

in which I write, had not yet come into being, when globe-trotters compass sea and land and criticize everything in nature from a tiny sea-shell or blade of grass to the grandeur of Niagara, the splendors of the Yellowstone and the glories of sunrise in the Alps; when everything in grace is criticized from the method of creation, the plan of redemption, the application of the atonement, the veracity of scripture, the trustworthiness of God and the facts of Christian experience on down to the humblest and most out-of-the-way missionary laboring for the enlightenment, uplifting and salvation of a sin-laden and depraved race. No, these days when preachers are measured by their chest tones; sermons by their brevity, polish and aimlessness; churches by their assets in cut stone and stained glass; success by the totals of statistical tables—no, these days had not yet fully come. The world was younger then and more simple. Moreover, I was younger and more simple too. The world lay before me and my field of action was yet to be determined.

There is no need to traverse the long story of how it came about that I decided to be a missionary. The decision was reached and I became a missionary. That is the main point at present. At the time of my appointment I had just finished my educational career; was in the enjoyment of the honors of my class, the approbation of instructors and friends, and had been accepted. Henceforth I was to journey through life not alone. I had been ordained to the ministry and had definitely consecrated myself to God for service in a foreign land. My spirits were aglow and my zeal increased as the date of our sailing approached. If ever one is prepared to appreciate the romantic side of life it is after graduation, ordination, marriage and embarkation for a foreign shore. If ever he feels that he is great enough to rise up and conquer the earth, it is then. If ever he is sanguine that his greatest hopes will be realized it is then. Alas! What do the years bring? How much of romance and victory have been mine?

In fancy I was again young. I was in the home-land, and together with my young wife was preparing for the voyage and for the furnishing of a new home in a heathen land. There were the boxes in which we were packing our few earthly belongings. The clock and the lamps and the dishes; the bedding and table linen and extra wearing apparel; the small medicine chest and our books together with a portrait of two completed the list. The boxes were closed, nailed, marked and dispatched and then a hurried tour began in which churches were visited, addresses delivered and an interest in missions aroused. Then came the keenness of saying farewell to country, friends and parents—the aged mother with tears streaming down her furrowed cheeks, with broken words breathing out her blessings. Now I stood with Mary on the deck of the great ship. The planks were drawn in, the vessel glided slowly away from the pier and we were off for the East. We watched the city and the shore fade from view and by the rolling of the ship we realized that we were indeed well out to sea. Tears were dried; any lingering doubts or misgivings were for the last time brushed aside and the heart was fortified anew. Where was the romance of this the first chapter of missionary life? It was all very solemn and real!

Again we were aboard ship and moving down the Thames. This voyage was to be long, slow and hot. Among those who took shipping were some two hundred soldiers and officers. Red jackets, white helmets and belts fairly blazed in the sunlight, while marchings, counter-marchings, drills, bugle calls, tattoos, taps and reveille kept us in much of an uproar from early morning till night. Some of the soldiers got into a fight and a court martial was resorted to in order to settle affairs. The entire set of ship officers used intoxicating liquors and one of them was drunk several times on the voyage. There was card playing and gambling in the parlors and on deck and at breakfast and dinner, with the exception of two, every male passenger's plate was adorned with a whiskey bottle. There was no place in all the ship where one might escape the fumes of tobacco, not even in one's own cabin. Added to these physical discomforts was the fact that the missionaries were the target of ridicule for the party. One day an army officer accosted me and said "where do you go, and what are you thinking to accomplish?" I stated that I expected to do missionary work among the heathen. To this he blurted out, "you're a fool! I've been in India for many years and I tell you that Christianity makes the native character always worse. You don't smoke or drink whiskey and you have your code of morals and education. You try to give these fine notions to the native and you spoil him. He never is a good servant afterwards. I should like to chuck you overboard right here and now!" where was the romantic side to weeks and weeks of such experience? Where the rest for either body or mind?

At last we reached our desired haven. We landed in an old water-soaked hulk which every moment seemed likely to be swamped. But we got safely ashore and spent the next few days in making purchases for our home-to-be, far to the north in the jungles. All our lives long we had been accustomed to deal with business men who prided themselves upon honesty, promptness and faithfulness to business engagements. But we had now to learn that a merchant did not expect one to give the price asked for goods. There was a first price, a second price, a third price and a sale price. We had to learn the art of "jewing down" and "driving a bargain." We had to haggle with these bazaars who spoke pigeon-English, about the prices of beds, chairs, tables, etcetera—a proceeding which violated every ethical business principle we ever knew and sent us to our quarters for the night feeling like sneak-thieves. But there was no alternative. If time were an object to us, it was certainly not to the bazaar-man. We must spend days in making the purchases we might have made in so many hours at home, or else submit to highway robbery.

