cease from their singing, far in the heart of the forest,
Flying across to the village, wooed by the scent of the flowerets.
And in the beautiful springtide cometh a sorrowful parting
From you, with whom in the past our soul hath held closest communion;
Ah! like a bird you are flying, swiftly away in the springtime,
Mournfully leaving behind you colour, and fragrance of blossom,
Leaving behind you hearts which are bitterly grieved at your going.

And like the plum blossom are you, patiently bearing the suffering,
 Fearing neither the blast, nor the frost, nor the snow of the winter,
 Softly it sheddeth its petals, leaving the opening cherry
 Sweetly to taste of the joy of the many trees budding thereafter.
 Pained are our hearts at the parting, but if the flower never falleth,
 Never may it develop the glory of perfect fruition.
 So let us bear the pain of the cruel but brief separation,
 All for the sake of the fruit it will certainly bear hereafter.
 Like a brave soldier are you: God sent you to fight in our battles,
 Saving the perishing souls bound fast in the snare of the devil.
 Closely united in spirit, fighting still under our Captain,
 One shall our song be of triumph, when the long fight is all ended,
 Peacefully rest you your heart so, never a fear for the issue.
 Though you are out of our sight, and far far away o'er the waters,
 Lost to our vision as smoke-cloud loseth itself in the distance,
 Still standing there by the sea, we lovingly follow in spirit,
 Longing to hear of you safely reaching the shore of your homeland.

* * * * *

Back again at Matsuye. After seeing the doctor, as every one advised, I returned with Hilda and Nurse Evans, who were waiting in Kobé for their passports. And not being up to much study, or other sensible pursuit, during the journey over the hills, I scribbled bits of its story there and back for you. Please skip, if you feel it too painfully elastic.

Kuruma riding is jolty indeed, so much so, you cannot attempt to read.
 And as my very rebellious brain refuses a word of sense to retain,
 I think I may as well spend the time in pickling our journey in spirits of rhyme,
 Affording it thus the recreation of a total change of occupation.

Our kuruma men are the greatest fun,
 They chatter and laugh and sing as they run,
 Though "sing." I must hasten to explain,
 Is a perfectly inappropriate name
 For a noise which truth compels one to call
 A rare specimen of refined caterwaul.
 The characteristic most strikingly
 Displayed is their equanimity.
 The way may be short, the way may be long,
 And things may go right, or things may go wrong,
 The sun may blaze, or the rain may pour,
 They may be fresh, or perhaps foot-sore:
 However it be, they take life as they find it,
 If nice, all the better, if not they don't mind it.
 When an English cabby would fret and fume
 They laugh, and serenely howl a tune.



Our
Journey
There.

From Sunrise Land

When from his lips would pour phrases hot,
They blandly remark—"Doing side is not."
And ever ready to help each other,
A tired one will push for a tired brother.
But good as they are, they are not perfection,
They'll cheat you without the least hesitation,
Smiling as sweetly as if they thought
They were doing exactly as they ought.
If you find them out, they will smile the more,
And respect you twice as much as before.
At intervals they are devoted to smoke,
And into their toy pipes tobacco they poke.
A whiff or two, a bowlful of rice,
Some pale yellow tea, some condiments nice,—
Then up they jump, tuck their pipes into cases
Fastened on to their belts with old cords or laces,
And balanced, each one, with a queer little bangle
Like these small sketches, which herewith dangle.
And then without the least sign of flurry
We calmly tear off—at a hurry-scurry.
Our extra men, too, are a comical crew,
They trot on in front fastened on to you
Like young tandem ponies carefully thatched
In straw overalls, wideawakes to match
When it is wet—but when it is fine
Displaying Adamic perfection of line.
And when the road is exceedingly hilly
They tack themselves on to you, willy-nilly.

* * * * *

One night a strange thing befell us. We were tired, it was very late.
We got to a lonely hamlet and knocked at the little inn's gate.
But they quite refused to take us. We pleaded we'd lie on the floor
Of the kitchen, if they would let us, we could not go on any more.
At last they consented to have us, and to our relief and surprise
They gave us a nice little bedroom, and of quilts most lavish supplies.
The house seemed still, and empty, why had they refused us before?
But they cared not to answer questions, and we heard them bar the door.
All around us rose the wild forest, the river was flowing near.
Its rush and its ripple mingled with the moan of the night-wind drear.
We could hear the people whisper; 'twas a weird uncanny place,
But thankful for any provision we trusted ourselves to His Grace.
With dawn we rose and departed, but in going downstairs to prepare,
We found out the sorrowful reason, *a dead man was lying there.*
And sorely it grieved us to leave them, unwarned, and uncomforted,
As sheep wandering over dark mountains, for whom Jesus' blood was shed.

It was ever thus, all along the way
 We seemed to see them shepherdless stray,
 And we had to leave them so.
 When shall it be that to even a few
 Of these towns and hamlets we hasten through
 Some one will come who can stay to tell
 Of God and Salvation, of Heaven and hell,
 Of Love eternal, Divine, and free,
 Of Love so precious to you and me,
 That without it we could not bear to live?
 Does not this thought make us long to give
 To the left-out ones, who need it so,
 And who never heard, and who never may know?
 Will you not ponder what these words mean?
 Meaningful are they, more than they seem.
 Then come, let come, or help come; for indeed,
 Though great is the cost, greater still the need.
 Dear one, open your heart to the call.
 Do you not love Him best of all?

* * * * *

One day it was hot,
 (Very often it's not),
 And we both bought a kuruma hat,
 A big basket thing
 As round as a ring.
 Thus bedecked we'd have startled a cat.
 The natives amused,
 For they are not yet used
 To foreigners thus decorated,
 Brought strings, turkey-red,
 And we tied to our head
 What felt like a full moon inflated.
 That day on the road,
 My good trotter slowed
 His pace for a moment or two,
 And picked up a hat
 Which was crushed rather flat,
 And covered with dark navy blue.
 As he had not one,
 There was nought to be done
 But appropriate it, with ease;
 Some miles we had gone
 When a cry of "Hold on!"
 Pursued us in best Japanese:
 And then it turned out
 That the fuss was about
 The hat, for its owner came flying,

To petition it back,
 With a bow—not a smack;
 'Twas returned with a grace edifying.
 Next day we had rain—
 Not that I complain,
 'Tis merely a fact in my story,
 Some hours of downpour,
 And I noticed, no more
 My man went hatless in his glory,
 For a new one had he
 As like mine as could be,
 And I wondered wherever he stowed it:
 Then under his head
 Peeped out turkey-red,
 And, "heedless of grammar," I knowed it.
 I stopped there and then
 And told him, that when
 I purchased that classic invention,
 'Twas not meant for *him*:
 His bright smile grew dim,
 And his bow thawed my icy intention.
 I gave him my hat. In addition to that
 I gave him a slight admonition,
 He went on his way
 For the rest of the day
 Quite damp—let us hope with contrition.

* * *

Down the hill,
 Down the hill,
 Down with a run!
 Spin round the corners;
 Oh, isn't it fun!
 Straight up one side, the great mountain rises
 Straight down the other, abyss of surprises:

Trees hang within it, strange blossoms blow,
 Water is falling far far below;
 On we go, down we go,
 Swinging along,
 Singing for joy of heart
 Snatches of song.

* * * * *

In the twilight, by the roadside, bare feet dangling in the water
 Which flowed beside it, sat a child—Would you have known your daughter?
 But be sparing in your judgment, we had tramped till blistered sadly
 Were my walking apparatus, and my shoes had hurt me badly.
 We were waiting for a doctor's wheel. Some evil had befell it,
 Had it chanced upon the downward spin we had not lived to tell it
 A little crowd had gathered soon. "Are you a man or merely
 A specimen of womankind? And to your country really
 Is it very very far away? And your relations do they
 Eat rice and things with chopsticks as we do? They don't? we knew they
 Must be most peculiar creatures!" This with greatest agitation—
 (But I beg to state, I'm giving you a somewhat free translation)
 Then one, a youth, demanded with pertinacity perplexing,
 "Are you an honourable *Sah*?" Are you a *Sah*? 'Twas vexing,
 But *Sah* was quite beyond me. Could it be a sweet contraction
 For "woolly headed savage"? This I asked, but not a fraction
 Of illumination came there through my brilliant adaptation
 Of their pretty little pet-name for our unanointed nation.
 Then began he to address me, using *Sah*. It was confusing
 Not to know if one were it or not: a state of things amusing,
 Till at last it dawned upon me. *Sah* was English! and I ween
 Never did an Irish-woman feel more comically green.
 "Sah" meant *Sir*. Somewhere he'd heard it; thought to practise it on me.
 This in mid-Japan came really rather unexpectedly.
 And I thought—I've lost my gender; it is time I went and sought her,
 But instead sat laughing softly, bare feet dangling in the water.

* * * * *

If I could sketch you the pictures, sketch them, though only in outline,
 Pictures our God painted for us, oh how your hearts would exalt Him!
 There were magnificent forests climbing in broad belts of greenwood
 Up to the top of the mountains, rivulets laughing and splashing
 And dashing over the boulders, murmuring under the fern and
 Hiding away in the thicket, and the most beautiful blossom—
 Fair white in pure gleaming masses shining all over the woodland:
 Seemed it as though quite forgetful Winter must not linger always.
 Blue skies had dropped us a snowfall leaving the blue all the bluer.
 Crimson and pink, too, in touches, as if a stray sunset cloudlet,
 Losing its way by chance, had entangled itself 'mid the tree tops.
 Showers of bright yellow, also, rich in a sunny profusion,
 As if the fairies of springtide sprinkled the landscape with gold-dust.

And we sang Hallelujah ! *His* hand had fashioned the garden.
 Full is the earth of His riches ; everything sayeth Glory !
 One night we walked up the hillside : winding the way was, and tiring ;
 But when we got to the summit all thought of weariness left us,
 Wholly forgotten and lost in the marvel that burst upon us.
 For as we turned the last corner, suddenly uprose a mountain
 Outlined in red fire before us, fire-jewelled, fire-enwreathed, fire-crowned.
 How so, or wherefore we knew not ; sometimes, they say, do the woodmen
 Set the long stretches of brushwood blazing like this through the darkness.
 And all around us was beauty, pearly grey mist and soft moonshine.
 Far, far below lay the valley, dark in the depth of the shadow :
 Far, far above rose the mountains, ridge and peak showing distinctly,
 Seemed they as mutely beholding this their illumined brother.
 High above all it was lifted, lifted in loveliest lustre ;
 All the more wondrous because so lonely and still in its splendour.
 And as we looked at it, and then away down to the valley
 Where lived the men and the women and innocent little children,
 Bound and beguiled by the devil knowing not of their redemption,
 Something reminded us then of matters sublime and eternal.
 God means our lives to be dual : one lived deep down in the valley,
 Low with the lost souls He loveth ; earnestly seeking to win them,
 Caring for nothing, so only some may be brought home rejoicing.
 One yet the same ever dwelling high in the radiant uplands,
 Hidden with Christ in God, in the depth of the height of His glory.

* * * * *

There are some brave souls, and God knows them well,
 Though magazines may not their praises swell,
 Whose life breathes a fragrance, just felt, not seen,
 Like the scent of the violet lost in green.
 Trusted with pain in a shaded room,
 Trusted with office, or shop, or loom,
 Trusted with pen, or needle, or broom,
 Such, day by day, toil, suffer, and pray,
 Contented to serve their God any way.
 But some there are, superfinely moulded,
 Who sit with hands submissively folded ;
 Who vegetate, rather than live, and suggest
 Good cabbages, doing no harm at best.
 Of the poor dark world's dark need they know ;
 They take a great interest in missions, and oh
 At times they are almost ready to go—
 But then, by some flaw in their calculation,
 They "mistake laziness for Resignation."
 For they are so speedily persuaded,
 That all the reasons by which they are aided
 To gravitate back to the easy chair
 Are fully as solid as they are fair.

From Sunrise Land

They "can't be spared," they have surely heard,
 And they don't recollect the rather absurd
 Little fact that most certainly never I want
 Would be upset did the question involve a pang,
 For "if course that is quite a different thing."
 They have "so few gifts," and they "cannot speak";
 'Tis their "cross in life" to be timid and weak
 —And that we call by such sacred name
 Because, invented to save us from pain,
 Far far removed from The Cross and Shame.
 Perhaps the Society's love was locked;
 When with somewhat uncertain attitude they launched,
 And every one said—"Ah now it is plain
 You cannot be meant to try again,
 How terrible should you the business strike
 Of life's most serious Fancy-work
 For "our Father's business is temples work."
 They ought not suppose so.—The argumentation
 Transforms action into Resignation.

