

**PEKIN MARVELS AT THE CIRCUS.**

(By Eliza R. Scidmore).

Pekin, Nov. 23.—The Empress dowager and the members of the court circle have had the time of their lives this year, when a real circus came up from Shanghai and gave three performances in the summer palace grounds for their exclusive enjoyment. It was the real thing—a great round tent, a sawdust circle, and rows of plank seats, with trained horses, baby elephants, clowns, acrobats, and bare-back riders. The peanuts and pink lemonade, the side shows, and "tickets for the concert immediately following the performance in the ring," were all worthy of the most critical of American small boys.

"Prof. Chatres' Indian Circus" is of Hindoo origin, and roams the east. It came up from Shanghai, returns there, and goes on to Hongkong and Manila. It is the same conventional affair we all knew in our youth. To the august personage and the court it was a revelation, a most delightful novelty, and three performances did not weary them. The circus came up by special train, and all was managed by commander Charles Hsingling, the son of Yu Keng, who, as a general impresario, manager, and director of novelties and amusements at court, has greatly delighted the Empress dowager.

A formidable procession of carts and jinrikshas conveyed the properties through the city and out to the summer palace grounds, and it was a gala day for all that part of Peking. Despite the troops ranged all the way to preserve order, the populace nearly mobbed the elephants, for, although elephants were some years ago, a part of every state procession, the common people were barred out and curtained off from any sight of them.

The tent was set up at the far south end of the great lake in the palace grounds, and the Empress dowager and her suite came across the water in the yellow curtained yacht when the first performance was ready. Seated in a foreign, upholstered arm chair under a yellow canopy, the Empress is described as enjoying the performance, laughing heartily at the two little Hindoo dwarfs who wore the Humpty Dumpty clothes of clowns, and was pleased with the trained dogs and horses. She used gold opera glasses to watch the trapeze performances, smoked cigarettes with graceful nonchalance, and was much taken with the circus woman.

The third performance did not pall upon her, and the gorgeously dressed princesses and ladies in waiting, the eunuchs in splendid uniforms, and the great audience of palace attendants and servants had never such a season of enjoyment.

Tung Lu, the recently deceased General and trusted favorite of the dowager, had once proposed to bring a circus to Peking for her entertainment, but the project fell through. The conservatives and literati at court wanted none of such foreign innovations and the circus was not mooted again. Now that they have smelled the sawdust and met the clown, the ringmaster, and the dancing horse, the Manchu rulers are provoked to think what they have missed—what fun there might have been long before this in the Purple Palace grounds.

The stories go that the Empress dowager watched the tiger long and earnestly, but would have nothing to do with the lion; that the Russian ringmaster and horse trainer was asked if he could train the dowager's officials as well, and as soon as he had educated the little Szechuan pony; and that in rewards silver medals and rolls of silk were given round, and the professor of horses and artists was paid some 20,000 taels.

**DICKENS' DREAM.**

In Forster's 'Life of Dickens' there is a letter of Dickens' addressed to Forster from Genoa and dated 30th Sept. 1844, in which he thus described a dream he had:

"Let me tell you of a curious dream I had last Monday night, and of the fragments of reality I can collect, which helped to make it up. I have had a return of

rheumatism in my back, and knotted around my waist like a girdle of pain, and had laid awake nearly all that night under the infliction, when I fell asleep and dreamed this dream. Observe that throughout I was as real, animated, and full of passion as McCready, (God bless him), in the last scene of 'Macbeth.' In an indistinct place which was quite sublime in its indistinctness, I was visited by a spirit. I could not make out the face, nor do I recollect that I desired to do so. It wore a blue drapery, as the Madonna might in a picture by Raphael, and bore no resemblance to anyone I have ever known except in stature. I think, (but I am not sure), that I recognized the voice. Anyway I knew it was poor Mary's (his dead sister-in-law) spirit. I was not at all afraid, but in a great delight, so that I wept very much, and stretchiag out my arms to it called it 'Dear.' At this I thought it recoiled, and I felt immediately, that not being of my gross nature, I ought not to have addressed it so familiarly. Forgive me,' I said. 'We poor living creatures are only able to express our selves by looks and words, I have used the word most natural to "our" affections, and you know my heart.' It was so full of compassion and sorrow for me—which I knew spiritually, for as I have said I did not perceive its emotions by its face—that it cut me to the heart, and I said, sobbing, 'Oh!! give me some token that you have really visited me!' Form a wish,' it said. I thought, reasoning with myself. 'If I wish a selfish wish, it will vanish.' So I hastily discarded such hopes and anxieties of my own as came into my mind, and said, 'Mrs. Hogarth is surrounded with great distresses'—observe I never thought of saying, 'Your Mother,' as to a mortal creature—'will you extricate her?' 'Yes,' 'And her extrication is to be a certainty to me, that this has really happened?' 'Yes,' but answer me on one other question!' I said in an agony of entreaty, lest it should leave me, 'What is the true religion?' As it paused a moment without replying, I said, 'Good God,' in such an agony of haste, lest it should go away!—'You think as I do, that the form of religion does not so greatly matter, if we try to do good?' 'Or,' I said, observing that it still hesitated, and was moved with the greatest compassion for me, perhaps the Roman Catholic is the best? Perhaps it makes one think of God oftener, and believe in Him more steadily? 'For you,' said the spirit, full of such heavenly tenderness for me, that I felt as if my heart would break; 'for you it is the best.' Then I awoke with the tears running down my face, and myself in exactly the condition of the dream. It was just dawn, I called up Kate (his wife) and repeated it three or four times over that I might not unconsciously make it plainer or stronger afterwards. It was exactly this, free from all hurry, nonsense, or confusion whatever. Now the strings I can gather up leading to this were three. The first you know from the main subject of my last letter. The second was, that there is a great altar in our bedroom at which some family who once inhabited this place had Mass performed in old time; and I had observed within myself, before going to bed, that there was a mark in the wall above the sanctuary, where a religious picture used to be, and wondered within myself what the subject might have been, 'and what the face was like.' Thirdly, I had been listening to the convent bells, (which ring at intervals in the night), and so had thought, no doubt, of Roman Catholic services. And yet, for all this, put the case of that wish being fulfilled by any agency in which I had no hand, and I wonder whether I should regard it as a dream or an actual vision!"

