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AMONG HILLS AND VALLEYS
IN WESTERN CHINA.

INCIDENTS OF MISSIONARY WORK.

BY
HANNAH DAVIES,
OF THE CHINA INLAND MISSION.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
MRS. ISABELLA BISHOP, F.R.G.S.

"I will make them and the places round about My hill a blessing ;
. . . there shall be showers of blessing."—EZEK. xxxiv. 26.

"The valleys also are covered over with corn ; they shout for joy,
they also sing."—Ps. lxxv. 13.

LONDON :
S. W. PARTRIDGE & CO.
8 & 9, PATERNOSTER ROW.
1901.

Affectionately Dedicated to my Fellow-Worker,

F. M. WILLIAMS.

AND TO

C. I. MARRIOTT,

WHO HAS LABOURED WITH US IN PRAYER.

P R E F A C E .

A FEW words of explanation are necessary as a preface to this book. The letters and journals, from which extracts are here given, were never intended for print, and were written to personal friends, generally in haste and often under trying circumstances. It is only in accordance with the earnest wish of one who has generously supported me whilst in China, that I have been persuaded now to publish them. In preparing these letters for print, I have realised greatly their imperfections and incompleteness ; much has been curtailed, whilst here and there facts have been supplied from the journals of others.

During the greater part of my seven years in China, it was my privilege to work with Miss F. M. Williams at Sin-tien-tsi, a small station in North-east Sī-ch'uan, opened in 1892. Many of my readers will have seen the interesting account of the beginning of the work there in "A New Thing," written by Miss F. M. Williams in 1895 ; and I trust that the interest already aroused in the work will deepen through reading of the "greater things" which God hath wrought since.

I greatly regret that, throughout these letters, so little reference is made to my fellow-workers and their work in other stations. This is owing largely to the fact that they were personally unknown to those to whom the letters were written.

And now, in committing this book to God, a threefold desire fills my heart.

In the first place, that it may speak forth God's praise. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake."

Secondly, that it may call forth prayer for all of whom I write.

And thirdly, that it may arouse in many hearts a deeper sense of the great need of China, and that some may be led to consecrate their lives to God for His service in that land.

"Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd."—(John. x. 16.)

H. D.

LLANGWSTENIN RECTORY,
CONWAY.

Oct.. 1901.

INTRODUCTION.

I HAVE much pleasure in writing a few lines of introduction for this volume. I spent seven months in the great province of Szech'uan, to which it chiefly refers, where, at Sin-tien-tsi, I made the acquaintance of Miss Davies in the midst of her work ; and my memories of that fair upland home and of Pao-ning-fu are among the most vivid and delightful of a very delightful journey. I saw the bright, kindly, and intelligent faces of several of the converts mentioned in these letters, and those of many others, "whose names are in the Book of Life," and learned on the spot of their changed lives, their self-denying liberality, their strong spirit of brotherhood, and their propagandist zeal.

The volume gives an accurate picture of mission work and its surroundings ; it is remarkably free from exaggeration ; and the discouragements, which are many and various, are told as faithfully as the encouragements. Some of the sketches of life and character are very beautiful, notably that of Mrs. Uen, who whitewashed the inside of her house after she had destroyed her idols, lest her Lord, when He came, should be grieved by the lingering odour of the incense which had been burned to them. Among many descriptive passages which will arrest the attention of the careful reader is that of the assembly in which Bishop Cassels put before the people the necessity for a new house of worship, and the results of his appeal.

The question which will occur naturally to the thoughtful

reader after going through these unaffected pages is: "Are these Chinese converts, who have but lately emerged from the thick darkness of heathenism, a whit behind ourselves, who have a history and heredity of a thousand years of Christianity?" And a further question suggests itself to me, after two years of journeyings in China: "Are not very many of these Chinese converts *in advance of ourselves* in the simple translation of precept into practice, in self-denying liberality, and in actively making known the Gospel which they have received?" The lives of many of these people bear witness that "if any man be in Christ he is a new creature," and that the old Gospel is still "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

I cordially commend this unpretending book to all who are interested in the much-discussed subject of Christian missions. It casts many useful side-lights on the complexities of Chinese character, and is an instructive contribution to our knowledge of the Chinese by one who knows their language and has lived among them, and who possesses that insight which love alone gives.

ISABELLA BISHOP.

PETERCULTER, ABERDEENSHIRE.

September 22nd, 1901.

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As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.—JOHN xvii. 18.

“From the brightness of the glory,
Go ye forth,” He said;
“Heal the sick, and cleanse the lepers,
Raise the dead.
Freely give I thee the treasure,
Freely give the same;
Take no store of gold or silver,—
Take My Name.

Thou shalt tell Me in the glory
All that thou hast done,
Setting forth alone; returning
Not alone.
Thou shalt bring the ransomed with thee,
They with songs shall come,
As the golden sheaves of harvest
Gathered home.”