After many delays and annoyances we set off for our future field of labor. We journeyed by day, we journeyed by night, we crossed rivers, passed through fields and jungles and jolted over rough roads in an ox-cart, until we arrived tired, jaded and hungry, upon the spot where afterwards we were to dwell. The natives stood in great groups and looked at us, and we in turn looked back at them. That was the extent of our conversation. Wasn't it romantic to be tongue-tied? Even the pigeon-English of the bazaar-men would have been welcome; but there was no spokes-man at hand. Then followed the days and nights of improvised dwelling, living in a temporary room, eating scant food, sleeping on makeshifts for beds, while awaiting the arrival of our stores and house furnishings. Novice that I was! why did I pay the bazaar-man? Why did I believe him when he promised to forward everything in four days? Looking backward over the years it seems incredible that I ever had such trust in human kind. Four days! Four weeks passed and we were destitute of our purchases and still improvising. The length of time that elapsed between purchase and delivery of the goods, I hesitate to record—nay, I will not record it—as I wish the reader to have confidence in the veracity of my tale.

Well, we were settled in our temporary home—our first home on the mission field. But we were no sooner settled than we were all unsettled. There was a strike among the servants and workmen whom we had engaged to attend to our wants. Each one had joyfully pledged himself for a certain sum stipulated in advance—through an interpreter whom we were fortunate enough to find; but now each one declared it impossible to go on with his work until a new arrangement was made. After such pantomimic and useless efforts to make them stick to their agreements, we capitulated—we had to or else be left in a strange land, without aid or comfort.

Things ran smoothly for a few days, then small articles began to disappear from the house, Pins, needles, pieces of cloth, a pair of my trousers; sugar, butter, bread rice, bits of meat, and so on. The next move was to get locks and keys and to store away everything from a thread or shoelace to the largest garment; from the salt sack to the remnants left from the dinner table; from the chickens kept from slaughter to the hay and grain reserved for the cow. From that day forward we resembled St. Peter in one respect at least, we had the power of the keys. By day they dangled at our girdles and at night we hid them away so as to insure safe finding in the morning. For seven days in the week and three times each day throughout those early months and years the housewife had to dole out the necessary supplies for the house and table. Eggs, potatoes and slices of bread were counted into the hands of the cook; flour, rice, coffee, sugar, raisins and spices were given by measure and stock taken when meals were served. How free from care was the missionary's wife! How easily she could attend to the household; do her own sewing, and in process of time that of our children; mend my clothing and cut my hair; superintend and often teach the schools which were organized; administer medicines to the sick and conduct Bible classes for the women! The romance of keeping house in those days! where is the scribe, the wise man or woman, the chronicler or the poetaster who will arise, write and make the glories thereof immortal?

But time would fail me to detail all the train of reminiscent thoughts which passed through my brain. The study of the language; the first effort at preaching in the new tongue; the first prayer in the alien speech; experiences with house-building and garden-making; the opening of schools and the instructing of converts; the touring among the villages and the makeshifts for securing adequate help for a growing work. What need is there to recount the damages which heedless washermen did to our table and bed linen and personal apparel, so that at the end of every year we have had to begin housekeeping anew? Why tell of the lizards and frogs and snakes that infested the house at all seasons of the year? What the use to describe the bats which flew to and fro over our beds and gave Mary the shivers as they circled about or fell upon the beds or floor after colliding with some obstruction? Is it worth while to mention the ravages of white ants, how I left my shoes on the floor one night instead of standing them on a chair, and awoke the next morning to find the little burrowers in the soles; how the little hand-bag which had been my constant companion in my travels for ten years in the home-land and was like an old and tried friend to me—how this was riddled in one night by these same pests; or how they came out of the floors and walls and ceilings—or rather rafters, and left behind them their long tunnels of brick dust and mortar; how they actually ate away the timbers of our roof until they gave way entirely? What matters it that our roof leaked during the monsoon so that we had to move our beds four times in one night and then place tin pans here and there to catch the streams that trickled through the tiles? Of no moment is it that rats gnawed my leather-bound books and that scorpions and centipedes were daily found under the mats. While as for insects—I counted forty-six separate varieties one evening buzzing about my study lamp! In addition to this panorama of pests there passed before me a long line of dark-faced creatures, each one come to ask a favor, clothes, food, money loans, lands, help in lawsuits, medicines, houses, cows, goats, buffaloes, boxes, bottles, needles, thread, buttons, paper, pens, ink, lead pencils, smelling salts, gum, camphor, kerosene oil, condensed milk, cocoanut leaves, palm trees, grass, spectacles, English books, newspapers, sheets, blankets, ropes, bamboo poles, bricks, stones, chairs, tables and so on were asked for by different individuals; but very seldom did one ever come to ask about his salvation or the improvement of his spiritual life. Each paid his respects with low salaams; but when refused his temporal requirement—as in the majority of cases it turned out—he knit his brows, tightened his loin cloth and began to lay deliberate siege. One refusal for each applicant would make a large total during a week; but when one says no, no, no, from ten to fifteen times to each person in order to convince him that he cannot have what he wants, it requires time, patience and strength of body, as well as an unbending will to keep from falling into the error of the unjust judge of the Scriptures.

