

TWO OR THREE.

There were only two or three of us
 Who came to the place of prayer,
 Came in the teeth of a driving storm
 But for that we did not care,
 Since after our hymns of praise had risen,
 And our earnest prayers were said,
 The Master Himself was present there
 And gave us the living bread.

We knew his look in our leader's face,
 So rapt, and glad, and free ;
 We felt his touch when our heads were bowed,
 We heard His " Come to Me !"
 Nobody saw Him lift the latch,
 And none unbarred the door ;
 But " Peace " was his token to every heart,
 And how could we ask for more ?

Each of us felt the load of sin
 From the weary shoulder fall ;
 Each of us dropped the load of care,
 And the grief that was like a pall ;
 And over our spirits a blessed calm
 Swept in from the jasper sea,
 And strength was ours for toil and strife
 In the days that were thence to be.

It was only a handful gathered in
 To the little place of prayer,
 Outside were struggle and pain and sin,
 But the Lord Himself was there ;
 He came to redeem the pledge He gave—
 Wherever His loved ones be,
 To stand Himself in the midst of them,
 Though they count but two or three.

And forth we fared in the bitter rain,
 And our hearts had grown so warm,
 It seemed like the petting of summer flowers,
 And not like the crash of a storm.
 " 'Twas a time of the dearest privilege,
 Of the Lord's right hand," we said,
 And we thought how Jesus Himself had come
 To feed us with living bread.

THE MISSIONARY'S WIFE.

The typical mission station in India is far away from the large towns. It may be near a railway or it may have the ordinary government road as its only means of approach, it is removed from English shops and society, from doctor and dentist, being placed among the villages simply to bring the Gospel to the natives.

To control such a mission station properly, to so govern the native servants and Christians with the necessary admixture of love and firmness, to have confidence in their word, yet at the same time to watch and judge their very expression, requires a tact and talent equal to that of a captain of a steamship or the manager of a business establishment.

The centre and head of the mission station is the missionary's family. This is necessary in every well ordered station for here is a country where home-life is wrong and women are oppressed and children are not under proper discipline, so that the object lesson of the Christian home is the most valuable in the whole neighborhood and is the source of beneficent influences which may be felt to the utmost limits of the field.

The home life of the missionary is a perpetual en-

couragement to those who do well and a rebuke to those who persist in living in dirt or who beat their wives or fail to provide for their family.

In the household no one occupies a higher position than that of the missionary's wife : officially, of course, the missionary is the head, but he is often away and then the people come to his wife with their own troubles. She is looked upon as a doctor and those with headaches and backaches, stomachaches and heartaches plead with her for help, but it is with a sharp discrimination that she glances at her array of patients.

This girl with tousled hair and blanket *en deshabille* is sent back to arrange her toilet, and with the washing and combing, cleaning and straightening up, she really forgets what was the matter with her and is sent smiling to her work. That baby is really sick and the plaster of ginger is ordered off and a hot bath prescribed.

This preacher persists in walking lamely and asserts that the water and air do not agree with him ; the native " dresser " is privately urged by him to give an order that he may get permission to go to his own village, but the medicines given are all neglected.

The troubles of this teacher are a mystery, now at midday with languid air and glazed eye he seems to be on the verge of a collapse, again in the evening prayer meeting he exhorts with firm strong voice and earnest gesture. Next morning he is asleep in front of the school, his limbs cold as if in paralysis, this goes on until the one solution, opium, solves the riddle.

Sometimes she is envied by her sisters at home for while they have but one servant she has six (but such a six !).

What work and wisdom are needed here, the daily bazaar bill, the endless counting of pice and annas, an overcharge here, another there, then the locking and unlocking of drawers and cupboards. In the adjusting of the wages and the giving of presents is a constant menace to the peace of the household. Now this napkin ring is missing, evidently it has been stolen and all the forces are marshalled and the solemn promise given that no wages will be paid until the missing ring is found, and found it is in a few days under the sofa where the thief has returned it.

During these days of suspense and severe glances it comes out that the ring was not stolen for its value but in order to get a servant dismissed.

Of all fraternities none are so secret as the natives, they will not divulge, they can and will lie without blushing, and yet if the mistress gives them to understand that they are liars and only liars, it only makes them worse, but perhaps they form a compact and all leave the service together.

What is there that this woman does not perform ? She is appointed judge between disputants, she sees that the grass is brought for the horse and the grain is properly measured for it, that the school girls are getting their due allowance of rice and curry, that the beggars are fed and sent away, that the washerman gives his right tally, that the sweeper cleans the house carefully, lifting out all stray toads and scorpions. Coolies, carpenters, cooks and other servants with bible women and teachers all come under her eye.

Then there is the proposed marriage of one of the school girls. With her husband she decides whether the match is suitable and all parties await the decision (whether they follow it or no).

The little black baby is brought to her to be named and presents must be selected and advice given.

On church prayer meeting nights she is often the