Some sins show a soft head rather than a hard heart. He whose sermon is a good life will never preach too long.

The music which reaches furthest into heaven is the beating of a loving heart.

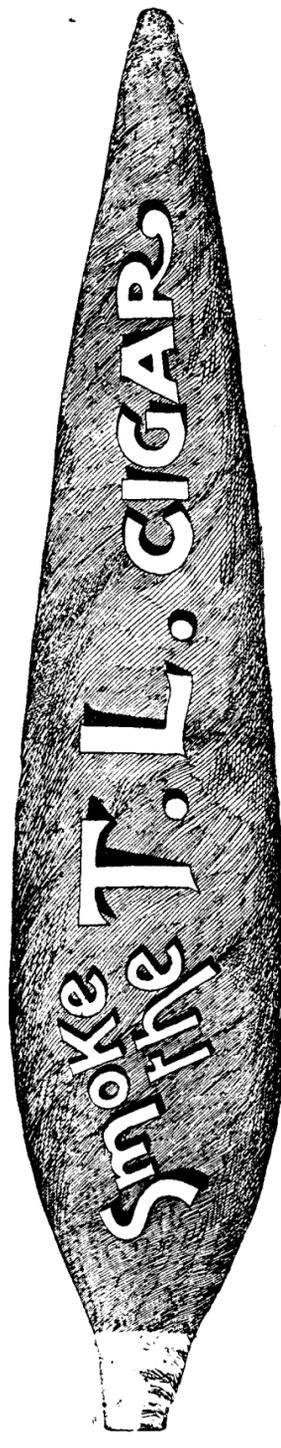
Call up in your darkest moments the memory of the brightest.

**GENTLENESS IN THE HOME.**

A single bitter word may quiet an entire family for a whole day. One surly glance casts a gloom over the household, while a smile of sunshine may light up the darkest and weariest hours. Like unexpected flowers which spring up along our footpath, full of freshness fragrance, and beauty, so kind words and gentle acts and sweet dispositions make glad the sacred spot called home. No matter how humble the abode, if it be sweetened with kindness and smiles the heart will turn longingly towards it from all the tumult of the world, and home, if it be ever so homely, will be the dearest spot beneath the circuit of the sun. Between a man and his wife nothing ought to rule but love. Authority is for children and servants, yet not without sweetness.—Waterbury American.

**BACK TO THE MOTHER CHURCH.**

The conversion of Archbishop Benson's son reminds a writer in the London 'Tablet' of some other Church of England prelates who have given one or more members of their immediate families to "the Church of All Lands." On this side of the water, too, we find among our converts near relatives of many well known Anglican bishops. A few names occur to me. Bishop Hobart gave a daughter, a son-in-law (himself a bishop), and a nephew; Bishops Lay, Coleman, and Southgate a son each; Bishop Chase a daughter who died a Visitation nun; Bishop Doane a son, now a Roman Monsignor and brother of the Episcopal Bishop of Albany; Bishops Potter and Polk each a niece, and Bishop Moore a granddaughter. Then there were several members of Bishop Wainwright's household, a brother of Bishop Lyman, and the nephews of Bishops Brown, of Fond du Lac (think of a nephew of a bishop of Fond du Lac among Rome's recruits!) and Meade, of Virginia.



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