

this unique notice at the head of the village items:

"All who have ever been the recipients of kindly deeds from 'Aunty Lee,' and who would like to reciprocate now, in her day of misfortune, are invited to bring their supper to Oak Grove on Thursday afternoon at five o'clock, and talk the matter over a 'neighborly' cup of tea."

At the time appointed I had a carriage come to take my hostess and me, and my basket of cakes and buns fresh from the bakery, to the beautiful grove. As we were driven along I was surprised to see so many people, lunch-baskets in hand, speeding in the same direction.

"Almost everybody in town is going," said Mrs. Evans, "high an' low, rich an' poor."

As I was being assisted to a seat a gentle, motherly little woman spread a soft shawl over the back of the chair intended for me, and quickly folded another shawl for my lame foot to rest upon.

"This is 'Aunty Lee,'" said Mrs. Evans, and the sweet faced little woman and I looked in each other's faces with a little curiosity, perhaps, as well as sympathy, and shook hands cordially. "I don't know what all these good people are to do with Elijah and me," she said with a smile that was as genial as a sunbeam, "but the minister would have us come, and he and his wife drove around for us."

The minister ascended the platform just then, and after tenderly yet impressively invoking the Divine blessing, he looked down benignly upon the faces upturned to his and with a touching intonation of voice asked, "Who is my neighbor?" He then went on to tell how Aunty Lee had answered that question in regard to himself.

"When I first became acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Elijah Lee," he said, "I was finishing my theological studies here in the village with Dr. Mills, and they had just married and settled down in their little house yonder, which they had inherited. One day I was sent for to preach on trial in the adjoining town of Luxboro'. My only coat was worn threadbare and extensively patched, and I had no way of procuring another. Feeling sorely grieved and dispirited I started out for a walk, and for the sake of telling my trouble to some fellow-creature, and with no thought of receiving any aid in the premises, I turned in to Mrs. Lee's house and read her the invitation I had had from Luxboro', and frankly told her why I could not go at present."

"Leave it to the Lord," said the good woman, and forthwith she proceeded to take my measure with a piece of tape. "Go home," she continued, "write your sermon and come here again Saturday morning."

"I obeyed. I subsequently found that the woman had actually taken a piece of cloth that she had laid by in the house for a cloak for herself, and, tailoress as she was by trade, had cut and made me a coat from it. I preached my first sermon in it, and shortly received and accepted my first call."

"Oh, dear," whispered Aunty Lee from her seat by my side, "he's paid me for that coat every New Year's day since, and it wasn't much for me to do, after all."

Major Sanford, the richest man in town, was the next to take the stand. The old people smiled and nodded their heads, but the young folks looked at each other and wondered what he could be indebted to Aunty Lee for.

"When I was a boy," the Major began, "I was bound out in H— to a very, very bad master, from whom I determined to run away. I availed myself of an opportunity to escape one Saturday afternoon, when I was sent to the pasture to salt the cattle. I came straight over the mountain to this place. I wanted to get out of the state as soon as possible, so came directly to the bridge down here at the river, which is, you all know, the New Hampshire boundary. Just after I had stepped upon Vermont soil I overtook, on the road, Mr. and Mrs. Lee, young people then. They had a basket and a spade, and had been digging up wild flowers to transplant into their garden. Although an entire stranger, they accosted me kindly. Noticing that I had been crying, Mrs. Lee asked me my trouble. Before I knew it I had blurted out the whole story, and had been invited by her to go home with them and stay over Sunday. I was, of course, only too grateful to accept the invitation. After supper we set out the plants, and then Mr. Lee took me with him down the hill to the bank of the 'brook,' as we called it then, and into his little machine-shop. I soon evinced my fondness for tools, and confided to him an invention that had, in a crude form, long had possession of my brain. Being a natural mechanic, he saw the utility of my invention at a glance. The subject was not mentioned on the morrow, which was a quiet, restful day to me. Mrs. Lee loaned me a clean linen suit belonging to her husband, and I went to church with them. The next day Mr. Lee went over to H— and made terms with my master, because Mrs. Lee said she could

not allow me to feel like a 'runaway.' Then Mr. Lee took me into his employment and gave me a corner in his shop where I could, at odd moments, work at my model. My invention proved a success and made my fortune, as you all know. I am thankful, my friends, that I am able to-day to repair the damages done to the dear little homestead and to rebuild my old friend's shop," and Major Sanford sat down wiping his eyes with his handkerchief, while his delighted audience applauded vociferously.