If such a tedious one read this rhyme
 Oh will not she waken while there is time?
 Don't think that "So will" must infallibly be
 A life-motto written expressly for thee.
 It may be the word is "Go Forward"—if not,
 If before the Master you stand in your lot,
 He will flame your soul with a burning hot
 And passionate fire, and you shall know
 The joy of setting some other aglow.
 And now, won't you face it, and hold a cremation
 Of the sadness which you called "Resignation"?

Our
 Journey
 Back

Our nap was to lodge in a hotel
 Of a very "promiscuous" description:
 We were firmly assured there were rats about,
 To mention no worse infection.
 And we peppered our sheets with "Kerling," a sight
 Affording the senses sincerest delight,
 Ensuring thereby a magnificent night.
 We got into bed,
 Well aware that between
 Ourselves and our neighbours,
 Was simply a screen,
 A thin thing of paper,
 Through which glances keen
 Might gently be shewn,
 To see what could be seen.
 We lay down, as I said, and attempted to sleep,
 But our friends quite a jollification did keep.

An asthmatical gentleman's breathings were deep,
And a baby, poor cherub, developed a weep.
So, though our tired eyes shut as tight as could be,
Our ears remained open irrationally.
Thus tossing and tumbling, most certain were we,
With walls made of paper we did disagree.
Then as we lay there, with distinctness we heard
Bewildering chorus of cough, cry, and word,
The frogs too were croaking, a rather absurd
Combination of voices, pathetic and gay,
Excited, monotonous, effectually
Successful in keeping us wakeful till day.

For ages we listened unwillingly, then
Perceived that our excellent kuruma-men
Had begun to discuss
Our doings and us.
It appeared, on the morrow,
Fresh helpers they'd borrow,
And two sen more a ree
Than was lawful, were we
To be asked then to pay;
So we heard them all say:
And they kindly agreed,
With a candour indeed
Most sweetly confiding,
That we were abiding
In innocence,
And would easily be
Taken in by the deep
Little scheme; then asleep
Were they all in a trice.

We kept still as mice,
Saying unto ourselves,
"Oh, isn't it nice!"
Next day, our best-beloved kuruma-man
Stated, with gravest composure, the plan;
He hoped we believed,
He felt greatly grieved;
But the fact was that we
Must give twelve sen a ree,
And not ten any more
As we'd given before.
(*That* even being double,
Because of the trouble
The great flood had wrought,
Than they usually sought.)
It pained him to know
They could *not* deign to go
Under twelve—but alas!
For the fact was just so.

So spake our best-beloved kuruma-man.—
"Tell him," said Hilda, "as fast as you can
Just how we heard them lay their little plan!
Tell him we'll walk. Not a single sen more
Mean we to give than we've given before.
Tell him we won't: and that's all about it.
They'll come like one o'clock,—never you doubt it!"
Greatly perplexed was our kuruma-man,
For this he wasn't prepared, and he ran
Round to the others, who with dubious faces,
But, to their credit, the best of good graces,
Rigged themselves up in their straw waterproofs,
Smothered their groans in their blue-covered roofs.
And then for once and for ever we all
Thankfully blessed our despised paper wall.



An old Curio-man painted this for me to send to you. Flying Storks, and rising, risen, or setting Suns, are among the delights of Sunrise Land—in Art that is, not Nature; for that good Dame, though as lavish as usual with her Suns, manifests a reserve concerning her Storks, which is disappointing to say the least of it!

We started, and it was exceedingly wet,
A fact, please remember, you mustn't forget;
As had it not been, we'd have walked with a
will,

Pleasanter far than the long sitting still:
But with the prospect of clothes getting dry
In the dim distance of sweet by-and-by,
'Twould not be prudent. And so we departed
Under our black hoods, and skies brokenhearted.

The first mile or so was decidedly slow.
The next was extremely exciting;

The flood had been there,
And the bridges, they were
The very reverse of inviting.

There tumbled a torrent,
Without leave or warrant,
Just where it was not at all wanted;

We were going downhill,
And a probable spill
Our kuruma-men never daunted.

So banging and bumping,
And slipping and thumping,
Our joints dislocated,

Our nerves agitated,
We thought of our mothers,
And of our dear others,

Who wouldn't have greatly enjoyed this;
But as for poor us,

No good in a fuss,
Though 'twas not what one calls unalloyed bliss.

Then up, up again
In the fast-falling rain—

Our kurumas let at least *some* through;
'Tis cheerful indeed,

And there's plenty of need
To cultivate patience and fun too.

"Tell me is there a Life Insurance?"

Tragic are the tones I hear.

"Tell me is there such an office?"

Can we find one living near?"

Mournfully her hopes I shatter:

"No, dear Nurse, alas, no, no!"

Are they tears, or merely raindrops

Glistening sadly on her brow?

("How could tears get *there*?" you ask me;

Scoffer, know that in Japan

Everything goes topsy-turvy,

Contradict me if you can.)



Scraps—Very Much So

139

Then this dictum catch I faintly
Chasing after me downhill,
What exactly, lost in rattle,
Something touching—"make your will"!

"Come
with me .
Look from
the Top!"
—S. S. iv. 8.

Sometimes like the wild birds singing
Or like sunbeam-flight,
Thoughts rise swiftly upward springing,
Such a one to-night
Thrills me with triumphant gladness,
Banishing the shades of sadness,
Which are wont to intertwine
Round this coward heart of mine.

Something of its restful meaning
I may give to you,
And it is no empty seeming,
But His love-note true—
We are threading passes winding,
And the evening mists are blinding
All the prospect, drearily,—
Whispers low a Voice to me.

"Come with Me, My child," it sayeth,
From the life below,
From the littleness that stayeth
Thy free spirits' flow,
"From the top look!" Sweet it ringeth
Through and through me. My heart flingeth
Far away each chilly fear,
It is sunshine: He is near.

From the top look! So thy vision
Crystal clear shall be.
In that moment of transition
Surely thou shalt see
Tangles straightening, wrong re-righting,
Victory encrowning fighting.
Peaceful mountain summits are,
Bright the view of near and far.

From below, the world's brief morning
Seems to close in night:
From above, one sees the dawning
Of Eternal Light.
Can it be that every shadow
Comes because our view is narrow?
Clouds of densest darkness frown
All around us when we're *down*.

From the top look! Hallelujah!
Christ is Conqueror!
Even now the Song of Triumph
Swells above the din of war.
Closes so my mountain story;
To His Name be ever glory.
Hallelujah unto Thee,
King of kings, eternally!

CHAPTER XVIII

"It will be a Seed"

*"Christ the Son of God hath sent me through the midnight lands,
Mine the mighty ordination of the pierced Hands."*

MRS. BEVAN.

Matsuye. May 3.—Dear Nurse Evans has been seriously ill. We think she got knocked up in the little hotel of "very promiscuous description" of which I told you. There were symptoms of typhoid, and she suffered much; praise Him, the danger is over, and we trust she will soon be well again. This coming so soon after our journey together over the mountains, has made us realize how narrow the boundary between the Seen and the Unseen. A step, and we have crossed it, and entered "straight another golden chamber of the King's larger than this we leave, and lovelier."

Ever since dear Nurse came she has gone for weekly missionings to Sakai, the little port down the lake, and much blessing has been given. We thank Him for giving her back to the work which so needs her!

May 5.—With a "Please pray" attached to each, may I give you three pictures?

We are in our village once again. The Christians there are beginning to feel the stirrings of heart we long so much to see. They are ready to carry the torch to some of the many places around, which lie in the darkness still.

In the home-mind sometimes, there is a rose-coloured fallacy afloat, that the moment a heathen is converted his first impulse is to tell everybody, and win everybody straight off. Is it so with home conversions? Is it so with one in a hundred? Ten thousand miles geographical make less difference in things biographical than some of us are apt to imagine, till we come and see. Human nature is much the same, and the devil is just the same, everywhere; and so it comes to pass, we rejoice exceedingly when our Christians are on fire enough to be aggressive, and, praise God, some are splendidly so.

At this particular moment we are bound for the village of which I told you where we held a little Open-air. As we walk along by the river side under wooded flower-decked hills, we sing choruses, with a happy abandonment as to time and tune, but making melody unto the Lord, nevertheless.

Oh! it is good to hear these who six months ago were in darkness themselves singing gladly :—

*"All my life I give Thee:
Day by day,
Come what may,
All my life I give Thee,
Dying souls to save!"*

We have brought our "Bento" with us, and after separating to give invitations all round, we meet in the large roomy house of the chief man in the village to partake thereof.

First, we sit down on the floor in a circle. Then a large case, placed in the middle, is opened. In it are layers of trays fitting into each other, and each containing its own variety of fare. Upon dainty plates of curled palm leaf, the helpings are arranged, chopsticks and all complete. I hear a kindly whisper of "Give her the very best," and receive my share accordingly. Then we sing straight through all the choruses we have learned. H. San asks a blessing, first on the Bento, and secondly on the meeting. Finally, we begin.

Valiantly I attack my huge rice-ball, trying to make a hole of satisfactory dimensions in its cold and dense solidity; and the condiments—what are they made of, or rather, what are they *not* made of? for they seem to be composed of a little bit of everything. One ought to be "saved above" minding this sort of thing, but it is a relief to have one's own food in the background.

At about eight o'clock the people begin to gather. Over and over again we sing the simplest of our Gospel choruses, till shyly they try to join in, and we know it is taking root.

And then one of the older Christians speaks, and for the first time for most of them, they hear of the God who made them and who loves them, and who sent His Son to die for them.

Again we sing, and another speaks, and they sit and gaze. How much of it do they understand? How much can they possibly take in thus hearing it? Most are peasants, but even peasants in Japan seem a thinking race, and when the question is asked, "Are you ready for the next life?" the unusual answer is given, "We are not ready for this life, how then can we be ready for the next?" Still, thoughtful or otherwise, it must indeed be bewilderingly strange. How little once hearing may mean I am beginning to find out, though it *may* mean more than we in our weak faith dare to believe—more, stupendously more,—because after all we are dealing with supernatural things, and have a supernatural Promise and Power and Person behind us.

Question and answer follow now—a sort of weeding time it is—for such conclusions, as that our God must be a relation of the Mikado's, (by which they mean

the opposite of the terrible irreverence it sounds) are shaping themselves in these darkened minds, and must be met and dispelled one by one. And then my turn comes. Very quietly they listen, and as we close with prayer not a sound is heard but the hushed "Amen" of the Christians.

By this time it is long past midnight, but nobody seems inclined to go. The children have fallen asleep on the mats or in their mothers' arms, or upon their backs, and the elder ones press closer together, many crowding round the open paper walls, and wide doorway. We cannot send them away, and the meeting begins again.

It is so good to find oneself able to understand even a very little. It is as if the thick curtain which separates us from the people were being pin-pricked here and there, and one were just beginning to see through. But only a very little yet.

At last somebody remembers to-morrow will come, or has come rather, for it is after one o'clock, and the day's work begins soon after sunrise. We say good-night, and pass out into the lantern-lit darkness.

Our second picture is different.

Three thoughtful, well-educated lads have come to talk about "Christianity." They can speak a little English, and between it and my broken Japanese we can get on without an interpreter. At once they plunge into the subject. "Bible having read, we think good Book is, but minds cannot accept Jesus being God," and questions follow touching His divinity, the eternal existence of God, the Trinity, the inspiration of the Bible, and the future life. Upon this last point they remarked that there were very likely some people in the middle of Africa, or China, or India, and other "heathen countries," who had not heard of the Gospel. What punishment could they have? It was not their fault! It is an often-asked question. Mercifully we have the answer—Christ's own unanswerable answer, "He that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes"; and they are satisfied. But their perfectly calm way of skipping their own Japan in the list of "heathen countries" astonishes me. From the verandah we can see hundreds of houses; in each one idols are worshipped morning and evening. Eighty thousand dollars were willingly offered in the Island of Kiushiu alone to send its representatives to Chicago last year, that Buddhism might be worthily represented. And yet we are not "heathen!"

