

MISSED

BY AMELIA JOSEPHINE BURR

Poor little angel! Surely 'twas a blunder
That pronged your wings and let the horns prick through
Your golden halo! Did God drowse, I wonder,
When he was making you?

Perhaps he added to a perfect devil
A touch of angel, in that moment's nod—
Then, waking, dropped the failure to the level
Where men and women plod.

Your aping of humanity is clever,
And yet . . . I've seen you when the gay mask fell
Just for a sigh! Are you at heart forever
Homesick for heaven—or hell?

BROTHERS

BY ELIAS LIEBERMAN

Noon in the park. . . . A tropic sun
Dazzles with light and chokes with heat.
Sleepers about you. . . . Notice one
Stretching his length on a wooden seat.
His face is blotched and puffy and seared,
Sweat drips from the clammy skin;
Flies romp on a stubble of beard,—
A bundle of dirt with a soul therein.

Noon at the club. . . . A welcome shade
Dulls the light and cools the heat.
Gentleman seated. . . . Lemonade
Dashed with cognac and something sweet.
Arms dangling limply down,
Feet tapping the polished floor. . . .
Yawning and stretching. . . . No one in town. . . .
Not a soul. . . . What a beastly bore!

PÈRE PERRIN AND HIS PEOPLE

BY JEAN CARTER COCHRAN

The author of this sketch has lived in China and is familiar with village and missionary life in that country. We have published two previous sketches by her—one, "Weh Sao-tze, the Militant," in our issue of March 8, 1916, and the other, "The Shadow on the Light of Asia," in our issue of July 12, 1916. Miss Cochran writes to us as follows regarding Père Perrin:

"The sketch I inclose is an account of Père Perrin, a French priest. We hear so much of the division between the Catholics and the Protestants on the mission field that I thought your readers might be interested in this incident, which seems to me to be a very beautiful one. I have copied verbatim the letter from Père Perrin, hence the rather quaint English. Some of the French and Belgian priests are saintly and devoted men. Coming from high rank, they live in great simplicity, never returning home." —THE EDITORS.

THREE ravens flew overhead, their black wings casting a sinister shadow over the land; suddenly with hoarse croaks they wheeled and descended on a brown field where not even a blade of dried grass showed where plenty had once been.

"If our friends the ravens find food to eat in this forlorn country, it is more than we shall do, Père Perrin."

Père Perrin shook his head sadly. "Now I know what 'the abomination of desolation' means, Père Le Brun; I always used to wonder. Look, we are coming to the Chang village. We shall soon see what our poor children are suffering here."

Slowly they plodded to the little hamlet, footsore, weary, and sorrowful with the sights they had seen and the stories they had heard. Père Perrin fingered his rosary, and his lips moved constantly, though no sound escaped them. Père Le Brun knew he was praying for his flock.

For fifty years had these two good Fathers lived in China. They had studied at the same seminary in France and sailed on the same ship to the Far East. The result of this daily, hourly companionship was, as Père Le Brun used laughingly to say, "We even think the same thoughts, we have no need to talk."

They had often seen destitution. In good years the streets were full of hungry people; but in the past summer there had been floods that broke all records, and during the winter came the most appalling famine they had ever known. With the February cold terrible rumors reached them of the conditions in their country parishes, so they had decided to make a tour of inspection to see what could be done. The results confirmed their worst fears, and Père Le Brun noticed that Père Perrin seemed to age from day to day.

On the outskirts of the village they met an

old man in a single ragged garment, his teeth chattering when the cold wind struck him. At first they did not recognize him, but he approached them and began to speak; then they saw, to their consternation, that it was Chang, the head man of the hamlet, who had been a prosperous, well-dressed farmer the last time they had seen him. Even in his misery he did not forget his native courtesy. "Ah, good Fathers, are you out in the country?" (It is always proper in China to ask an obvious question by way of salutation.)

"Yes, Mr. Chang, we are visiting our hungry sheep. But," in surprise, "where are your doors and windows, and where are the roofs of your houses?"

"The hungry wolf has come and eaten them all, Père Perrin."

It was easy to see that grim want was stalking through the village. A crowd of hungry, gaunt people soon gathered, clad in rags and with the look of famished animals; it was a quiet, orderly group, however, no demonstration being made and only dumb curiosity and wonder being shown. They had been a respectable people in their prosperity, and they were equally peaceful in their adversity. A few scrawny little hands tugged at the skirts of the Fathers' gowns, remembering the sweetmeats that they had always carried for them on other visits. Their friends had not forgotten the little ones, and they were soon munching solemnly.

Père Perrin turned again to Mr. Chang. "I see there are no pigs or dogs in sight. Are they all gone? What are you living on?"

"The scum from the ponds and the bark from the trees will have to keep us until next harvest."

The kindly priest groaned, and, drawing a purse, opened it and took out a few Mexican dollars. "Take it, Mr. Chang, and buy yourself