

We need not enlarge upon the trial which comes, sooner or later, to all missionaries who have children, —the necessity of parting with them for proper education in the home land. This is a heart-agonny so deep, so bitter, so unendurable, except through abounding grace, that it needs only to be mentioned to be in large degree appreciated; yet perhaps even this very plain and obviously great trial does not receive from us the prayer and sympathy it should. Surely the least we can do to lighten the sorrow for our missionaries, is to support largely and heartily the homes for missionary children, established, or about to be established; in our various denominations; homes where missionary parents may leave their loved ones with some comfort of heart, feeling that they will have some such affectionate care and oversight as they themselves would give.

Lack of intellectual and spiritual privilege and stimulus is another trial of which we too seldom think. The fact that missionaries are engaged in directly spiritual work, is apt to give us the impression that they can be in no need of spiritual influence, and we forget that in this matter they are givers and not receivers; that little of external spiritual help comes to them such as we receive constantly through the ministrations of God's house, through contact and intercourse with an educated Christian community, through an abundance of the best devotional reading, and access to libraries of commentary and cyclopedias. The missionaries greatly feel the tendency to spiritual depression and repression in the lack of these helps. They also learn that they must sacrifice much in purely intellectual directions that would give them as keen pleasure and delight as it gives to us in the home land. Nothing more touching and beautiful concerning this matter can ever have been said than was written by one of our young missionaries in Siam, when quite new to his field and work. He says: "Sometimes when we hear, through friends or the press, of the growth of great institutions and the swing of mighty movements at home, we feel that we should like to fall in line once more and march to the beat of these mighty pulsations of humanity. We feel that we are being left behind. In a sense we are. We cannot keep abreast of all developments everywhere, and yet be loyal to our own little trust. We must dare to be ignorant of many things and of many books in order that we may do this one thing."

To mention but one more of the special trials of our missionaries, let me speak of the trials connected directly with the work itself. The sin, and misery, and degradation which must be daily witnessed and fought against; the inadequacy of the means furnished, and the heart-sinking when sometimes the promised means fail, and retrenchment is called for; the longing to see results which often are not seen for many years; the sight of the wide-stretching fields that seem so promising, and yet cannot be entered or touched for the lack of the silver and gold; the weakness and instability of the native converts, and the necessity of most carefully guarding and fanning the feeble little flame kindled in their hearts,—all these things, and many more in the work itself, call for earnest sympathy and prayer on the part of the home workers, that the missionaries may not feel that they are forgotten and left to struggle alone with their burdens. I should not be doing them justice, however, if I should even seem to intimate that the missionaries themselves complain of these things. They rarely mention them, except in their secret prayers to the God of all help and comfort. They turn to us,

in their letters mostly, the bright side of their own lives, whatever they may show us of the lives of the heathen. And even in private, they do not dwell upon their trials, though realizing them, but often rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake. In the same letter from which quotation has already been made, the writer says: "But, after all, we would not exchange places or work with the most favored home workers. We lack the enthusiasm of great numbers of fellow workers, but the promises come to us at the first hand; they apply immediately and directly to our work. And I suspect that letters from the home land do us vastly more good than you experience from any letters you receive. So the promise of a hundredfold even in this life is more than verified."

Let us, then, keep ourselves in full touch and sympathy with those who wear the Father's name and are doing the Father's work so far away, and are of our own spiritual family. Let us write to them, pray for them, love them for their work's sake, and in all ways possible to us, seek to help carry their burdens. Let us take them country by country and station by station, family by family a name by name, and thus particularize and emphasize each one, bringing each missionary in turn to the mercy seat, and asking there some special blessing on every head. If we personally know some of them it will be easy to think of some special petition for such; if we do not thus know them we learn to know them in spirit, and to feel them near and dear in the sweet bonds of Christ's own love and life. And so, with blended interests, hopes, and desires, we learn that "he prayeth best who loveth best," and that our blessed Intercessor best "loves and prays for all."—*Life and Light*.

JÉSUS CHRIST THE SAME FOREVER.

Christ our hope in Heaven. How we rejoice in this great truth, Jesus Christ in whom our every hope for the future centres, the same forever. Unchangeable in all the past. Unchangeable in the changeable present, and throughout the endless ages of eternity, the same, loving, compassionate, helpful Saviour and Friend.

He said to His disciples when His work of atonement was nearly completed, "I go to prepare a place for you."—John 14:1. His own home was with the Father long before his time began, but now he goes to prepare a place for His loved ones from earth, for you and me, brothers and sisters, and for all those, millions though they be, who will accept the salvation He has provided. For he says, "In my Father's house are many Mansions."—John 14:2. The "Mansions," giving the ideas of stability, the everlasting possession. And the "many," assuring us not only that these are large, spacious, unbounded, ample for all, but that there may be a variety in the accommodations provided, suited to every Christian's capacity for enjoyment, in that Heavenly country.

O how we often wish to push aside the veil that separates that land from ours, and know just what it is like, especially do we so long, when a loved one has suddenly stepped beyond our care and reach. "A land so very near, and yet so far from sight."

The poet says:—

There is a region lovelier far
Than sages tell or poets sing;
Brighter than noonday glories are,
And softer than the tints of Spring.