Which reminds me that a friend kindly suggested the inadvisability of using that term, as it implied something akin to barbarism to the sensitive Japanese mind. Being so new to everything one was puzzled. People at home realize little enough the woefulness of these nations left in the dark, without being further soothed to sleep by the use of mild phraseology, and to most, "unchristian" would mean little more than what they have in their own near neighbourhood. And yet one would not willingly wound any. So I consulted Mr. Buxton's trusted referee upon matters

Japanese, sure that if he knew of any such feeling he would tell me at once ; but he seemed to think it best to use the word that most forcibly emphasised the fact, that this people were without Christ, having no hope, and without God in the world. Sometimes it seems as though we whitewash black to such an extent that we almost begin to believe it is only a shade of light grey. But I may be mistaken : older and wiser differ. Whatever we call them, the fact remains that here they are all round us, people for whom Christ died, yet knowing just nothing about Him. To-day, to-morrow, and on all the to-morrows until this reaches you, they will *die* like this—die with a cry on their lips to the poor dead Buddha who cannot save. Do you care ? How much do you care ? "God so loved that He *gave* !"

And now to return. After an hour or so spent in proof-giving as to the verities of our faith, the conversation turns upon things terrestrial. "We hear there are churches in England called *sects*," and they want to know all about them.

I tell them the old story of the sand-pools and the ocean. They see the point at once, and exclaim, "Ah, they are all the same water, only a little sand between !" And they listen with keenest attention to the grand, true sequel, how, when the mighty tide comes rushing in, it sweeps into itself all the little scattered sand-pools, their very existence lost in its magnificent fulness. "All one *in* Christ Jesus."

"Are the *sects* dear to each other ?" The more we love the Lord Jesus the more we love all who love Him, irrespective quite of their particular "sect." "Do they ever join in one ?" Oh yes ! And I tell them of the incoming of the love-tide in our own land, even now : they look at each other, and say, *sotto voce*, "That is good."

A few of the English Testaments, so kindly given to me just before I sailed, are in hand still. As I am writing their names in each, one of them says simply, "*It will be a seed.*"

Will you not stop even now as you read this, and pray an earnest "Amen" ?

Picture number three is different again.

The great spring Matsuri is going on, and the air is full of the rich sound of the gong, the tiring drum-beat, and the hum of multitudinous voices.

It is night, and we are going to the Shinto temple on the hill with Gospels, tracts, and leaflets. It is a good chance to reach the many country folk, who crowd in from the outlying villages, and we must not let it slip.

At the foot of the stone staircase leading to the summit, I leave my helpers, whose presence in the strange scene at the top might be open to more misconstruction than mine ; and, hardly noticed, pass up with the throng.

The dark pinewood is hung with chains and rings and stars of radiance. On either side are stalls and booths shining with pendent light-globes. The whole place is aglow with luminous colour, and thousands dressed in their pretty best are flocking to see the sight.

About half-way up I find myself in the precincts of the priests' robing-room. There they are in a gorgeous *déshabille* of purple and crimson and blue : scarves of gold and silver brocade trail about on the floor. The finery is quite awe-inspiring, or will be when it is on, (I thought of Carlyle's "Sartor," and wondered what he would have said !). Three youthful acolytes, evidently overcome by its resistless influence, are down on their knees in a series of prolonged bows. I offer my books. Through sheer astonishment at such audacity, I verily believe, they are accepted, and before they have had time to recover from the shock, I am gone.

Then up, and on, to the top. And at the top, what a flash and clash of light, and colour, and sound. A sacred dance is in progress. A tiny child-figure, dressed in the most marvellous fashion, postures slowly up and down to the measured beat of a drum within the curtained temple. "Suffer the little children," He said, but she does not know it yet. A few minutes and the dance is over. I and my books are discovered. The people press and push ; the young priest in charge of the drum leans over and asks for one ; little painted faces smile down pleadingly. I fill the outstretched hands, and they hide them in their sleeves. Before the old gentleman robed in flaming yellow, and reposing in state at the far end of the shrine, has discovered the position of affairs, and arisen with dignity, I am off again.

But it is not wise to linger longer. And a few minutes see me rejoining the others below, rejoicing that we were able even a very, very little, to "buy up the opportunity out of the hand of the evil one."

All the way home we were stoned more or less, and "Jesus, Sign of the Red Cross !" was shouted after us—honours of which we were unworthy.

And now you will pray for us, will you not ? Pray that He may so clearly go before that we may follow after, fearing no evil, knowing His voice, obeying it only.

Pray that spirit, soul, and *body* may be strong to do His will. And pray for the bread thus cast upon the waters—cast in such weakness, that one wonders sometimes how it can ever do any good at all—ever bear one little bit of fruit to His glory.

We can only leave it all to His patience and forgiveness, and trust Him to perfect that which concerneth both it and us.

It is May now. This letter, begun last month, has been delayed. I had just written the last few lines, when the Christians of our village (for we are here again) came to go with us to another of the many unreached hamlets surrounding us.

And as we walked along the narrow path, among the low-lying paddy-fields, for the first time I saw bread being literally cast upon the waters. It came with such a message of strength and comfort, that I could not help stopping and passing it on to the others, to whom, in this fresh and beautiful connection, it was as new as to me.

There was nothing of importance in the sower. He walked up and down the flooded field, throwing his seed upon the water, and *it* was muddy and uninteresting enough. The *seed* was the worthful thing.

And we took courage then. In us is nothing: that is evident; but in the life-seed is everything, "with the power of God behind it;" and however improbable and impossible it looks, "he that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, *shall doubtless* return again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou *shalt* find it after many days."

Yonago. May 11.—M. San and I have come here, according to Mr. Buxton's arrangement, to be with Lizzie, who would otherwise be alone. Dear Mary is much missed, the Christians loved her so.

We have been having a happy time making friends with new sisters and brothers in Christ. Among them, are some of the cultured upper class ladies, and some bright earnest lads, as out and out for their new Master, as they used to be for their old. Full salvation is a glorious truth. Not only forgiveness but cleansing, "Cleansed, and the Cleanser abiding." And even more, there is for us, praise Him; "Thine the mighty ordination of the pierced hands."

Yesterday we went to the lake island, to which Florence and I. San go fortnightly. We took a number of Gospels, and giving one to each group upon the little steamer, set the best reader thereof to read aloud to the others. This satisfied all concerned, and enabled us to keep the bulk of our stock for the islanders. When we landed a crowd gathered at once, we found our way to a hut they called a "hotel," had a cup of tea, and a sumptuous lunch of bread and jam which the thoughtful Lizzie had prepared; and we were feasted upon by eyes male and female, old, young, and middle-aged. We had our first meeting then, and they listened quietly, though we afterwards discovered they could not have understood much, their dialect being different from M. San's, or even Matsuye's simplest.

Then we asked the way to the village where the Matsuyeites were to land. They said it was hard to find, and offered to guide us there and back.

The path wound in and out, and round and through the loveliest cornfields the sun could wish to shine upon. Sometimes the barley rose above one's head on either side, and the wheat was nearly as high. Soon it will colour, and then think of the miles of glory sheen, with its dark pine groves rising here and there, set in the blue of the hill-encircled lake.

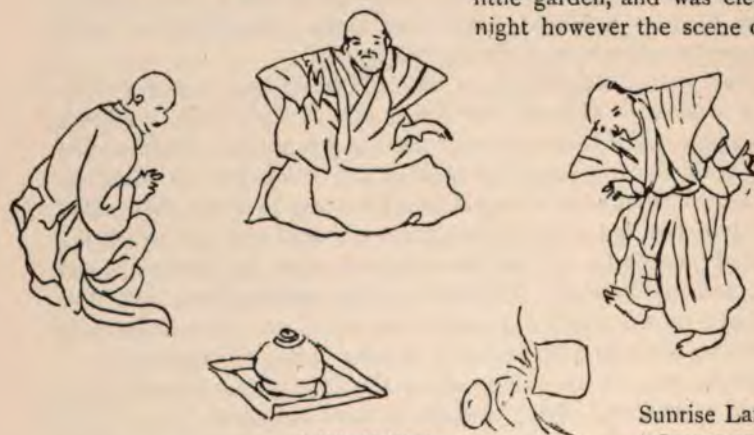
We had to walk single file; and M. San tried, under difficulties, to explain something of our message to the old woman who guided us. She told her how without her help we could not have found our way through the mazy cornfields, and compared the village of our desires to the heavenly home, drawing the parallel in simplest words, as if for a little child. But it was evident she understood little, and to each question of M. San's, I could only hear a "Don't understand."

We passed a Shinto temple, as usual buried in splendid pine, two giants guarding its entrance, stone monsters too, in attendance. "The gods live there," said the old dame, pointing to it.

There were little graveyards strewn about by the cornfield-edges, and in the woods; and one knew as one passed them, they were graves of those who had never heard.

And then we reached the village where the Matsuye boat landed, and found our way to the room Florence always sleeps in. The interested, if not decided, members of the community heard of our arrival, and appeared with Testaments, tea, and bows. We bowed, tea'd, and devoted ourselves to the Testaments, had a miniature meeting with the three or four who had come, then prayed, one of them joining, that soon they might in truth "believe," and their islet be won for King Jesus.

The room where we were, though poor, and given to rats, overlooked a bright little garden, and was clean and fresh. At night however the scene changes, and those



A Hibachi Upset.

are best off, according to Florence, whose olfactory nerves are least highly developed.

But this is part of life Japanese, and some one has styled the

Sunrise Land as a country of "Scents and Ascents."

To our disappointment we found we must leave at once, as we had to return that night, and the boat was due to start for Yonago earlier than we expected. This meant we could not wait to see Florence and I. San. So we pinned up a text to tell the tale of the birds that had flown in, and away, and turned back by the way we had come.

Over a hundred men and women (children we never try to count!) had assembled to see us off, and as the boat was late we had time for another meeting. We had given away all our books, and many we knew would read them; it was all we could do, and we came away wishing we could have stayed.

Such work as this—and of it we all have much, needs to be done in faith, for

anything less likely to yield result cannot be imagined. Books given, will they be understood, words spoken, will they be remembered? These Satan-bound people, will they ever believe at all? These minds, by his malice darkened so, are they even capable of serious belief?

Yes, that is all true, and much more is true than we can know, and all this is against us; nevertheless at Thy word we will let down the net, and as for the great multitude of fishes—Lord, we believe, help Thou our unbelief!

The Christians here seem very earnest. At the weekly prayer meeting, the older boys arranged to come not once a week, but every day, for Bible readings on the Tabernacle. To-day we studied the Vail, "the Vail, that is to say His flesh." It is a pleasure to work with such minds. They are not satisfied just with "pretty texts." They want to *know* their Bibles.

It is late, and I am writing whilst waiting for Lizzie, who is out at a meeting. She will be very tired, I fear.

These meetings, beginning perhaps at 9 o'clock or later, are delightful to the spirit, but a weariness to the flesh. But we cannot help it, now that the busy season is on, it is either that or no-

A few nights so long in coming that I began to think we were meant to have a prayer meeting for the district, instead of a preaching. But the Christians who were with us said "Oh no! It is not late *yet*" (9.30 p.m.); "at their honourable convenience they will come." So we went on waiting. Finally they did come, and we had a lovely time.

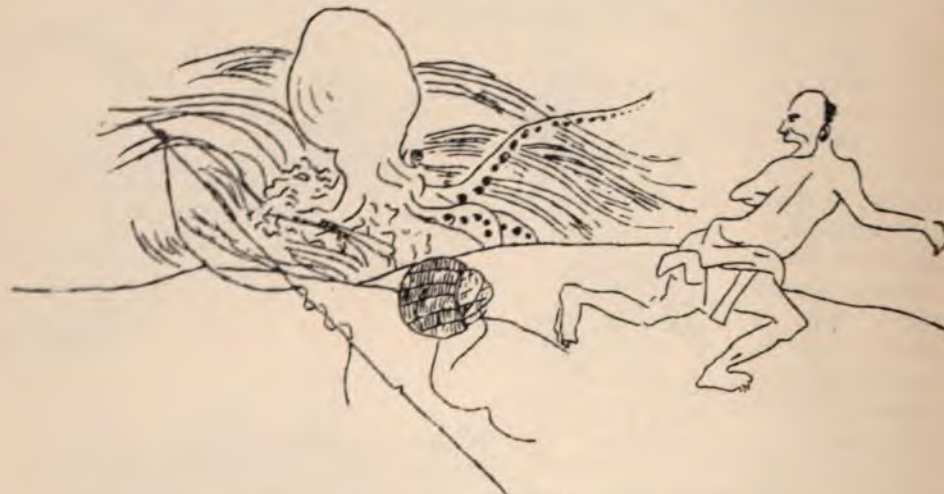
Sometimes we hear such gladdening little things. Just lately an inquirer told our Japanese pastor that he had been drawn to "The Doctrine" through noticing the kindness the Christians showed to each other. "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples if ye have love one to another!" Pray that this unfeigned outshining love may abound all through the great missionary army, the native Church included. Sometimes it seems as if the fair Love-mantle were encompassed



Curio Carrying!

by spirits of darkness, eager to touch with grimy finger its spotless purity. And only the closer-coming presence of the Master can keep them off.