As I reflected upon these things, the common places of missionary life, there was interwoven among them like the theme of an oratorio the words I saw in the Trumpet, "The romance of missions has passed away?" "The romance of missions has passed away." Passed?

In my reverie it had escaped me as well as in my experience, perhaps because of lack of appreciation.

I sat up with a start. Are there no joys, no bright spots, no blessings in the missionary's life? Aye, there are; but such as cluster about the sweet words, home, wife and children; such as come from fellowship with the Father and with his son Jesus Christ. There are mercies and providence and blessings in all the days and years. There is joy in preaching and teaching and baptizing—the joy and blessing of fellowship and service with and for Christ. But aside from his home and his Saviour the missionary has no deep fellowships. He is alone—yet not alone. He is sorrowing yet always rejoicing. Upon him, besides all these things, comes daily the care of the churches. To him it is given to fill up the sufferings of Christ for his body's sake which is the church. Of the Lord himself was it not said, "He is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief?" Peace, be still, my heart, "It is enough for the disciple to be as his Master and the servant as his Lord."

The clock struck twelve and my accounts were untouched!—The Baptist Missionary Review.
Hope Station, Liveanddein, India.

Not to Ourselves.

According to the teaching of Paul, "none of us liveth unto himself." If any man thinks because of his eminent endowments or great acquisitions he is not subject either to the Law or the Lawmaker, he understands but little about himself and the rule of life. He cannot absolve himself from relations to the Creator of the universe and to his own kind any more than he can change the fact of his own birth or choose other parents. He comes into the world with obligation for life to his parents; he is a son to them, and all the philosophy in the world cannot prove otherwise. He may deny his sonship; he may take another name and even turn parricide; but it would be of no avail whatever. His relations are fixed.

It is just as true that these relations involve obligations as that they exist, and it is no more possible to evade them than it is to evade death. One may repudiate them, and with colossal egotism declare that he owes nothing to anybody; but he only proclaims his own selfishness and mendacity. You cannot take a single word, dis sever it from its myriad relatives and constitute a distinct language of it; and you cannot take an individual, disassociate him from his kind and make a new race of him. Like Ishmael, his hand may be against every man; but his enmity only emphasizes the fact of his betrayal of his race. These are the meanest and worst, or perhaps we should say, the insane of mankind.

If none of us liveth to himself, to whom do we live? We live, it might be said, to others. To parents, to children, to neighbors, to brethren, to the desolate and helpless. Certainly we owe such obligation, and the more faithfully we meet them the more fruitful and beneficent do our lives become. But it is the doctrine of Paul that we belong to God, and owe him everything. According to him, no one of us liveth, or dieth, even, to himself; for whether we live, or whether we die, "we are the Lord's."

If we get hold of this great truth with sufficient apprehension of it, we shall have no room for egotism or selfish gratulation. Our sense of the great obligations we owe will overwhelm any pride of individual greatness or achievement. We are not our own, we belong to God, who created us. It is in him we live and move and have our being. It is from him we have derived all our powers, and through his providence we have all our opportunities. Whether we live and work and endure and achieve, we are the Lord's and the increase is his; whether we die and enter into another sphere of existence, we are still the Lord's. Our relations, then, are to him, and to his will we should adjust our lives, if we would do wisely and well. It is because the heavenly bodies are rightly adjusted to the central influence of the solar system that each particular sphere swings in certain and beautiful harmony, each in its own orbit. Centered in God, every one of us finds his own individual orbit in which he freely moves, without danger of confusion or collision, for right adjustment to him means right adjustment to one another.

But we stand in a special relation to God because of what he has done for us through Jesus Christ. "Ye are not your own," said the Apostle, "for ye were bought with a price." What then? "Glorify God, therefore." Wandering from the way of truth and life, we got out of adjustment to God, and knew not how to get back again. Christ came to draw us back, showing us by his own life how to tread the path of obedience. What the apostle says of us he says also of him:

"For the death that he died he died unto sin once; but the life that he liveth, he liveth unto God."

The conclusion of the whole matter is this, that as Christ died unto sin, so we are to be dead unto sin, but "alive unto God in Christ Jesus." We are to become identified with the Son of God, so that we can say with Paul, it is not I that liveth, but Christ liveth in me, which is the hope of glory, and signifies triumph over sin and death.

Abiding in Christ we have the sure relation of children to the Father. We live as Christ's, we speak in his name and spirit, we work for him, we are in his stead toward the world, we participate in his victories, we extend his kingdom. We therefore live not to ourselves, but to God; and yet we do not lose our individuality, but preserve it unto everlasting life.—The Independent.