

ful how they deposited them. And then, to tell the truth, I have been dreaming over my Lares and Penates, and she held up the little Japanese idol.

'Oh! is that a real heathen idol, Mrs. Harmon?'

'Yes; didn't you see it at our missionary tea meeting?—or perhaps you were not there?'

'No, I wasn't. I can't tend to everything. I'm a Rathbone Sister, and a Daughter of the Revolution and a Rebecca, and a member of the Relief Corps, and the Woman's Club, besides belonging to our own Aid Society. I declare, sometimes I feel like a fly in a spider's web!'

'I don't wonder,' laughed Mrs. Harmon; then she added thoughtfully:—'There are so many organizations now that no woman can hope to join all; and don't you think that we who are Christians ought to give our best strength to those that are carrying on the work that Jesus began?'

Mrs. Stebbins laughed comfortably. 'I know what you're after. If I don't ever do anything for the heathen it won't be your fault, and I'll tell our next minister's wife so.'

Mrs. Harmon's face flushed, for she suddenly realized how many invitations she had given this parishioner to join the missionary auxiliary. 'Well,' she said, with a final shake of the head, 'I never felt so strongly the necessity of using my one pair of hands wisely, as I have this afternoon. It would be different, perhaps, if I had forty, like the goddess of mercy.'

'Did she have forty hands?' And Mrs. Stebbins took the shrine and examined Kwannon-sama curiously. 'And has it really been worshipped?'

'Oh, yes!' And Mrs. Harmon read to her the missionary's statement.

'Did you ever? And it's very old, too,' continued Mrs. Stebbins; adding, with sudden animation, 'Did I show you my cabinet when you were at our house?'

'Yes; I remember your lovely shells.'

'And other things. Why, I've got a bit of Cleopatra's Needle, and a piece of the wall of Jericho. But I haven't any heathen gods. I don't believe one of our club women have got one.' It suddenly dawned upon Mrs. Stebbins that here was a prize within her grasp. Besides, she had been thinking for some time that she would make the minister's wife a present. She would make a 'combination.' 'If you'll let me have it for my collection I'll give you five dollars for it,' she said finally.

Mrs. Harmon prized the idol highly, and expected to make it teach many a lesson and preach many a little sermon; but as she met Mrs. Stebbins's keen gaze a sudden thought came to her. 'Yes, you may have it,' she said.

Mrs. Stebbins unclasped her well-filled pocketbook and handed out the money. Once more the little, old idol from far Nippon changed owners.

'Dear Mrs. Stebbins,' said the minister's wife, 'won't you let this idol plead for the women in Japan who try to believe it will help them? Won't you think how our missionary women are working to save souls, while some of these other societies to which you belong have no spiritual outlook? Sit down with Kwannon-sama all alone some day, and I'm sure she'll talk to you as she has to me this afternoon.'

'Oh! I don't know about that. I never had much of an imagination.' And Mrs. Stebbins laughed again, until all the glistering things in her bonnet quivered in sympathy.

'But it doesn't need imagination; it's awfully real. They're trying this day to

put their trust in the many-handed goddess. Yes, and they make an army of them, as if—I'll just read you what the missionary writes about that: "I visited the temple of San-ju-san-jen-do, with its host of images of Kwannon. A thousand of these gilded images rise tier behind tier; each five feet high. The smaller effigies of the goddess swell the number in the temple to thirty-three thousand three hundred and thirty-three!" Isn't it pitiful?'

'Yes—the poor things! Wouldn't I like one of those five-foot images, though? Stebbins is going to get a Rogers's group for one corner of our parlor, but I believe an idol would give more of an air. Don't you think your missionary could get me one?'

'No, I am sure he couldn't.' There was a peculiar tone in Mrs. Harmon's voice which arrested Mrs. Stebbins's attention.

'Now you're tired with my gossip and I'll run along home,' she said; 'but first won't you tell me how to pronounce that name? Kwan-non-sama? Thanks. Some of the club women can twist their tongues round all sorts of foreign words, but I get awfully mixed. I hope you won't get sick packing;—but I suppose you're used to it and don't mind.' And with other friendly words and wishes, Mrs. Stebbins departed.