Perhaps boys and girls may chance to read this. Here then is something they will like—at least I did very much. These queer old Japanese drawings are to be had in quaint old curio shops, such as we have here. An ancient gentleman, with shiny pate, and long pipe, lent me these to copy for you, for the comic touch tickled me immensely. They looked more interesting in that little matted room at the back of the curio shop, lying among old brocades and rough sketches, and all sorts of odds and ends, than they do in bare black and white in a letter. Still they may do their work by telling how many a year ago, when they were first painted, in pale blues and browns, these strange men and women were just as we are now, even down to enjoying a little fun. So don't let us imagine "the heathen" are



The Fisher Fished.

dried up, unreal, unsatisfactory beings, but *real people* with real minds which can think and laugh, and real hearts which can joy and sorrow, real men and women and children, to be loved and won for King Jesus.

There are many things in which we need your prayers more than we can tell you. To-day I heard of a young fellow who is hesitating between God and Baal. "He wants some religion, but is not determined which to take. *He is wishful to live with some missionary, to watch his doings; and then with some Buddhist priest, to watch his doings; and if that missionary's doings are preferable to that of priests, he will take Christianity, and if not he will take Buddhism.*" Does not

"It will be a Seed"

149

this give a deep glimpse into the terrible possibility open to us? We may so easily wound a weak conscience, and sin against Christ. One would thankfully choose the millstone, and the toss into the sea, rather than *that*.

Sometimes Faust's lines spin themselves into fears for me—

" 'Tis thus at the roaring loom of Time I ply,
And weave for God the garment thou seest Him by."

Solemn, is it not? We are weaving for God the garment, *the only garment*, they may ever see Him by. Will you not ask that we may be saved from ever, by word or look or gesture, pushing a soul back into the dark?

CHAPTER XIX

With one Bare Telling

*"We would be melted by the heat of love,
By flames far fiercer than are blown to prove
And purge the silver-ore adulterate."*

Yonago. May 14.—Across the corn-fields, lies a little brown-roofed village, inhabited by a fraternity of Beggars. The story of its opening is a beautiful proof that the Gospel of Christ is the Power of God unto Salvation to every one that believeth, be they whomsoever they may.

The Beggar people, like the Eta, live in hamlets by themselves, and are looked down upon by the Japanese in general. One day Mary went to the poor little place, and spoke to those who listened. Then she tried to interest the Yonago Christians in it, but they feared it would be no use. Christianity needed *thought*, these people could not think. They knew nothing, besides which they spoke a *patois* of their own, and would not understand proper speech. However, it ended in the head catechist's going there, and becoming impressed with the opening, and the need. And now some of the earnest young Christians have taken it up, a little room is being built, and all promises well. The people themselves take a keen interest in the proceedings, and yesterday when Lizzie went she found excitement prevailing. Some opposers had threatened to burn down the new room. The Beggars had turned out, and defended their property with such effect, that the insurgents thought it wisest to retire.

Last week we went to a large silk factory, and after interviewing the foreman, invited the girls to come to us for a meeting. About fifty did, and all promised to return; but to-night instead of them, we find a board posted upon our front door, caricaturing the whole affair, and ridiculing the girls for coming. We hear the town is similarly placarded. Our gentle timid girls must be tremendously in earnest before we can expect them to face that again.

Our daily Bible-class progresses. The boys are deeply enjoying tracing with me the unfolding of the great plan of Redemption in type and prophecy. Oh that one could help them more! The first year away from books and friends, teaches one how precious every atom of Bible knowledge is, and how very little one possesses.

* * * * *

May 18.—We have come to our village for a few days' work. I believe we are going to have a solemn time, for we have had it in our own souls first. "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord," "Speak unto Aaron and his sons that they separate themselves from the holy things of the children of Israel, *and that they profane not My holy name in those things which they hallow unto Me. I am the Lord.*" These words have been speaking to us—

"Far better in its place the lowliest bird
Should sing aright to Him the lowliest song,
*Than that a seraph strayed should take the Word
And sing His glory wrong.*"

May 19.—We are not in our usual room this time. The honourable Mr. Silkworms have it. When the hotel folk told us this, bowing profusely the while, and we answered that it did not matter—Christians did not mind such little inconveniences, their satisfaction was supreme. They have given us a downstairs room near the kitchen, and the old proprietor finds it convenient to creep in and out at intervals. "It's an ill wind," etc. ! He wants to hear the doctrine, but fears the result of accepting it. Poor old man. Will somebody pray for him ?

To-day my food ran short, and I hazarded poultry. They caught a full-grown specimen, and brought it to be interviewed. It was a small black-feathered thing, wrapped up in a blue cotton handkerchief. It blinked at me, it kicked, it audibly protested. I never saw so unresigned a chicken. But hunger steeled my heart. I described the process necessary from *now*, till *then*. They professed comprehension, and departed. Presently it reappeared, stuck upon a dish in so suggestive an attitude that I literally retreated. It looked exactly as though it were going to jump at me. It had come straight from the pot, ghastly, gaunt, and cavernous : a case of beauty unadorned and indigestible. I *tried* to tackle that bird, but it was altogether too realistic. And so closed dinner, and so closes story.

May 21.—Once again we are waiting at the little hotel by the lake. The tiny garden-yard at the rear looks so pretty and bright, and our hostess has brought in a vase of flowers for our special delectation. How these Japanese will enjoy Heaven ! They seem capable of so much more pleasure than most, a subtle power of delight is theirs, His gift surely, who gave us the flowers, "those beautiful smiles of God !"

We have had, as we knew we should have, a sacred season of quiet in His Presence at our village. At one of the Bible readings, instead of taking notes as they usually do, one of the men sat with his face covered, silently praying. Afterwards he spoke : "For some time I have been full of thought about this, (our message for them, which was indeed just His for us, about holiness in our holy things) by God's special grace did I hear this morning, and my soul has fed."

One would not be surprised should the Spirit of God come upon this man, as

upon men of old, and use him mightily. That is Japan's need to-day. Prophets of her own, who, Elijah-like, will dare to stand and face the crowd, and dare to bear the after silence of the desert; for marked out for a life-long loneliness is the man who is "the Voice."

This man came to me with a question I never heard mooted before. Some time ago, at a large meeting in a village where the Gospel had never been preached, pictures were used to help to explain the message, and among them was one of our Saviour. The people looked eagerly; care was taken to guard them from mistake as to it, but the fact remained they had seen "a picture of the foreigner's honourable God." From that time doubts as to this mode of work in heathen lands, came to me. Power to pray for blessing upon it was not given, and as "whatsoever is not of faith is sin," I discontinued using any pictures of our Lord.

But as others older and wiser could, and did, one could not judge at all; and until that afternoon, I did not get the question satisfactorily settled. Then through one of those guidances which afterwards one understands, it was once more forced upon me; the doubt came to a head, and He showed me clearly that, in view of the possible dishonour and misunderstanding which such use might occasion, I was not to touch this natural mode of "help," but trust entirely to the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit to-do the whole work.

And the thought also came,—as we cannot truthfully paint that Sacred Face, because the Godhead in it is beyond all human mind to conceive, or art to enshrine, have we any right to paint it at all? Is it perfectly reverent to try? And to me, the one answer seemed *No*: an added reason to prevent one's using prints and drawings made to sell.

This point was no sooner clear to my mind, than the very same question rose among the Christians, who had called to take us to a meeting, and for the first time I heard it mentioned, one saying he had felt uneasy about it for some time, while another said he had spoken to no one, but gone to God about it, and "had got it in his heart these words, 'pictures of His Son to God were not good.'" They turned to me, and I was glad for that still time with Him about it, just before. One could answer them as He had taught one then.

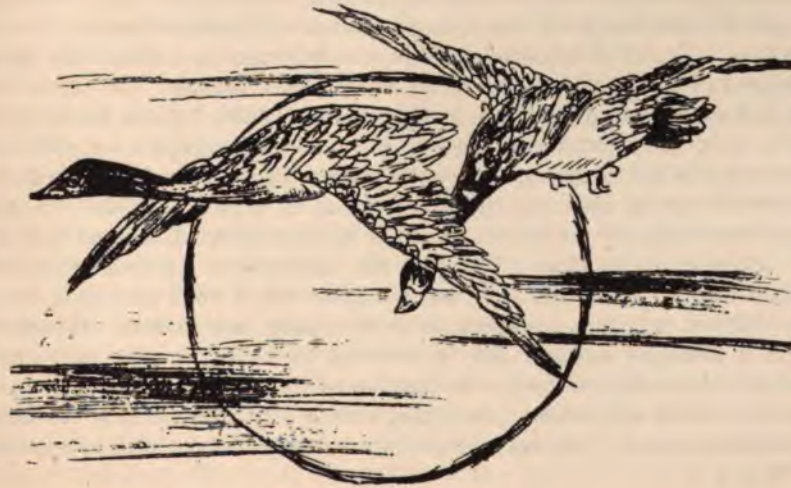
My dear brother P. San is at our village now. He has left school and given his life to the fight. You will know what a gladness this is to me. Pray that he may be Christ's good soldier, kept true and earnest and all for Him.

Our dearly loved young Christians (young in the Faith at least, most of them are older than we are, and one is a great-grandmother) are doing well, and learning daily from H. San, who shepherds them faithfully. He is preparing them for Baptism; they all know the Lord's Prayer, a good deal of the New Testament, and can sing numbers of hymns. I am longing to know when they will be declared proved and tried, but don't ask the staid H. San, for fear of seeming in a

hurry. This time of testing is important, and the native Christians are the best judges as to its duration. But one longs that the gift of the discerning of spirits should be given again; then "the same hour of the night" which saw their acceptance of the inward and spiritual grace, might see them sealed with the outward and visible sign. As it is, we must wait till "time has proved" what our eyes cannot now see clear enough to read.

As I write the voices of men, raised high in dispute over some game of chance in the next room to ours, remind us where we are, and why. We are on the King's service, let us buy up the opportunity ere it pass, and is lost. . . . We spoke to them, and gave them books, it was all we could do. They are reading them now. May their words sink deep. Our pleasant hostess comes in with tea, we talk to her, but she "knows it," she says. As we pay her, she tosses a coin to the idol on the shelf, it falls into a box and rattles. "What good does it do?" we ask her. She doesn't know, but it is the custom. "Will you leave all that money there?" She laughs. Oh no, when it has lain in the box awhile she will take it back again. "Then it is only pretence?" Oh no. It is the custom. And this is all she knows, or seems to know. And she is one for whom Christ died.

It is night once more, and the mail goes to-morrow, so I close with a sketch from a Japanese design, which one comes across everywhere—in fretwork, and friezes, and tinted transparencies, and loveliest by far, in real life in the sunset on the lake.



jubilant! You dear home heroes and heroines, His hidden ones, in hidden service spent—you may not share the gladness of this life of Tidings-telling now. But surely afterward, the glory for you will be double. I love to think of the surprises awaiting you then. Last night's meeting, for example, it was *yours* far more than ours. God seeth not as man seeth.

With morning we blithely departed. The road was broken, they told us, and no kuruma could run, so we walked, and thereby reached many we should otherwise have passed. M. San had a long talk with a dear little woman who had never heard before, and our baggage coolie meanwhile opened out to me, telling me last night's hearing was his first, and that it all seemed so "thick" to him. I taught him John iii. 16, which he struggled through bit by bit, till it was fairly *in*. Sometimes when the sun seemed hot, and the way long, it was such a compensation to remember *this* could not have been had we been kurumaing.

