

INCIDENTS FROM PASTOR HSI'S LIFE.

By Mrs. G. M. Barber, Brantford.



AMONG the Christians whom Pastor Hsi visited was one old lady with whom he felt thoroughly at home. As in the case of his own wife and mother, her baptism had been long delayed and from a cause that must have especially appealed to his heart. Converted a year or two before, her love and faith and Christian consistency were undoubted. And yet she never asked to be received into the church, and seemed distressed when the subject of baptism was mentioned. This puzzled the missionary ladies, who could not think of any reason why Mrs. Han should hold back. At length, in a quiet talk one day, the old lady unburdened her heart.

"Alas," she said wistfully, "if only I could be a true follower of Jesus, and be baptized."

"Any why not?" questioned the missionary, much interested. "Is there anything to hold you back?"

"Me? Why, of course, there is," said she, sadly. "How could I be His true disciple? I could never accomplish the work."

"But what work?" said her friend, kindly. "Did not Jesus do it all?"

"Ah, yes, and I do love Him, and am trusting Him alone for salvation. But I know that the Lord Jesus said that His disciples were to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Alas, I am not able to do that. I do love to tell of Him," she went on as her missionary friend seemed for the moment unable to reply. "I have told my son and his wife, and all our neighbors, and in the summer time I can go to several villages near at hand. Oh, I am not afraid to tell of Jesus! It is not that. But I am old and feeble. I cannot read. My eyes are growing dim, and I can only walk a little way. You see, it is impossible for me to go to foreign countries and preach the Gospel. If you had come earlier, when I was young. But now it is too late. I cannot be His disciple."

With a full heart the missionary explained the meaning of the Saviour's words, and spoke of His perfect sympathy and keen appreciation of every act prompted by love to Him. He knew about the widow's offering, and said of another who was not able to serve Him much, "She hath done what she could."

"What she could? Was that what it meant? Oh, then, it might be, after all." And the dear old lady could hardly wait till the following Sunday to be baptized. Full of joy in her new privilege, she was one of the brightest members of the little church, and her earnestness in doing what she could was a frequent incentive to others.

Northward from Chao-ch'eng a day's journey nearer the capital, lay another important city, about which he was much exercised. Beautifully situated, populous, and accessible, Hoh-chan was practically without the Gospel. Passing missionaries had called there on their journeys, but any seed thus sown had not appeared to have borne fruit. For months Hsi had wished to open a refuge in this city, but his hands were full of other work and his funds were taxed to the utmost. Still he prayed for Hoh-Chan, not less burdened about its needs because for the time being he could do nothing else to help. Every morning at family worship he remembered the city, definitely asking that God would send workers there. At length Mrs. Hsi, full of sympathy, came to him and said:

"We have prayed a long while for Hoh-chan. Is it not time to do something? Why not send men and open a Refuge there, as at Chao-ch'eng and other places?"

"Gladly would I," replied her husband. "But such work is costly, and we have no money in hand."

"How much would be needed?" inquired the little lady. "Thirty thousand cash? That is indeed a large sum." And she forthwith went her way.

But Mrs. Hsi could not forget the needs of Hoh-chan, and all day long she kept wondering if there were not something she could do to send the glad tidings to that city. But thirty strings of cash! At one time she might have managed it. But now she had so little of any value remaining. And yet she did long that those people might hear of Jesus.

Next morning Hsi prayed again for Hoh-chan, pleading its needs before the Lord, and asking that soon it might be possible to open a Refuge there. The little service ended, Mrs. Hsi, instead of leaving the room as usual, walked up to the table, and laying a little package before her husband, said quietly: "I think perhaps the Lord has answered our prayers."

Wondering what she could mean, Hsi lifted