

month, and this, together with the forty-five cents he received at the asylum, was enough to keep him in food. Before I left Canton for this country I procured for him 'Mark's Gospel,' written by one of Dr. Mary Niles's blind girls; also paper for writing, and told Wong to go on and perfect himself in his reading and writing, and as opportunity afforded, to teach and preach until my return. This he promised faithfully to do. Before leaving I placed in the hands of the church deacon enough to give Blind Wong fifty cents a month while I was away, promising to send a few dollars more later. He is thus dependent upon me to this amount, but the church gives nothing, so no precedent has been established yet. I believe that on my return I shall be able to open a school for the blind in Canton, or at least get him work as a tutor to some well-to-do blind person, and there are many such in the city. It has been estimated that there are at least 10,000 blind of all classes in Canton, China. In other places blind preachers have been able to preach with



WAITING TO BE HIRED IN CHINA.

power and to lead souls to Christ, and I trust God will be able to use Blind Wong, especially among his blind associates in the two asylums near the East Gate in Canton.

Blind Wong was very grateful to me for what I had done, and before I left, through the help of the deacon who had befriended him, he presented me with two red paper scrolls; on one was written in Chinese: 'The halt, the deaf, the blind, the dumb can learn the way to enter the heavenly city.' On the other: 'To speak plainly of salvation and redemption, to proclaim the good tidings, this honors the holy church.'

Since coming to this country the native Christians in the south, around Canton, have suffered for the Name, but I do not think that Blind Wong has met with any serious trouble. I therefore have hopes of again seeing him when I return, and of carrying out my purpose.

Sample Copies.

Any subscriber who would like to have specimen copies of the 'Northern Messenger' sent to friends can send the names with addresses and we will be pleased to supply them, free of cost.

Abigail.

(Bertha Gerneaux Davis, 'in the 'Independent'.')

'You seem pretty young for it, Abigail; you do so!'

'I know—I'm not very old yet, Aunt Martha; but Miss Ames said she didn't think that ought to make any difference. She said she joined the church when she was only nine; and I'm seven, you know—most seven and a half. She thinks they'll take me.'

'Well,' said Aunt Martha, 'I'm sure I hope so; for your heart's set on it, I can see. But I have my doubts about it—I have my doubts about it.'

It was not a very encouraging prospect, but the child rose, smiling hopefully. 'Praps they will, Aunt Martha.'

'They'll ask you a lot of questions, I guess, Abigail, those deacons will. But don't you get scared. You don't do yourself justice, child, if you get flustered.'

'No'm,' solemnly, then, brightening somewhat, 'I'll look straight at Dr. Kingsbury, if I feel afraid. I can talk to him without being scared.'

'Why didn't you talk to him, or to me, about it before, if you've had it in your mind so long?'

'I don't know, Aunt Martha; I tried to, but I couldn't somehow; and I didn't know for certain myself until last night, and then I felt as if I must go, to-day.'

'Well, dear knows, I don't want to be a stumbling-block; perhaps you'd better go on, child, and have it over, seeing they won't meet again for three months.'

Tap, tap, on the study-door a few minutes later; a soft, gentle tap as if a woodpecker had strayed in, and was exercising his little beak on the old panel. There was a cessation of voices within, a moment's silence, then—'Come in.'

Her first startled glance as she crossed the threshold disclosed no beloved Dr. Kingsbury—only the six formidable deacons, with chairs drawn up in a circle. Her cheeks flamed.

'How do you do, little girl?' Deacon Spencer was the first to speak. 'It's little Abigail Somers, isn't it? How are you, my child, and what is it you wish?'

'I—I wanted to come—I came—to see about—about joining the church.' It was impossible to add another word. She had to breathe fast and swallow several times to recover from the effects of these few words. Six pairs of eyes looked at her kindly, but with some surprise.

'Well, well,' said Deacon Smith; and he patted her head, looking with a rather doubtful smile at the others.

'Isn't— isn't Dr. Kingsbury going to come?' ventured Abigail.

'Dr. Kingsbury is a long way from here; he's just gone to Wyoming,' answered Deacon Spencer; 'his brother is very ill.' He scrutinized the slight childish figure gravely. 'Do you mean you want to join the church?'

'Yes, sir.'

'How old are you?'

'Seven years old, sir—seven years and five months.' Abigail's heart was in her mouth with a sudden realization of the fewness of her days on the earth.

Deacon Peterson, the youngest and newest member of the board of deacons, broke the silence that followed. 'Suffer the little children to come unto me,' he said, his face turning quite red with the effort.

'Beautiful words,' said Deacon Spencer,

'and true ones! Let the little children come unto Christ. But of course these things must be taken with limitations. When did you experience a change of heart, Abigail?'

'Sir?'

'When were you converted? When did you first feel that you were a sinner, and righteously under God's wrath?'

'I—I don't remember, sir; I don't know;' then, truthfully, 'I guess I never felt just like that.'

'Ah! But perhaps you can tell us when you first made up your mind to give your heart to the Lord and follow in his footsteps.'

'I don't know when I did first, sir. I guess I always wanted to be good since I was a real little girl and I could understand about it.'

'Is there any doubt in your mind as to your love for the Lord? Do you put him above every earthly friend?' This question was from Deacon Simms. 'Would you be willing to give up your father and mother for his sake.'

'Her father and mother are dead,' said Deacon Spencer, in a loud whisper. 'We will put it this way: Would you hesitate, if you had to choose between the two, to leave your aunt and never see her again—to be with your Father in Heaven?'

'With Papa in Heaven?'

'No,' said Deacon Spencer, 'I meant with God, your Heavenly Father.' Evidently Abigail was too small and ignorant to understand the solemnity of the step she wished to take.

The question convulsed her little heart. How would she choose—how could she help choosing? 'I don't know, sir,' after a long pause, 'I—I have been with Aunt Martha all my life, 'most; she has taken care of me since I was a little child. I can't bear to think of losing her; I'm afraid I'd choose her.'

'Ah, I see! You are too young yet, my child, to have a realizing sense of the relative values of things in Heaven and things on the earth. I thought so! All in good time; it will come in good time!'

A long pause, while the deacons looked at each other and Abigail sat with folded hands gazing out through the open window at the graves in the churchyard with their leaning headstones overgrown with moss. The cicadas and katydids rasped their net-veined wings with as unsubdued a shrillness as their brothers and sisters in the daisy-fields beyond. The grass-hoppers leaped unconcernedly through the grasses whose roots reached down to the sacred dust below, and the audacious sparrows hopped from mound to mound, and even settled a difficulty or two on the flat stones that for a century had folded in those who had 'fallen on sleep.' Abigail, as she looked, was trying to puzzle out the meaning of Deacon's Spencer's words. What were the 'relative values' that she was too young to understand? She was quite sure that if he would explain them to her she could understand; but she was too shy to ask.

Deacon Smith's voice broke in on her musing. 'What made you wish to take this step, my child? Do you come to us of your own accord, or at some one's suggestion?'

'Miss Ames,' stammered Abigail—'Miss Ames was talking to us a little while ago in Sunday-school about—about joining the church; and—and it made me want to come.'

'Ah,' said Deacon Lawrence, 'I see! You would probably not have thought of com-