In the afternoon we had a little meeting and gave away many books. We went off the road proper, at times, and found the loveliest nooks among the woods where in simplest rusticity dwelt a people gracious and winsome, eager to know the why and wherefore of our visit, and yet so concerned lest we should be weary with the heat and roughness of the way that they would hardly question us till we were seated in the shade. One could only wish and wish again for a hundred lives instead of one, to "pour out" upon them all. Can you think how hard it is to leave place after place with the one bare telling?

And now to-night we are waiting here; having shown ourselves and spread by means of children manifold, that we have come to tell every one who wants to hear of the One True God who loves them. The people seem very busy, but if indeed He is "going before," we know He will draw the hearts He has prepared, and the meeting will not be in vain.

A young priest has just come in. Must stop.

. . . Yes we had a good time. Our room soon filled, and the Shinto expriest with whom we had been talking, offered us his, fancy a *priest* doing that! He had been obliged to leave the fraternity owing to illness, and having heard about the "new foreign religion" was keen to hear more. Oh how simple it all is when our Lord arranges for us. One gets so accustomed to surprises that one ceases to be surprised. It is "just like Him," that is all.

Not until nearly 10 o'clock did the people begin to muster. A funny little bit of by-play was enacted just before. I went into the big dark kitchen sort of place, to make a cup of "Liebig," hoping thereby to keep awake, for in spite of all my efforts I was *very* sleepy. While the kettle was boiling, it got wind somehow, that the honourable stranger was going to honourably dose her honourable interior, and this "drew" the meeting! How they crowded round and watched, while I mixed the brown stuff with a chopstick, and then handed round a diluted portion thereof

for their august benefit. It certainly worked as a charm, for between it and the inspiration derived from a packed room of eager and sometimes excited listeners, I forgot all about bed till after 1 a.m., when once more its shadow fell upon me—and hardly staying to see the last of our audience, and not staying at all to divest myself of anything, I lay down . . . suddenly came a crack in the wall, so it sounded, and I sat up again. We were wanted, the paper dividing our room from the next was slightly opened. "Would we deign to partake of the honourable tea?" which meant "Will you come and talk to us?"

So we went, for these were people worth going to—as who is not? One, our ex-priest friend, the other a Buddhist, and he said this—"Before this time, I heard the doctrine spoken of, I hated it greatly, but I hated it without an understanding of its real teaching. I was judging a cake before tasting it. This was not just."

Oh, how one longed that he might taste and see that the Lord is good: no doctrine merely, but the blessed Lord Himself! Both priests accepted Testaments, and one of them invited us to go to his village, promising to gather the meeting for us himself. It seemed too good to be true, but it is a long way off, and we cannot go at present. Can you wonder and blame us for ever and ever reiterating, re-echoing the cry "Come over and help us! The harvest is great, but the labourers are few"? Can you marvel that we pray with our whole hearts, "Oh great Lord of the harvest, thrust forth more labourers into Thy harvest"? But what if this prayer, Christ-inspired though it be, fall back upon us, because God cannot answer it, because we will not have it so!

"Is it nothing to you, O ye Christians?

Will ye pass by and say

'It is *nothing*, we cannot aid them'?

You can give—or go—or pray;

You can save your soul from blood-guiltiness,

For in lands you never trod

The heathen are dying every day,

And dying without God.

Is it nothing to you, O ye Christians?

Dare ye say ye have naught to do?

All over the world they wait for the light,

And is this nothing to you?"

CHAPTER XX

On with the Message

*O come, let us go and find them,
For in fair Japan they roam,
At the close of the day, 'twill be sweet to say,
"We have brought some lost ones Home."*

June 2.—We are passing through a pretty bit of country. All around are reaches of golden cornfields, interspersed with patches of dark green tatami rush, young rice in vivid emerald, bean and egg plants in soft electric. Dotted about are little brown-roofed homesteads, hedged with flowering shrubs and pine. It was too sad to pass them, and too hot to go to them, so we have hit on a compromise, and despatched our kuruma-men with tracts for each house, we awaiting their return, by the wayside. We have been trying to concoct some sort of shade out of our kuruma hoods, and now, sitting down in the bottom of mine, I am scribbling away to you. We are kurumaing to-day, because it was too far to walk in the heat, and we have promised a meeting at Imaichi to-night.

It is pleasant on the road just now; the scents are reduced to a minimum, and the flowers are a continual joy. I wish I could paint them, sweet fragrance and all, and waft them over to you. There are varieties of spirea and clematis; lilies are beginning, purple and white iris grow in pools by the wayside. The hedges are full of honeysuckle, deutzia, syringa, any quantity still of azalea, and here and there a stray trail of wisteria. The woods echo with the trill of the nightingale, which warbles in a sort of intermittent whistle. One looks up through it all to Him, and marvels at the infinite resourcefulness lying behind such lavish loveliness.

The towns and villages are rich in fair things too, fern-balls hang from cottage eaves, large pots of spring chrysanthemum, purple or white iris, late peony, or dwarf rose, adorn the pretty rooms; and as the paper walls are all wide open now, we can see many a dainty bit of colour, as we pass. Sometimes a bamboo joint hung against the wall, with a spray of blossom in it, is the only decoration. Sometimes an old rootlet or gnarled pine branch is grouped with a bit of opening bud, by way of contrast of idea. There is no end to the devices of these beauty-loving people. The merest hut has a graceful touch about it.

How very hot it is! The languid air hardly inflates the great paper fishes,

which hang from a tall bamboo, in front of the nearest cottage. For the Boys' Festival is not over yet, and from every house where within the last seven years one has been born this signal of joy stands forth. The Fish is emblematic of indomitable perseverance, from the Chinese story of the carp which swam up the waterfall. M. San tells me, "So boys must be brave like them, therefore it is their sign." One comes across the design in scrolls, with all manner of variation, and the colouring often is capital.

Beside the fishes on the pole, there is a long white flag, emblazoned with various grotesqueries, in which the military idea predominates.

In March the little girls were fêted. The shops were cleared, and crammed with dolls and models of life from the Mikado's court in the olden time down to the rustic of to-day. And the children were dressed in their gayest, and played about in their pretty demure way,—so much for beautiful fanciful old Japan. Alas for the day when it shall be "foreign"; devoted to top-hats, stiff collars, and kids.

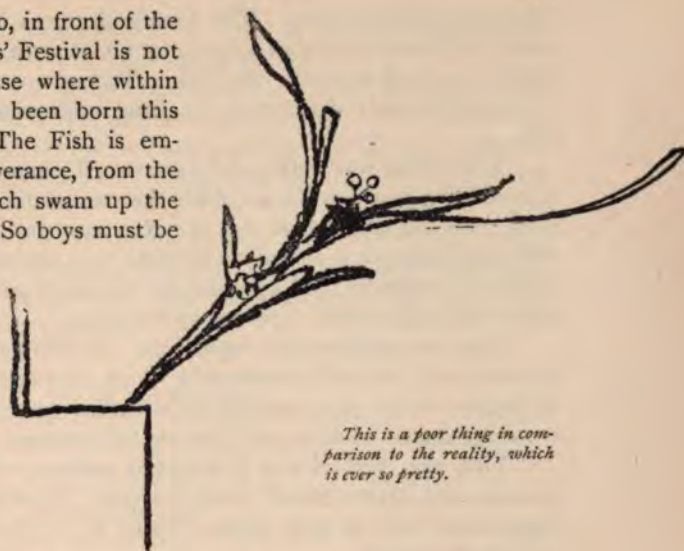
Later.—We have reached our destination for the next day or two; and now, while M. San interchanges greetings and communications endless with her friends in the little room below, I turn once more to you. How powerless distance is to separate. Though F. R. H.'s lovely lines deal with one unmeasured by miles, they often come to me,—for our goodbye

"Has only parted us a little while,
And has not severed e'en the finest strand
In the eternal cable of our love:
The very strain has twined it closer still
And added strength."

How we praise Him for it all! Praise Him for such a privilege. Praise Him for trusting us so.

It is raining now, and the great drops fall with refreshing splash, but to our sorrow this means no meeting, so I may go on writing.

I. San was married to N. San last week, and perhaps you would like to hear about the wedding. The deed and its accessories took eight hours to get through.



This is a poor thing in comparison to the reality, which is ever so pretty.

First came the knot-tying. The poor bridegroom had to march up the church all alone, and stand in solemn solitude for about three minutes, while the congregation looked on, and admired his back. Then there was a rustle, and with a face betokening speedy dissolution, the little bride came in, and trembled up beside him.

The service was simple and earnest. We knew the Master was with us, as He was with the guests at Cana. After this, we all repaired to a large cool beautiful place near the lake, where the marriage feast was to be held. All down the long room cushions were placed, and before each was set a tray containing nine dishes, a pair of chopsticks, and a general air of dainty arrangement as to colour and contents, charming to the eye, if not to the palate.

Then the guests seated themselves. A blessing was asked,—not in the hurried Western style, but with a reverence which allows time for it to be given; and then all began—or the Japanese did, *we* waited by common accord, till we saw the way the thing should be done, and then we followed our betters.

First one bowl-lid was lifted, then another,—but I pass over the next few minutes, and devote myself to an analysis. Remember this was a feast of the first magnitude, such as only comes “once in a blue moon,” to quote one of our respected members.

- 1st. Rice, in a bowl of black lacquer, decorated with storks in gold.
- 2nd. Fish-soup with floating eggs. This in red lacquer, relieved with bamboo tips in gold.
- 3rd. A mixture of fish, egg, and vegetable, in a china vase, such as we use for roses.
- 4th. Pickled fish, and tiny orange-like things, cooked in sugar. A curly china dish held these; colours, crimson and blue; contents, brown and yellow.
- 5th. Sliced raw fish, garnished with pink sea-weed, and scraps of pretty oddments.
- 6th. Daikon—a sort of gone radish root, eschewed by barbarous foreigners.
- 7th. Roast fish. This even we appreciated. It reposed in blue china, of graceful design.
- 8th. Fish paste: white rings with pink edges, carried away in papers, by most. This is quite the correct thing, fortunately for us.
- 9th. Bamboo shoots, pickled in vinegar. Various vegetables likewise dealt with.

Also there was a tiny cup of bean sauce, used as condiment to the condiments. And there were numberless little additions, also of course tea and cakes. Now, how would you enjoy a Japanese Feast?

I have forgotten the clothes, an item of some importance, I suppose, in such affairs. Both were sheathed in silk. N. San in white and silver grey. I. San in

white, navy blue and black. The Japanese idea of a worthy costume is something rich and chaste. No show, but everything thoroughly good.

At first I was haunted with wonderings—Is it right to spend time so? Is it right to go in for feasts and silks, when the world pressing all around us is dying, darkly dying? At last peace came in the remembrance that this marriage gladness pictured the coming of the King, the Bride prepared to meet Him. The joy of the espousals.

"The King's daughter is all glorious within. (Our little bride's inner things were as pure as her outer.) Her clothing is of wrought gold: She shall be brought unto the King, in raiment of needlework." He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner over me was Love!

"The bride eyes not her garment,
But her dear Bridegroom's face.
I will not gaze on glory,
But on my King of grace,
Not on the Crown He giveth,
But on His pierced hand.
The Lamb is all the glory
Of Emmanuel's land."

. . . I really think I am beginning to understand something of the meaning of the truth symbolised by the fact that the Tabernacle rested upon the desert. The Heavens above us are open, and yet we dwell upon the sand. I was up there a moment ago, all forgetful of such earthly things as food, when a voice recalled me. It spoke in Japanese, and it spoke as follows—

"The man has come with the chicken for you."

"All right!"

"Don't you want to see it?"

Remembering late experiences I answer decidedly, "No, thanks."

"But perhaps it won't be the kind you want?"

"Oh, any kind will do."

"But——" Here I cut all further expostulations short with a desperate explanation.

"So!" And with a shrug of surprise I know, though the floor intervening obstructs the view, preparations are made below.

Silence, then a scuffle, and then, oh dreadful! a step on the stairs, a voice which cannot be ignored.

"Look!"—and parts of the interior machinery of that unlucky victim are displayed to view upon a plate. "What am I to do with them?" "Throw them away!" Another "Oh!" and I am left in peace; but the heavenly strains of

"glory, glory dwelleth" sound faint and far away, dispersed by forced reflections upon to-morrow's dinner.