"Dear heart," said Aunty Lee to me, "what was he talking about? He's paid us over and over, and he's tried and tried to make Elijah go into partnership with him, but he wouldn't, and I wouldn't let him."

Then followed one-minute speeches by the score. "They kept me three months when I was sick and homeless," said one. "I made their house my home for weeks when I was out of work," said another. Ten homeless working girls were married in their parlor and went out into the world with their blessing. There was a great number of touching little speeches from those who had received flowers and delicacies in illness and warm garments in times of need.

And so from them all flowed out contributions of money, the greater part of which was safely placed in a bank for the benefit of the Lees when old age and failing strength should overtake them.

"Dear me," said Mrs. Evans to Aunty Lee, "you've been lendin' ter the Lord, and he pays the best interest, arter all. I never could understand before; but I dew now."

"There are none of us so poor that we cannot give such as we have. A smile or a kind word even will come back to us in kind," said Aunty Lee, and we all brushed away the tears that we could not suppress while those touching speeches were being made, and went to our homes.

FEEDING GHOSTS IN CHINA.

The carpenter who has been making our new book-case says he wants to go to his home for a few days—some work is awaiting him there; the Chinese writer says he wishes to go—there is a message to be sent in the direction of his village, he can carry it, and, being at leisure, can spend a few days with his family; our house-boy says he, also, must go—his "muddar" has been sick, is now "more better," and he must go and see her.

And so the carpenter and the writer have gone, and the boy is going; but it seems so strange, their all asking to go at the same time, that I suspect that at least part of them have some untold reason for it, and, when I remind myself that it is now the last of August, that it is the time of the full moon, and that last night our Chinese neighbors were going about out of doors carrying bowls of boiled rice, and that in front of the houses in the street near by were little fires with those thin filmy ash-flakes that remained from burned paper scattered about them, I feel sure that I have guessed the reason, and that it is a wish to celebrate at their own homes the Festival of Burning Clothes, and the friendless Ghosts' Feast.

The Chinese think that persons after they are dead need the same things as when they are alive and that if they are not supplied with them they can revenge themselves upon people in this world, bringing them ill-health or bad luck in business. This being the case, of course, people try to keep the ghosts of their relations in as comfortable and quiet a state as they can.

If a father should die, his friends, while he remained unburied, would every day put a dish of rice, and, perhaps, a basin of water, by his coffin, so that his ghost might eat and wash. Afterwards, they would at times carry food and drink to his grave, or place it before the wooden tablet, which, to honor him, would be set up in his house. To supply him with clothes and money, or anything else he might need, like a house, a boat or a chair, paper imitations of these things would be made and burned, after which it would be thought the ghost could make use of them. Fifteen days at this season of the year are considered the most lucky time for making these offerings. Large quantities of clothes and other paper articles are then sold, and there is a great burning of them all over the country.

Besides these well-to-do family ghosts, there is another class of whom people are dreadfully afraid. These are the spirits of very wicked men, and of childless persons who have left nobody behind them in this world to care for them. They are supposed to be wandering about in a most forlorn condition, and to be able to do a great deal of mischief. To put them in good humor, and to induce them to keep out of the way of the living, a feast is made for them every summer.

For several years past this feast has been given in an open plot of ground just outside our yard and under our sitting-room windows, so that I have often seen it, though I am obliged to say I have never spied any ghosts coming to eat of it.

Every year the ceremonies are the same. Early in the day four tall poles are planted in the ground about a dozen feet apart, and so placed as to mark a square; about twenty feet from the ground a wooden floor is built between the poles. A few men who stand upon this platform direct everything. Usually, one or two of them seem to be priests; once I recognized the leader as an expert juggler whose tricks I had witnessed only a short time before. A part of the feast had been made ready beforehand and is at once arranged on the platform. At two corners are placed ornamented cones, six or eight feet high, which, I suppose, is expected will appear to the ghosts to be solid cakes, but which are, in reality, only bamboo frames, thinly plastered over with a mixture of flour and sugar; besides these are green oranges, other fresh fruits, and articles of different kinds. Soon offerings of food begin to come in from the neighborhood, and are drawn up by ropes to the platform; these are, mostly, baskets of boiled rice, and have a bit of wood holding a red paper stuck in the middle of the rice. I suppose the giver's name is upon the paper, and after the feast the baskets seem to be restored to the persons who brought them; the rice can be taken away, and eaten at home.