Mrs. Harmon stood still, and with a far-away look in her eyes, after the door closed. Then she said to herself: 'She doesn't understand, she doesn't understand!' And a moment later: 'She doesn't want to understand! Are such Christians like the idols themselves,—blind, deaf, and dumb?'

But her countenance cleared as she sat down at the writing desk. She took a large blank card and wrote upon it:—

'Dear Mrs. Knox:—I have sold my idol and got my Thankoffering money at the last moment. Now, you will laugh and ask, "Which idol?" This reminds me that if we would all sacrifice our idols our Thankofferings would grow immensely. But this of mine was bona fide, and I send its price with a deeper sense of gratitude than usual. Did you ever realize that we missionary workers ought to be supremely thankful for the ability to be interested—to understand—to sympathize—to feel? Well, the dear Lord has revealed to me this afternoon how dreadful it would be to live without one throb of interest in the women on the other side.'

Then she doubled the card around the five-dollar bill, thrust it into an envelope, wrote the address of the Branch treasurer on the outside, and went back to her packing with a song upon her lips.

The Little Brook.

Have you got a brook in your little heart?

Where the bashful flowers blow,
And blushing birds go down to drink
And shadows tremble so?

And nobody knows, so still it flows,
That any brook is there;
And yet your little draught of life
Is daily drunken there.

Then look out for the little brook in March
When the rivers overflow,
And the snows come hurrying from the hills
And the bridges often go.

And, later, in August it may be,
When the meadows parching lie,
Beware lest this little brook of life
Some burning noon go dry.

—Emily Dickinson.

For His Chum.

(S.S. 'Times'.)

Some years ago, when he was little more than a schoolboy, a long-legged lad in knickerbockers left his English home for the Dark Continent. The well-used adjective was even then scarcely appropriate, since the torch of civilization had begun to light the land with fateful gleams, and nations of the Old World were preparing for their future destinies in the New. None of us can realize what the civilization of Africa has already cost the white races both in life and treasure. We have heard of the cruel fever, for which no antidote is known, which levies its toll upon every important enterprise and cuts down the strongest and best workers, and now we live in daily fear of what the horrors of war may reveal. And as yet Africa is but an infant Hercules scarcely awake from its first long sleep.

There were other boys in the English home to be provided for, so Percy Prime went off to seek his fortune. He waited a long time before any semblance of fortune made its appearance. He visited several places, and at last gravitated towards fast-rising Johannesburg. He had many ups and downs, especially downs, many changes of employment; he earned a little, saved a little, was robbed of all he possessed, and had to begin all over again. While he was able to keep body and soul together he was too proud to ask for help from home.

In the early days the loneliness and homesickness were terrible. When the train from the Cape was due, his feet were drawn with those of many others, to the railway station in the hope of a letter and perhaps the sight of an English face. And how often was he tempted to jump into the outgoing train, and rush towards home at any cost. But pride and self-respect would step in and insist that he should not return till he had something to show for his exile and his labor. He was not going back like the bad shilling.

By-and-by he obtained regular employment, and made something of a position for himself. And then he was often enabled to stretch a helping hand to some unfortunate new-comer, or some failure who had lost heart and hope. And then who so proud of being an Englishman as Percy Prime? For with the exile, careless and reckless as he may often appear, the word home seldom fails to touch a tender chord, and is often more potent than heaven itself.

But one hot and dusty summer's day in a showy new street of the showy new town, Percy came face to face not only with a resident not only of the old country and the old city he loved so well, but with a school-fellow from the old school. They had not met since school days, neither knew of the other's whereabouts, but out here in far-away Africa, the connecting link was strong enough to form a bond of association, and to strengthen into a lasting friendship. True, they did not introduce themselves in the historic way that graced the meeting of a Stanley and a Livingstone. Their greeting, 'Good old Percy P.' and 'Good old Chum,' savored of the slang of the playground, but the handclasp was as warm, the welcome as cordial, as heart could wish.

From this time life bore a very different aspect to each of the young men. They lived together and did not tire of each other's companionship. They lightened their difficulties and disappointments by sharing them, and their pleasures were greatly increased. It was always a delight to be able to talk of the 'dear ones at home,' to ramble together in thought through the