From “Hymns of Tersteegen.”

AMONG HILLS AND VALLEYS IN WESTERN CHINA.

CHAPTER I.

THE JOURNEY TO CHINA.

“For His Name’s Sake they went forth.”—3 JOHN 7.

S.S. OCEANA.
October 18th, 1893.

IT seems months since we parted from you all at the Albert Docks, and yet only five days ago we bid each other good-bye, with the prayer “God be with you till we meet again.” We were wonderfully lifted above all the pain and sorrow of parting! At one time I seemed to feel the breaking heart, but it was only for a moment. I heard Christ’s words all the clearer: “For *My* Sake and the Gospel’s”; and for nothing else in the wide world would we leave you all—but for Him, for His Sake? Our hearts cry out a joyous “*Yes,*

Love so amazing, so Divine,
Demands my life, my love, my all.”

When the ship slowly moved away and the distance between us grew greater and greater, and you joined with us in singing:—

“All hail the power of Jesu’s name,”

fresh courage and strength came as the words rang out upon the waters:

“Crown Him, crown Him, crown Him Lord of all.”

* * * * *

Yesterday we reached Gibraltar. We had two hours ashore, and visited the market-place and Soldiers' Rest. From the roof of the latter we had an extensive view of the bay; and the superintendent of the Institute gave us an interesting account of Gibraltar and the life there. He told us also how God has blessed the work being done among the soldiers.

Now we are steaming quietly along the beautiful Mediterranean Sea. I have heard that the colour blue in the Old Testament typifies love. To-day we seem enveloped in blue—the deep blue of God's unspeakable love. The broad expanse of unclouded sky above is perfectly blue, speaking to us of the length and breadth and height of His great love. "As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us."—(Ps. ciii. 11, 12.)

The sky reflects its glorious blue upon the broad waters beneath, until "the depths speak forth Thy praise." And looking across the waters of the sea, away and away to where they wash the shores of dark, heathen Africa, I can see the blue grows deeper, intenser, and these words have begun ringing in my heart: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." "His great love, wherewith He loved us." "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly." "God so loved the *world*, that He gave His only begotten Son." We long to know more and more of the breadth and length and depth and height of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, so that when we come into the depths of heathenism, and are face to face with dark Chinese souls, Christ's love and compassion may be reflected through us, by His Spirit, upon the sin-bound men and women of China.

* * * * *

We arrived at Malta, October 20th. Soon after we anchored we went on shore with the Rev. A. Polhill-Turner (C.I.M.) and Mr. R. Porter, of Ceylon, who very kindly took us for a drive through the island. We visited many places of interest, and from the brow of a hill saw the place where

St. Paul was wrecked—"the place where two seas met." There was something inspiring in seeing a place where the great apostle had been. Mr. W., one of the Protestant missionaries in Malta, begged us to make known the spiritual needs of the island, and to pray that more workers might be sent there.

* * * * *

Early on Sunday morning, October 22nd., we anchored at Brindisi. Soon after breakfast the English mail arrived, and you can imagine with what joy we each hurried away to a quiet corner to be alone for awhile with letters from loved ones far away. Is it to be wondered at that many an eye was full of tears as we read the last loving messages from those left behind? Every letter breathed forth the prayer that we might realise the presence of God with us. This we do indeed, and it keeps us above all the loneliness that otherwise might come. "Alone, yet not alone; for the Father is with me."

*S.S. OCEANA. SUEZ CANAL.
October 26th, 1893.*

ON deck last night, about 8 p.m., we watched the lights of Port Said growing clearer and clearer. Gradually we drew nearer, passing many large steamers, until at length we anchored exactly opposite the town.

As soon as we were still the coaling began. Port Said is said to be the largest coaling-station in the world—millions of tons of coal being shipped here annually. The coal-boats were alive with little black-faced Arabs, screaming and hooting and hopping about, performing all kinds of antics. Fairly alarmed at their howls and screams, we inquired the reason of a sailor standing by. "Oh, it is all right," he answered; "they are always like this. But they are right-down quick workers all the same." And so indeed they proved themselves. We made a very short stay at Port Said, and about midnight entered the Suez Canal. What a strange sight met our view on coming on deck this morning! On either side nothing but the desert, dry and barren. Moving very slowly we have plenty of time to examine our surroundings; but very soon they become monotonous, for

everywhere there is sand—sand, almost nothing but sand. What a picture of our human heart—without God, a desert ; with God, “a watered garden !”

The canal is eighty-seven miles from Port Said to Suez, and we were about eighteen hours passing through it. Slow motion is necessary, as in some parts the canal is too narrow, and the volume of water too small to allow vessels to pass each other. There are stations situated at certain distances down the whole length of the canal, forming sidings ; and at each of these every vessel must stop until notice is received from the next station that the little run between the two sidings is clear.