At length, the platform is well laden with food, which remains exposed in the sun and wind for several hours, during which time a great noise is kept up with gongs and other musical instruments, partly, I suppose, like a dinner bell to call the ghosts, and partly to amuse the men and boys who gather in an interested crowd around the platform.

Late in the afternoon the head men begin to distribute the feast. The baskets of food are carefully lowered; the cakes are broken up, and the pieces, with the oranges and other fruits, are flung hither and thither among the crowd, who scramble merrily after them, sometimes half a dozen rushing after the same fragment, and now and then a man trying to clamber up the poles to secure a portion before it falls. When the stage is cleared the crowd disperses, and the Ghosts' Feast is ended.

In this region the people are very poor, but in a large and rich community this festivity would be kept with splendor even, and with much cost.

Last year a part of the wooden framework fell, and one man was injured. I think this may make the old ground seem unlucky to the Chinese, and lead them to seek a new place for this year's feast.

Let us hope that they will do so, for to have a set of the most wicked and unhappy ghosts asked to dinner under one's windows, is not, after all, so amusing as it is noisy and sadly foolish.—Mrs. S. C. Wingate, in July "Wide Awake."

COMMANDER JAMIE.

There lived in a Scotch village a very little boy, Jamie by name, who set his heart on being a sailor. His mother loved him very dearly, and the thought of giving him up grieved her exceedingly; but he showed such an anxiety to go and see the distant countries which he had read about, that she finally consented. As the boy left home the good woman said to him, "Wherever you are, Jamie, whether on sea or land, never forget to acknowledge your God. Promise me that you will kneel down, every night and morning, and say your prayers, no matter whether the sailors laugh at you or not."

"Mother, I promise you I will," said Jamie, and soon he was on shipboard, bound for India. They had a good captain, and as some of the sailors were religious men, no one laughed at the boy when he knelt down to pray.

On the return voyage, things were not quite so pleasant. Some of the sailors having run away, their places were supplied by others, and one of these proved a very bad fellow. When he saw little Jamie kneeling down to say his prayers, this wicked sailor went up to him, and giving him a sound box on the ear, said in a very decided tone, "None of that here, sir."

Another seaman who saw this, although he swore sometimes, was indignant that the child should be so cruelly treated, and told the bully to come up on deck, and he would give him a thrashing. The challenge was accepted, and the well-deserved beating was duly bestowed. Both then returned to the cabin, and the swearing man said, "Now, Jamie, say your prayers, and if he dares to touch you, I will give him another dressing."

The next night Jamie was tempted to do a very foolish thing. The devil does not like to have anyone say his prayers, or do right in any way, so he put it in the little boy's mind that it was quite unnecessary for him to be creating such a disturbance in the ship, when it could be easily avoided if he would only say his prayers quietly in his hammock, so that nobody would observe it. Now, see how little he gained by this cowardly proceeding. The moment that the friendly sailor saw Jamie get into the hammock without first kneeling down to pray, he hurried to the spot, and dragging

him out by the neck, he said, "Kneel down at once, sir! Do you think I am going to fight for you and you not say your prayers, you young rascal?"

During the whole voyage back to London this reckless, profane sailor watched over the boy as if he had been his father, and every night saw that he knelt down and said his prayers. Jamie soon began to be industrious, and during his spare time studied his books. He learned all about ropes and rigging, and when he became old enough, about taking latitude and longitude.

Several years ago the largest steamer ever built, called the Great Eastern, was launched on the ocean, and carried the famous cable across the Atlantic. A very reliable, experienced captain was chosen for this important undertaking, and who should it be but little Jamie, of whom I have been telling you. When the Great Eastern returned to England, after this successful voyage, Queen Victoria bestowed on him the honor of knighthood, and the world now knows him as Sir James Anderson.

Question Corner.—No. 15.