* * * * *

One little showing of His hand, I think, is worth the telling. You remember about that day some weeks old now, when I almost missed the leading, and how in His love He took His rightful place again, and led us straight to the pilgrim shrine and the priest's house.

A few days afterwards a card of thanks came from the head-priest, who had been out at the time, and a request to call again.

So we went, and were welcomed. First tea and cakes, in the usual fashion, were set forth, and we partook; then, to our great surprise, a maid appeared with two little lacquer trays containing rice and the &cs., "for we had honourably deigned to come a long way, and our honourable insides must not remain empty."

Was it not kind? We don't expect such attentions anywhere, least of all in a priest's house.

And then we had a long talk, which ended in their renewing their promise to read and study our Holy Book, and to pray to be led into the truth. That little word "pray" opened the door into wide questioning. How did we pray? How did we know our God heard? Did He answer? Were no propitiatory offerings needful?

We never like to close such a conversation without then and there kneeling down and speaking to the great Subject and Object of it all. In this case, when we proposed it, the priest exclaimed at once,—

"Oh, this room is far too unworthy, and the silkworm's leaves are here" (in a corner lay a pile of mulberry); "in such a mean place, would your God honourably deign to hear?"

It seemed so strange to him that indeed He would, and not only so, but that He had already heard every word we had spoken, and seen every thought, unspoken, and knew us through and through.

We knelt then, the two priests standing respectfully. Oh, pray that they may learn to *kneel* to the God who loves them so.

June 5.—Tea-time with you. "In the chill before the dawning between the night and morning" with us. And leaning out of the open window, I watch the first faint shine in the East, and think of you. What strangely binary things we are. "The shell where our spirits dwell in their wondrous ante-natal cell" may spend the hours in weary tosses under a mosquito net, while the inhabitant thereof, the real *me*, is peacefully pillowed far above enjoying itself immensely. The long hot night, so nearly over now, has been full of songs for me. And tired in body, but glad in spirit—

"Oh, Lord, we adore and we bless Thee,
That we in Thy hands of might
Are the chords whereupon Thou makest
The music of Thy delight:
Whereon Thou wilt sound for ever
In wondrous and glorious tone
The name of Thy Son beloved,
His name alone!"

Oh to know Him! If in this going forth with Him we emptied our hands of all life's treasures; if for ever after all we love, and all we prize should vanish quite away; should time be counted lost, strength drained, life "spelled a failure," it would be worth it a thousand times, if through it all we knew Him better!

His love—it "hath neither brim nor bottom!" It is "like Himself. I go to fathom it with my arms, but it is as if a child would take the globe of sea and land in his two short arms." "There are curtains to be drawn by in Christ that we never saw, and new foldings of love in Him. I despair that I shall ever win to the far end of that love, there are so many plies in it!" So wrote Samuel Rutherford, and now he has had two hundred years with the Lord of his love. And one day we too shall see the King in His beauty.

"Oh the blessed joy of meeting, all the desert past!
Oh the wondrous words of greeting, He shall speak at last!
He and I, in that bright glory, one deep joy shall share,
Mine to be for ever with Him. His, that I am there."

* * * * *

To return to our little tour, we had happy meetings in Imaichi, and then went on to the village where our friend of the Straw Rope lived, knowing that as it had been helped in the flood-time it would be peculiarly open to us. But the campaign closed with an ignominious flight. We were literally chased out by "things," etc., and remembering that "he who fights and runs away may live to fight another day," we beat a hasty retreat, and somewhere about midnight started for Matsuye.

We had a queer weird ride, among firefly-lit fields, and dark still pine groves. Once a blaze of bright red flame rose suddenly before us, and I was glad our ponies were bipeds, for no four-legged animal could have stood that without blinking. As it was we trotted on exchanging salutations with a band of peasants, homeward bound, who bore, by way of lanterns, huge bundles of lighted fir.

June 8.—Once more we are on the wing. A message followed us to Yonago, begging us to return to Imaichi, so we are here again. . . .

Back from the meeting. Such a large one, and as quiet as possible. Numbers of men listened throughout. Though few houses are open for visiting yet, a good work of broad-cast seed-sowing is being done, and F. San will reap if he faint not.

To-morrow we go to a village a mile or two distant, where no one has ever been. . . . We went, and after a long wait, in a beautiful open room, numbers of people gathered. When we arrived the little tapers and incense sticks were burning in two rows, upon the ancestral tablet shelf. After we had been bowed in, regaled with tea, questioned as to our honourable name, age, occupation, country, relations, and antecedents, a flicker of the meaning of the whole thing seemed to light up the family mind. They looked at each other, father, mother, grown-up sons, then the head of the household rose, and to my great surprise calmly blew out all the idol lights, and sat down again. When the guests one by one appeared they were welcomed as we had been, (for though this large room or set of rooms thrown into one had been regularly arranged for by F. San upon a business basis, all who came were treated as visitors, and when paying time came, there was quite a polite palaver, before the neatly folded up money would be accepted). Finally we began, and went on for nearly two hours. Then we gave a breathing space for questions.

"Where did our God live? What was His name?" (and a great many more, too irreverent sounding, though not so meant, to write). It was late when we left them, and one of them walked back with us, seemingly interested. But what does that mean? More than it sounds perhaps. More likely less. For Satan has fowls always on the wing, and the sun of scorn shrivels many a quick sprung seed, and the cares and pleasures of life choke the Word oftentime; will any of it find good ground wherein to lodge, strike root, and grow? God knows. But more truly such work as this is not even sowing seed, the soil is hard and full of weeds,—there is much to be done before ever a seed can be cast. Praise God, by His Holy Spirit we know this preparatory work is often done, ere we come with our message. "Something in my heart tells me what you say is true. Something answers 'yes' to it." So said one who for the first time listened. But this is rare. Is it because we do not "walk in the Spirit" enough, to be "led of the Spirit" straight to such Spirit-prepared ones? How much He must have to forgive, before He can use us at all!

Once more it is night. The great heathen town has gone to sleep, and all is still and dark. As one sits alone in the quiet room, too tired to sleep as yet—one seems to feel the shadow of a darker darkness, a deeper slumber brooding over the place. And all around it is so; and thinking wider, it is so; this great round world seems rolling on, away from the Love-light of God.

One by one its lands pass before me.

Africa. Think of it. Think of its heroes, think of its woes. *Every minute* sees two of its millions die the cruel helpless hopeless death of a slave. Think of its needs. Words cannot word them.

China. Well do we know the line "A million a month in China are dying without God." What do we grasp of its meaning? What do we *feel* of it?

India. With her twenty million widows. That alone were enough to touch any woman-heart surely!

Japan. With its thirty millions unreached as yet. God's islands of the sea, where'er they be, and the Hermit Land, and the Indian's home in the far North-West—the forgotten land in the farther South—but name them one cannot, and what need? We know them on our map. *But do we know them in our heart?* Think of them all: dishonouring Him to-night, full of sorrow and sin to-night: wrapped in the death-gloom to-night. How can we be so cool about it? Is it because we *are* so cool, we have ceased to see the old world miracles, the conquests which *told* for God? For we seem to be making no headway, not one inch—

“Oh it is hard to work for God, to rise and take His part
Upon this battlefield of earth, and not sometimes lose heart!”

Truthful Faber—it is just so, but praise Him, even as one writes, the next few verses, instinct with courage, ring through one—

“Workmen of God! oh lose not heart! but learn what God is like,
And in the darkest battlefield thou shalt know where to strike.
Thrice blest is he to whom is given the instinct that can tell
That God is on the field when He is most invisible.

As He can endless glory weave from what men reckon shame,
He in His Own world is content to play a losing game.
For right is right, since God is God, and right, the day must win.
To doubt would be disloyalty, to falter would be sin!”

CHAPTER XXI

Christ is Conqueror

*"Oh let the message fly faster!
The time is speeding away,
And the thrilling voice of the Master
Speaks, 'work while 'tis called to-day.'
Then send forth the news of gladness,
Let its echoes ring far and wide,
And joy shall banish all sadness
At the coming of harvest-tide!"*

SARAH G. STOCK.

Yonago. June 13.—"Consider how brief is the span of life; how short the moment of separation from friends; and how exquisite the joy that is set before you!" So spoke a servant of God many a year ago; and truly while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, a peace given not as the world giveth wraps us round; and a gladness, too glad for words, is our abounding portion. Oh is it not a magnificent thing to be privileged thus, in any small measure, to spread the glorious tidings of our Blessed Lord! Praise Him, ye missionaries! Ours is the very cream of life—and yours too, dear home ones, who give and help give, for surely God's good measure, pressed down and shaken together and running over, must be yours. We are all engaged in the same great work, all looking for, and earnestly desiring the Coming, all *hastening* that Bridal Day, if we may accept the wonderful marginal reading; all, all, pressing "on to the glory," as knights "in the army of God; whose march will be onward and forward, because of the foes on the road!"

The other day, as we travelled home by boat, we had a long talk with the boy whom Hilda led to the Lord, in our village last March. He seemed very bright, and glad to have an opportunity of speaking of his Saviour. Our converts here are natural upon that point, as children are at home. They have yet to learn, and we trust they never may, the cold reserve of grown-up Christendom. His brother, he told us, had gone to the war, which now seems a fact established. It will mean woe behind the scenes, if it goes on—and one wonders whither it tends. The darkness heralds the dawn, praise Him, "and behind the dim unknown standeth God amid the shadows, keeping watch above His own!"

June 14.—I wonder would the children like a little bit all for themselves?

One day there was a hard thing to be done, one of us did not want to do it. "I *can't*," she said, but she added honestly, "at least—I don't like to!" Now, she was very fond of a certain hymn, you know it too, I think—

"Onward, Christian soldiers,
Marching as to war!"

and her friend, who did not at all intend to give up doing this little difficult thing, began to sing it softly—only putting it rather otherwise—

"Onward, Christian soldiers,
Sitting on the mats!
Nice and warm and cosy
Like little pussycats.
Onward, Christian soldiers,
Oh how brave are we!
Don't we do our fighting
Very comfortably?"

at which she laughed at first, but soon she almost cried, for she saw not only the absurdity of it, but the *wrong* of singing one thing, and doing another. So she and her friend knelt down together, and asked God to make them true to their hymns, and true to their prayers, and then they sang this chorus,—

"From all fear of what men think or say
Victory for me! Victory for me!
From ever fearing to speak sing or pray
Victory for me! Victory for me!
Lord, in Thy love and Thy power make me strong,
That all may know that to Thee I belong,
And when I'm tempted let this be my song
Victory for me! Victory for me!"

And that is the end of the story, for it quite settled the question.

Last night, a little baby girl came to live with us. A few minutes ago, her sister, our cook San's eldest child, brought her up to show to me. She put the tiny bundle in my arms. I looked at the small dark ball of a head, funny little pucker of a face, wee doubled-up fists and feet; and wondered various things. Then she opened her eyes, long, narrow, slanting slits, stared straight up at me, and, according to the others, smiled. Perhaps she did in one-day-old baby fashion. To me she only seemed bewildered, but as she gets more accustomed to life, this may wear off. Now, will you ask for this little one, as you would for your own baby sister—that the Saviour, who loves all children, black, brown, yellow, or white, may say of this dear little Japanese child, "Suffer her to come unto Me"?

June 17.—Back from our loved village friends. Oh what thanks can we render to God for them, for all the joy wherewith we joy for their sakes before Him! May He make them to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward them. May He stablish their hearts unblamable in holiness before Him, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ!

We spent most of the time in quiet visiting among those who are being prepared for baptism. To my great joy H. San of his own accord volunteered the information, that he hoped ten, including two little ones, would be ready very soon. Others he said were "prepared in heart but not yet in head"; but these ten firstfruits have made me almost too happy! Oh praise Him! praise Him for ever! My heaven will be ten heavens in Immanuel's land!

Among those who will never I fear be allowed by their relations, or sufficiently brave to face it, is the dear old woman who first sheltered the pioneers, when they opened the then closed village. To all we say, she only answers sadly, "I am too old, my relations will not love me if I do." We are sorry—but we know our tender God will make allowances, more than we; He understands the tremble of the poor old heart. Then there is a sweet child of twelve, whose parents forbid it. She is being taught, however, and is living for Jesus. As yet they have not prevented her coming to the meetings. The other of the two little lambs gathered in that evening of "The Eight" is away at Ishi San's Christian Orphanage. His parents have placed him there for the sake of the good influence Japan's young "Müller" exercises over the hundreds of children he loves, and teaches.