Soon after entering the canal we passed the Kantara Siding, which is on the old road to Syria—the very route taken by the Patriarchs when they went down to Egypt. About 10 a.m. we reached Ismailia. This forms the central office of the Canal Company, and we made a slightly longer stay here, and a few passengers left us.

* * * * *

*S.S. OCEANA. ADEN.
October 30th.*

“The shadow of a great rock in a weary land.”—Is. xxxii. 2.

“That Rock was Christ.”—1 Cor. x. 4.

For the last three days we have been steaming down the Red Sea. The heat has been great and has wearied us much.

Early this morning we watched the rocky coast of Arabia getting clearer and clearer as we neared Aden. It was all rock, with no sign of vegetation anywhere—all dry, barren rock. At 9.30 a.m. we anchored opposite Aden, which is situated at the base of a high, rugged rock. Our kind friend, Mr. Porter of Ceylon, again took some of us on shore ; the time was too short to allow of our going to the far-famed tanks which most visitors to Aden like to visit ; but we enjoyed seeing all we could of that part known as “Port Aden.” We stood awhile in the centre of the town and watched the crowd around us. There were old, rugged-looking men with bright-coloured cloth wound round their limbs, and white or scarlet turbans tied on their heads.

Some of them, too, had their hair powdered with lime—this being considered a mark of distinction and honour. It gives the hair an unnatural whiteness which contrasts strikingly with the generally jet-black hair of the Africans. There were young, intelligent-looking men in the crowd too, and laughing, happy-faced boys who were rubbing their teeth with some strange plant. One was selling sandals, and, seeing we noticed them, at once became eager to dispose of them, assuring us that “de English put dem on dree hundred years ago when they were savage!” Even this, however, did not induce us to invest in a pair.

We saw very few women, only about half a dozen, crouching down by a wall, all hidden away in their black shawls. We heard they were from Zanzibar, indeed, nearly all the inhabitants of that part of the town are Africans.

An hour or two later the *Oceana* was again on her way eastward; and for awhile we could at the same time see the coastline of Africa on the one side and that of Arabia on the other. We prayed that the day may quickly come when “Ethiopia shall stretch forth her hands unto God,” and that many more such men as Ion Keith Falconer might be sent forth to carry on God’s work in Arabia. There is a great need there of men, “strong (Gr., endynamited) in the Lord”; for if the rocks around are hard and barren, the hearts of the people seem so too. But “it is not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord.” Who will go with the Lord there? Surely there are His “other sheep” to be gathered in from Arabia’s sandy desert:

“A cry as of pain,
 Again and again,
 Is borne o’er the deserts and wide-spreading main;
 A cry from the lands that in darkness are lying;
 A cry from the hearts that in sorrow are sighing;
 It comes unto me,
 It comes unto thee,
 Oh, what!—oh, what shall the answer be?”

It was with much regret that we heard on Saturday that we were due to arrive at Colombo on Sunday. We thought of all the extra-work it would entail—transshipping

and coaling, and the many temptations that always attend Sunday landing.

We arrived soon after breakfast, and as we could not go ashore without hiring boatmen, we remained on board.

Ere leaving the *Oceana* in the afternoon, an opportunity was given for a little work among the native traders who came swarming on board, an opportunity which, under other circumstances, we should probably have missed. As usual, on anchoring, innumerable small boats came alongside our vessel, and, in less time than it takes to write, the deck was crowded with Singalese traders trying to persuade us to buy their wares. Presently one of them came up to Miss Tolley and me, and asked us to buy. Deeply interested in our reply, he squatted down in front of us, saying: "You Christian, you no buy Sunday—me know Jesus Christ." We found he was a Mohammedan, and had been to a Mission School. We had a long talk with him and others who gathered round.

Later in the afternoon, when we had transhipped to the *Rosetta*, they came again, seven or eight of them, to hear more, and Miss Tolley taught them to repeat part of John iii. 16. In the evening, when they had left us and we stood by the ship's side, watching the setting sun light up the broad waters with a golden radiance, we prayed together that we might see those dark Mohammedan faces again, irradiate with glory in the presence of the King.

PENANG.

Friday, November 10th, 1893.

Since last Sunday we have been journeying due East across the Indian Ocean. This morning we came within sight of land. It was Prince of Wales' Island, and as we drew near Penang we were struck with the dazzling beauty of the place. It is set in a wondrous setting, with the mountains behind and the blue sea at its feet.

We anchored at 9.30, and found the landing-stage thronged with Chinese (who number about one-third of the population of Penang)—real Chinamen, with their dark, copper-coloured skin, shaven heads, and pigtails arranged

round their heads in strange style, black shining eyes, and flat, but kind, faces. How unattractive they are! And yet, in spite of it, through God's grace our hearts went out to them.