Answers to these questions should be sent in as soon as possible and addressed EDITOR NORTHERN MESSENGER. It is not necessary to write out the question, give merely the number of the question and the answer. In writing letters always give clearly the name of the place where you live and the initials of the province in which it is situated.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

97. By whom and to whom was it said, "Come with us and we will do thee good?"
98. By whom and of whom was it said, "They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided?"
99. Who killed six hundred Philistines with an ox goad?
100. By whom was Moses so named and why?
101. What was Aaron's conduct when his two sons were destroyed by fire from the Lord?
102. Where was Moses buried?
103. What was the early Bible name for Prophet?
104. How many were the Songs of Solomon?
105. What is the shortest song in the Bible?
106. What king was smothered by his servant?
107. Who had for a possession 23 cities of Gilead?
108. By whom were the children of Israel carried captive into Babylon?

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

1. The great apostle of the Gentile race?
2. The first man who in heaven found a place?
3. A youthful Christian in God's law well read?
4. The Lord's peculiar people by him led?
5. One who his birthright for a trifle sold?
6. "An Israelite, indeed"—one of Christ's fold?
7. The promised land with milk and honey blest?
8. A younger son by God beloved best?
The initial letters take and you will find
One virtue of the lowly Christian mind.

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS IN NO. 13.

73. Megiddo, 2 Kings xxiii, 29.
74. Saul, 1 Samuel xxii, 18.
75. Athaliah, 2 Chron. xxii, 10.
76. After the Babylonian captivity, Neh. viii. 7.
77. Zedekiah, Jer. lii. 11.
78. Mount Carmel, Kings xviii. 20.
79. Deborah, Judges, iv. 4. 5.
80. Ehud, Judges, iii. 15.
81. Abimelech, Judges, ix. 5.
82. The men of Shechem, Judges ix. 24.
83. Hezekiah, 2 Kings xx. 6.
84. Balaam, Num. xxiii. 10.

ANSWER TO ENIGMA.

1. I-chabo-d, 1 Sam. iv. 21.
2. S-amari-a, 1 Kings xvi. 24.
3. A-hima-n, Num. xiii. 22.
4. I-su-i, Gen. xlvii. 17.
5. A-nis-e, Matt. xxiii. 23.
6. H-ie-l, 1 Kings xvi, 34.
Isaiah—Daniel.

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.

To No. 13.—Jas. R. Stirling, Maxwell, O., 10; Frank Lyle, Morrisburg, O., 3; Hugh McKeercher, Franktown, O., 12; Gussie Kelly, Kingslear, N. B., 6; Jessa M. MacIntosh, Cavazville, Q., 8; John Tresidder, Montreal, Q., 10; Cora E. Hamilton, Noel Shore, N. S., 12; F. W. Paton, Port Edward, O., 9; Amos J. Poppelstone, Woodham, O., 10; Jane W. Patterson, Gaspe, Q., 7; Annie Donaldson, Ormstown, Q., 12; Francis Hooker, Ormstown, Q., 12; Annie Paton, Ormstown, Q., 12; Margaret Paton, Ormstown, Q., 12.

To No. 12.—John J. Fisher, North Easthope, O., 12; Alice A. Hamilton, Gore, N. S., 10; Peter Masson, Eramosa, O., 13; Hibbert C. Hicks, Dorchester, N. B., 10; John F. Millen, Fortane, O., 13; Allie Dale, Uxbridge, O., 12; Marilda E. Webster, Blanshard, O., 12; Esther E. H. Derby, Kilsyth, O., 6; N. L. McEachern, North Kappel, O., 11; Anna Eyles, Walnut, O., 8; Maggie Darling, Southampton, O., 12; Lillie Jackson, Southampton, O., 12; Lina Sutherland, Ingersoll, O., 11; Susie E. Brown, Head of Wallace Bay, N. S., 11; Everett Forbes, Little Harbor, N. S., 1; Sarah J. Bouins, North Cayuga, O., 10; Stephen S. Stevens, Hopewell Hill, N. B., 10; G. Hugh Harrison, Oak Bay, N. B., 10; Hugh McKeercher, Franktown, O., 10; Ellen Cole, White House, New Jersey, U. S., 12; Gussie Kelley, Kingslear, N. B., 9.