Others have left the village, and are in lonely places where no preparation or teaching can be given. To Him we commit them, but oh one longs to gather them all into some sheltered corner, and feed and watch over them until they are stronger to face life's battles. It requires as much faith, I think, to trust for their safe keeping as it did to believe for their salvation.

We had a happy time over our Lord's Second Coming. These men and women have literally turned from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven. It is a splendid Reality with them. We thought, too, about the Resurrection. A single Christian grave is sown here, and this gives point to it all. They were much interested, and turned up the passages, marking them carefully with red paper slips. Presently a reflective mind found difficulties; and for a moment perplexity reigned. You should have seen how the air cleared when Philippians iii. 20, 21 was found and read. It answered, without in the least explaining. We cannot fathom the depths of a love which is soundless, nor can we measure the might of a power which is boundless. It is enough for us, that "according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself,"

He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body.

We returned late ; were, through various delays, nine hours on the way, with a thermometer 95° in the shade, so arrived home rather weary, and at once prepared for bed. But this was not to be, for the kind Christians wanted us to go to the evening meeting at the Beggars' Village, and though we said at first we really could not, we repented, and went. It was worth while. The little room was packed. Three dozen children sat in front, and they joined in the hymns, and knelt during prayer. Behind them stood the grown-up Beggars, their parents. They seemed greatly interested in watching with paternal and maternal pride their infants' decorous behaviour, and they listened most attentively to everything which was said. Once there was a skirmish, and a sudden rapid dissolving of half the meeting. A policeman had appeared at the doorway, and alarmed them. But he soon went away, and the excitement subsided.

Soon we hope to go to a village down the lake which we have often passed but never visited ; and then on to Imaichi, as they need help there so much. Something seems ever urging me on through these last weeks, before the hot weather comes with its imperative " must stop."

June 23.—Drums and drumming everywhere. Flags hung across the streets. Bamboo branches and Chinese lanterns suspended from the houses, the temples wide awake night and day. Quiet nowhere and at no time. Such is a Matsuri. Just now a farce is being enacted by a couple of clowns in the pay of the priests. One wears a huge horrible mask, the other plays a *tingle-tingle*. In the midst of the attendant crowd stands a small travelling shrine, hung with beads and tinsel. The idol sits on a throne at the back. Underneath is a box for contributions, rice and coppers are freely offered by the applauding throng. Buddhism, philosophical though it may be, stoops to the burlesque oftentimes, and stoops low.

Sometimes as one looks at these unimpassioned faces, watches lives absorbed in chasing fleeting shadows ; hears, after some earnest telling, light laugh and careless word, feels, rather than hears or sees, the presence of the dead wall of absolute indifference, the spiritual befogment, the soul paralysis, only now and then alive enough to take the trouble to be aggressively hostile, one wonders intensely, will *anything* move them ! In such moments, when most deeply one feels one's impotence, and the awful force of the "principalities and powers marshalling their unseen array" against us, one finds comfort unspeakable in the thought of the conquests already won. They are facts, they live before us. Look at that lighted face, it was dark a year ago. Look at those wakened eyes, they were dull as others' once. And the Christ who has conquered will conquer : even now He rideth forth conquering and to conquer. As the glorious C.I.M. motto says, "*Christ IS Conqueror. Amen. Hallelujah !*"

I am writing at our outstation to which we have come to lend a helping hand at to-morrow's meetings; and the catechist has been telling me of some of his difficulties. No visiting in daylight can be attempted he says, and very few are open even in the evening. Of one, or rather of the opening thereof, I think I must tell you.

Last time we were here I was sitting by an upstairs window writing my home-mail, when looking out, I saw some one gazing up at me. Nothing strange in this. Scores so amuse themselves every hour of every day, but this time the Voice spoke to me, "Buy up the opportunity. Give him a tract." There was no other way to do it—if I asked him to go round to the front, he would, probably, move off—no other way but the most unorthodox un-Japanese one of climbing out upon the low roof, leaning down, giving it—and so obeying. It was done, and much astonished, he bowed with what I feared was dignity offended, and departed.

A few minutes afterwards a message of thanks was left at the front door, and that evening a lady, attended by her servant, their lantern darkened so that their arrival should not be recognised, came to see us, bringing with her a dainty little present, and a tale as strange as it was true.

Told there, in the dimly-lighted passage, the sliding door watched by the maid, the gentle mistress daring to come no farther in, trembling even then, with the hazard of her visit—it sounded strange enough. Her husband was a well-educated professional man, and had read of Christianity. For some time he had desired to become better acquainted with its tenets; but the fear of man which bringeth a snare, nowhere more than in Japan, prevented his inquiring. To-day he had passed our house, and paused to look up—the rest you know. He was so struck by the singularity of such an act, she told us, and so convinced that *something* must lie behind it, that he sent his wife to see us, and assured us of a welcome, could we call at night to see him. Then to the preaching meeting, still escorted by her servant, came the wife, and a young student who was studying with the husband. Next day they sent a message: "When you come again please tell us"; and the student called to see us. This in *daylight*, which meant something. Since then the house has "opened," and oh, never can we praise Him half enough for condescension which can stoop to use the foolish, yea, the foolish things of this world, to confound the wise, and show forth His own sovereignty and glory. It will cost much if they follow in the cross-marked path of Jesus. Pray that this small story may be life-crowned, light-crowned, love-crowned through the glad eternal ages.

* * * *

June 24. Sunday Morning.—Can you picture it—Sunday in a heathen town?

Opposite our house a woman is weaving. The regular pass of the shuttle never misses. So close she is to us, one can almost see the pattern of the long blue web.

Next comes a Chinese lantern maker ; he is pasting the paper slips round the slender wooden frame, and painting thereon rising suns in flaming crimson, pale-winged flying storks, great chrysanthemums in pink and yellow, sprays of bamboo feathery green, devices manifold. Then comes a rice-pounder busily plying his noisy trade, the creaky thud ceasing only for a moment now and then when he pauses to take breath. There is a seed-shop and a paper-shop. There is a fish-shop and a crockery-shop. In all these the business of the day is in full swing. A little lower down a carpenter keeps up a perpetual hammering, and so on indefinitely all down the long straight street, where kurumas rattle, and watercarts rumble, and bone-clattering singers wander wailing. Sometimes a grim old priest passes too, and turns to look at the house where the foreign teacher is staying. The only sign of Sunday is the closing of the great school behind us, a national institution this, and worthy of Japan. But the boys thus freed from lessons expend their youthful energies in gathering round this small abode, and shouting "Yasu! Yasu!" "Jesus! Jesus!" pelting it with pebbles, which clatter down the tiles, and threaten to smash the windows, and otherwise rendering it impossible for us to forget for a moment that we are storming the devil's fortress, and that he doesn't want us here.

And yet looking out how bright it seems! Sunshine floods the summer world, fair flowers bloom, and caged birds sing, little children laugh and play; all seems just as if it were not what it is, for "The whole world lieth in wickedness" close-clasped in the arms of death.

Oh! for a trumpet peal which should alarm, arouse, awaken; but the heavens above are dumb, and no thunders shake the mountains. The beautiful slumbering world sleeps on, and we—oh what can we do? So few, to such a need!

How can any to whom our dear Lord Christ is precious hold aloof from service true! He who wept over the city in olden time cares still, as He looks upon the sinning and the suffering of to-day. He cares for the great home cities, the towns and villages too, where thronging, pressing, sorrowing, dying souls fling back the love He offers them, ignoring all its costing. And near, so near, to His heart are these lost lands, where slipping and stumbling upon the dark mountains His other sheep blindly wander, deeper and deeper, on and on, in the lightless gloom.

*"But still more I grieve for Thy glory, O Lord,
That the world should be only an Egypt for Thee."*



A Grim old Priest.

Yes, that after all is the plea of pleas. There may be much of mere sentiment mingled with the other. An emotion which melts as we face the reality. But for God's sake, for His glory's sake, oh, who will come to the help of the Lord against the mighty?

"Oh, who this day will rejoicingly say,
With a joyful heart and free:
Oh King Divine, my life shall be Thine,
I consecrate *all* to Thee?"

* * * * *

In Japan, work among the children, once it gets a footing, thrives exceedingly. Jane has two large lovely children's meetings a week. Among her little girls is a deaf and dumb child, to whom she manages to talk in signs, and whom she really believes loves Jesus. *How* any knowledge of Him enters her consciousness, I know not. It must be the Holy Spirit's work within, meeting the inarticulate work from without; as Jane's helper puts it, she seems to "feel Him in her heart." At Yonago, Lizzie has a Sunday-school and a "Monday-school," and at our village the Christians themselves have started a mission school for the poorest of the poor. One's heart yearns over these dear little things, so winsome in their ways, so quick to learn, and retentive in remembering—lambs who might be folded, but because there is no one to care, are left to wander away.

As I write M. San is telling me of a talk she had with some who were shy about letting their parents know they had come to us. Here it is verbatim.

"I tell them they should tell—they say, 'frightened.' I explain about that, then say 'When you confess, father, mother cross, very angry, say "Go out from house," what you do then?' And one of them say, 'Will go out,' and I ask, 'But what will you do then?' And no answer come. So I say, 'Very glad to hear will go out, but mustn't go first time they say so,—no, pray God to give patience, strength, brave, and God surely send it.'"

The parents are not at all likely, however, to demand such mighty sacrifices. They are most loving and tender with their little ones, and a father's love for his child is much stronger than any he ever professes for his wife. But in their horror of the foreign doctrine, and fear lest their children should become entangled in it, they might strongly object, and the obedient little things would hardly dream of protesting.

As the school gets established, however, and the parents' hearts are won by the foreigner if not by the "Doctrine," opposition changes to approval, and in many a heathen home to-day the seed is being sown by child-hands, in the shape of books read, texts said, and hymns sung, and the fathers and mothers tell us how little Miss Chrysanthemum sings our honourable songs to them in the evenings. Work among

children always seems to me to be a sort of undermining of the fortress : a work presenting little immediate result, but certain to produce one in the future.

Two special "Please prays" I have for you this mail. . . .

A large low room, dim lights swinging from dark rafters, the music of splashing water filling its stillness, hardly a sound beside. Ten o'clock comes. The long day's work in harvest-field and silkworm room is over. Men, women, and little children gather on the mats, and crowd the open doorway. They listen, listen, listen, they have never heard before, they may never hear again, and they sit in silent listening, till we can talk no longer.

Will you pray for these villages, only once reached? To leave them so would be heart-breaking, save for His promise and your prayers.

And my second picture, this :

An old man sitting reading, in quaint rhythmic cadence, his voice rising, falling, rising, like the waves upon the shore. And around him are grouped faces, blank, and wondering, and pondering, thoughtful too, and sometimes eager, but all weaving into one form of puzzled face-expression—"Oh, we do not understand it." Can you see them? Now they take it, this strange book, with stranger story, and they turn it round and over, look within at the inscription written large upon its front page—

*"These the Words of One True God are,
This the Jesus-Doctrine Book is.
And if more you want to hear then
Go to any of these places.
They will tell you of the doctrine."*

And then come the names of the seven Light-holders, our seven little churches scattered around Matsuye, some of them churches of only the "two or three" as yet, and written in full the "Gospel in miniature"—John iii. 16.

They read on, one and another slips away, one and another comes, and still the old man pauses not. And many hear to *think* perhaps in after days.

And so the seed is sown. Sown it may be by hands unknowing their high mission, but still the seed. With Him we leave it, whose it is—and with *you* to prayer-water constantly.

* * * * *

Yonago again, and a corner of time for you.

In one of my mail letters, there was an account of "such a nice missionary meeting," held in a benevolent somebody's drawing-room, on a certain afternoon. Oh I wonder if you have the shadow of the ghost of an idea of how those words sound to us! "Such a nice meeting" to hear of sin unchecked, need unmet, woes un comforted, death unlighted. Perhaps the tea and cake which (possibly by way of benediction,) closed this little entertainment, the curio-examining, interrogation

showering, the interchange of sentiment regarding the heathen in general, and their representative now on view, in particular, were exceedingly "nice." But it is puzzling.

"Ah but," you interpose, quite shocked with this view of the case, "we were hearing about the work done, and *that* was most encouraging!" Be it so, but let this fact sink deep—every old missionary will confirm it—The work *done* is the merest fraction swallowed up, overwhelmed by the immensity of the work *left undone*.

You know that wonderful missionary hymn, "A cry as of pain"? Will you who read this letter do just this? Get it, words and music * (for the very music is a prayer). Learn it, sing it till you know it, through and through. Then go away somewhere, where you can be alone with God. Let its plea have time to touch you. It is *His* plea; His, for His heathen. Let it well up, through you: listen, listen:—keep silent before Him. Be still and know. . . . Then rise, and in His strength obey. "Whatsoever He saith unto you, *do it*." Will you? *Oh will even one stop and do it now?*

Sometimes strange visions of the girlhood of Christendom pass before me. One seems to see it, sweet, sunny, beautiful. Glad with a soulless gladness. A scentless camellia flower. One can see its pretty round of sociabilities; afternoon teas, tennis parties, concerts, and lectures; kindly little interests in beings, doings, and dressings. Permeated pleasantly doubtless with the odour of sanctity, for "we go to church, teach in the Sunday-school, visit a district, take a great interest in missions."

And then the vision fades, and one sees in a glass darkly the girlhood of heathendom. On the surface, in some lands it may be, bright enough, in others, dark utterly. In all, more terrible under the surface, than one dare paint for you.

Here are some words from Ruskin, thought-out words, worth our thinking out—

"And if on due and honest thought over these things, it seems that the kind of existence to which men are now summoned, by every plea of pity and claim of right, may for some time, at least, not be a luxurious one;—consider whether, even supposing it guiltless, *luxury would be desired by any of us if we saw clearly at our sides the suffering which accompanies it in the world.*

"Luxury is indeed possible in the future, innocent, exquisite, luxury for all; but luxury at present can only be enjoyed by the ignorant; *the cruellest man alive could not sit at his feast unless he sat blindfold.*

"Raise the veil boldly, face the light, and if as yet the light of the eyes can only be seen through tears, and the light of the body through sackcloth, go thou

* See Frontispiece.

forth weeping, bearing precious seed, until the time come and the kingdom, when Christ's gift of bread and behest of peace shall be unto this last as unto thee; and when for earth's severed multitudes of the wicked and the weary, there can be holier reconciliation than that of the narrow home, and calm economy, where the wicked cease—not from trouble, but from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

Here are some words from a higher than Ruskin—

"Rise up, ye women that are at ease, hear My voice, ye careless daughters. . . . Tremble, ye women that are at ease. . . . Woe to them that are at ease in Zion!"

It is evening, Sunday evening. All the gongs are slowly tolling. All the air is sadly throbbing with their melancholy sound. And the idol tapers gleaming through the half-closed shutters tell us that in all the homes around us Jesu's honour is defiled. Can you hear it? Can you see it? Does it touch you into caring as He cared, and as He careth, He the Tender One who died? O may He who lives and loveth fill, inspire us with a yearning, quenchless, tireless, ever burning even unto death, for these!

Dear one, it is to you, *to you* the Master speaks, forgive me for pressing it so. Will you not face these things with Him now? What will you wish you had done, when the King comes?

CHAPTER XXII

Amen. Hallelujah!

*"The discord that involveth
Some startling change of key,
The Master's hand resolveth
In richest harmony."*

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

Sakai, en route for Shanghai. July 3.—A hot, hot afternoon. My loving little sister M. San has been trying to plan for my comfort, while we wait here for our boat, which is due to sail this evening. But it is wearily hot, and one is glad to lie flat down on the half-cool mats, and dream over the days that have passed, since last I wrote to you. . . .

We are with our Yonago boys ; it is our closing Bible Reading. "Will you come back again and give us more teaching?" they say ; and we answer "Yes, if He will." Bright, earnest, thoughtful lads, the hope of the young church ! What a privilege to help them ever so little ! . . .

And now we are stopping for a night at a village, often passed, but never reached. It does not look inviting, the shore is half deserted. An old man hovering near, takes our small baggage on his shoulder, plods down to the tiny hotel, deposits it on the floor, and waits for his fee. A sickly, sulky-looking woman appears, and greets us in a most *un*Japanese fashion. M. San is shocked, and I am surprised ; hotel people usually welcome us effusively. But perhaps she is tired. "May we come in and rest?" She assents, though evidently unwillingly. Shall we stay? we ask ourselves ; such an ungracious reception is not encouraging. What would Jesus do? Then we pray, and stay. Soon a policeman arrives to see my passport ; minutely examines it, wants to know where I was born, how long ago, and why I had come ; this last leads to a straight talk. He is, in common with most of his class, a thoroughly well-educated man. He has read the Bible, but is far beyond it ! Of course he is not childish enough to believe in idols or gods, or a God of any kind, he leaves such delusions to ladies and children.

After his departure, we consult our hostess as to a night meeting ; she does not object, and we forthwith despatch any stray children we can find to give notice. By ten o'clock all the population it would seem has gathered. Among outside

listeners is the policeman standing just within earshot; and shot I pray he may be by an arrow from God's quiver. We used the "Wordless book"; its strips of black, red, white, and gold, gummed in my Bible, speak clearly when once the purport thereof has been grasped by these intelligent minds. What a surprise the author of that bit of work will have! Surely it were worth a life-time's training to be used to sow a seed which is proving so fruitful for Christ. "Little is much when God is in it," and much, worth nothing at all, otherwise.

By midnight comes a pause on our part, we really cannot go on any longer. Questions follow, and clamours for books. The eager faces, and outstretched hands, emerging from the darkness outside, into the lamp-glow within, and then slipping back again, seems too vivid and true a picture of what it must look like to Him. For thirty, forty, fifty, years, these men and women, for whom He died, have lived without hearing of Him. Now they have heard just once, *just once*. When will they hear again? How is it there is no one to spare to continue this poor little weak beginning? Why, oh why, are the hands so few? When shall we have done "playing with missions"?

But one bright thought was given me that evening. In the twilight while the busy people were gathering in from field and fishing boat, I stood by an open window overlooking the lake, and watched the shadows falling, deepening, until the water's gleaming silver changed to heavy black, and it was night. Then dreary thoughts fell upon me; for across on the other side were hamlets and villages deep in the dark. It seemed the invisible visiblized. Suddenly a single glimmer flickered faintly into life, trembled, struggled up again, stronger grew, and stronger. Then others awoke, twinkled, steadied, shone; till at last, all the darkness was star-fringed. Spoke a voice within me saying, "So shall it be! So shall it be!" and with the word came peace.

Next morning comes, and we must go. *Now* they plead with us to stay: we do not know why it was so different at first; perhaps it was only a ruse on the part of the powers of darkness to blow the first rushlight out. Praise the Lord He conquered. . . .

They were talking together, a man and a boy. Around them lay the fair blue lake, and their island home was bright with the first gold of harvest. But on their hearts the sunlight fell not, and those souls, meant to be flooded with glory, were dim as their own pine groves. And yet at times, strange footsteps wandered through them, and questions rose unbidden, like bubbles through still pools, to rise and break and vanish, but sometimes to return again, and yet again; while answers they had none. And one was this—*Does God hear prayer?* For they had heard about Him, and weekly they heard more. But they turned away and answered, "No, no, no! it cannot be."

They turned away—to what? To *nothing*—bare negation. Pitiless and com-

fortless. To the thinking and half-awakened Buddhist, "life, death, and that vast for ever" are one long sigh, and his song is ever—

*"Colour and perfume vanish away,
What can be lasting here?
To-day passes away in the abyss of Nothingness,
Like the passing image of a dream."*

Then came a day of wedding joy at Matsuye, I. San's marriage of which I told you, and upon the island all the bridal cakes were made. The younger of our "Two" had them in charge, and he brought them up to Matsuye. Carefully he carried them, but as he stepped from the sampan a fear crossed his mind—something was going to happen to the cakes. A few minutes afterwards he stumbled, and they fell upon the sun-baked road. There was no time to go back and make more, there was no time to open the fragile little boxes and see to the well-being of their frail contents. What should he do? And then came the cry, listened for, for so long. A simple little plea, "illogical" if you will (though why?), but oh! so welcome to the heart of the Father, who goes the longer half-way to meet the child of His love.

And there by the roadside he prayed his first prayer; he prayed that none of the cakes should be broken. Then he gathered the boxes up, and went on.

The marriage-service was over, and, Japanese fashion, to each guest was given a box of dainty make, within which lay a sweet creation of pink and white, fan-shaped, and touched with a golden wish, for each bore the character which, in Christian parlance, means "best blessings," sketched in gold-dust upon it. Not one was even cracked!

Back to the island went the boy, found the older doubter, told him the tale of the cakes. "Now I know that God hears prayer, for God heard *me*." It was "one thing I know, that whereas I was blind now I see," over again. He told the story to I. San, who told it to Florence, who told it to me, and I tell it to you that you too may rejoice with them, in this their first jewel won on the Island of the Lake. . . .

And now we are on our way to Imaichi, to keep our promise to help them there once more. The dear old colporteur from Matsuye accompanies us, and we look forward to good meetings. There are two great realities in heathendom. The reality of the presence and power of the devil; the reality of the presence and power of the Lord. The more awfully the one presses, the more gloriously the other shines. Can it be that there is something more than we sometimes think, implied in the coupling together of the command, and the fact,—*"Go ye into all the world . . . And, lo, I am with you alway"*?

We are in the midst of our bright and busy Sunday, when suddenly comes a

collapse on my part, and I find myself environed by wet towels, doleful faces, and a general sense of blur. Therefrom emerging I ask them to pray—the meeting must not be missed to-night! Whereat the fatherly Matsuye saint demurs, and not until “He giveth power *to the faint*” has silenced his last objection will he consent to “agree,” as touching this, at all events. Perhaps there would be fewer “unanswered prayers” did we, as he did then, make sure of our basis, before we prayed at all!

That night, or next morning rather, for it is past 1 o'clock before all is over, finds a very happy little group of five, praising and thanking our own strong God who carries His tired ones so. A meeting where fully two hundred heard, and *quietly* heard, the Word of Life—a long after-talk with two who really we trust will believe—oh is it not splendid when through the thick darkness He puts forth His hand and touches a soul into life! For all this we praise Him. How good He is, how near, how tender—

“To Thee, Lord, my heart unfoldeth
As the rose to the golden sun;
To Thee, Lord, mine arms are clinging,
The eternal joy begun!
For ever through endless ages
Thy cross and Thy sorrow shall be
The glory, the song, and the sweetness,
That makes heaven, heaven to me!”

• Next day we have to return to Matsuye, where all are kindly concerned, and think I should straightway go for the rest and change ordered some time ago. And so it has come to pass.

But between that, and this, comes something too lovely to write much about. Some joys, just like some sorrows, seem far too deep for mere word-expression.

The baptismal time at our village must be a song without words for you.

“I could not sleep one hour last night, so great was my gladness,” so speaks the dear great grandmother not six months old in the new life. I wonder I have slept one single night since then, for joy such as this is almost too much for one’s “mortal coil,” and makes one want to “shuffle” it off! Those who have had it will understand, those who have never had it—would that they knew it too!

But the parting which follows is sad enough. One might be going away for six years instead of six weeks. I never knew I loved them so dearly, nor ever dreamed they cared so for me. “Pray for us,” they write, “honourably deign to pray for us, we pray always for ever for you! *Saryonara, saryonara* good-bye!”

Will you pray for them, that they may be kept from the danger which lingers near blessing? Let us ask that this child-church, so weak as yet, may through the exceeding greatness of His power, according to the energy of the strength of His

might, grow strong in Him, and become a crown of glory, a royal diadem in the hand of our God! One turns to, and rests in, the prayer of our Saviour—"Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one as We are. . . . Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory. . . . That the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them." And the Father will answer His own Son's prayer, for our precious village trust.

A few words more, and I must close.

It is our last Communion at Matsuye. Side by side we kneel, Japanese and English sisters together, one in Him. And yet through the service the difference presses. One follows with ear and lip, the still foreign tongue, with the soul one prays in the language of home: it is not perfect unison. But when our pastor comes to Florence and me, as we kneel there last in line, he speaks in gentle English, just for us, and we feel the touch of the golden ring known only by faith before—for what save a true close kinship of soul could have prompted a thought so kind? And as our brother ministers thus, to his sisters in Christ the Beloved, above and beyond, one is lifted, to the land, where "lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands—Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever"—"Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy holy name; evermore praising Thee and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory: glory be to Thee, O Lord most high!"





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