From Mr. and Mrs. McD., English missionaries in Penang, we received much kindness. They took us for a long drive of six miles through beautiful country, to see the waterfall for which Penang is famed. On either side were groves of cocoanut-trees, oleanders, fig, orange and lemon-trees, fine lace-like acacias with their long black pods just bursting to scatter their seeds, tall banana-trees laden with heavy clusters of fruit, and everywhere there was a rich undergrowth indescribably luxuriant.

On the roadside were gorgeous masses of brilliantly coloured flowers; and very soon we had gathered beautiful bunches of ageratum, lobelia, ipecacuanha, white Passion flowers, rich yellow gloxinias, and the deep crimson "Glory of the Forest," and mixed with them sprays of beautiful ferns, creepers, and grasses.

Penang itself seems to be quite a Chinese town, with narrow, irregular streets, the shops on either side having long Chinese signboards hanging outside, covered with the unknown hieroglyphics that we long so much to understand.

Funny little Chinese children swarmed everywhere, with their small round faces crowned by a small tuft of black hair sticking up on end at the back. What queer little mites they were, running hither and thither, their brown bodies covered only by a tiny garment tied round their waists! The Malay children are very pretty, with abundance of curly, black hair and bright, intelligent faces. If dressed at all, it was in gaily coloured silk scarves, their small ankles being decked with bangles, and their waists and necks with silver chains, their noses and ears being also sometimes adorned with rings. And the Chinese women? Yes, we saw them, too; some were sitting in the sun making shoes, others were carrying water from the river, and one we saw was busy washing clothes at a pump, the clothes on the stone ground, the woman rubbing them with her feet.

As we thought of the awful darkness of their hearts, we felt drawn to these poor women in pity and longing. For Jesus' sake we long to become Chinese unto the Chinese, that through us He may, by His Grace, save some. "The love of Christ constraineth me."

"And with a rush the intolerable craving
Shivered throughout me, like a trumpet call;
Oh, to save these! or perish for their saving!
Die for their life! be offered for them all!"

* * * * *

Passing through the beautiful gardens of Penang, which are laid out with brightly coloured flowers, we hastened on to the waterfall and the tropical woods beyond. On either side of us were shady groves of feathery palms, with here and there a tall cocoanut-tree stretching up towards the blue sky. Suddenly we came in sight of the great waterfall we had come to see. For a few moments we watched the clear waters dashing and splashing down from one rock to another. The sun's glory was reflected in rainbow tints on the water, and the fine crystal spray rose in clouds to fall again on the lovely graceful trees and ferns that seemed to vie with each other in nestling closest to the waters.

In the woods and along our path, flowers and ferns, which we treasure with such care in England, were growing in their rich, native beauty.

"The earth is one vast temple,
Made for worship everywhere;
And flowers are the bells in glen and shade
That ring the heart to prayer."

They rang our hearts to thanksgiving and praise as we reluctantly turned away from the waterfall and slowly wandered back through the palm-woods to the gardens and our *gharries*. We then drove back to Penang, and after tea with Mr. and Mrs. McD. we returned to the vessel.

"Heaven above is softer blue,
Earth beneath is sweeter green,
Something lives in every hue
Christless eyes have never seen.

Birds with gladder songs o'erflow,
 Flowers with deeper beauties shine,
 Since I know as now I know,
 I am His and He is mine."

* * * * *

S.S. ROSETTA. INDIAN OCEAN.

One evening lately we stood looking over the sea, talking of you and of the land to which we are going. Every few moments the great dark billows would rise higher and higher, until at length they burst into a sea of phosphorescent light. It was exquisitely lovely, and seemed as if millions of stars had fallen round one spot, lighting up the surface of the dark waters with dazzling beauty.

I thought of the promise of God, that "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea."

That time *will* come, and the darkness of heathenism will burst into a sea of heavenly light; and when "the day breaks and the shadows flee away," and God's children shall have "gotten the victory," and shall stand upon "the sea clear as crystal," there will then be millions of precious souls from China, and India, and Africa, and all heathen lands to shine as the stars for ever in the presence of God.

CHINA SEA.

November 15th, 1893.

Since leaving Singapore last Sunday evening, we have had very rough weather. The captain had warned us of heavy seas ahead, but we were hardly prepared for all we have passed through. On Monday and Tuesday the wind was very boisterous, and most of us were on the sick list again. The "Daily Light" texts on Tuesday evening seemed specially meant for us. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." "I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me."

About midnight the storm broke upon us in all its fury, and for three or four hours it raged louder and louder. For some time Miss R. and I, who share a cabin, lay clutching the rails of our berths and feeling every instant in imminent

danger of being tossed out. One thing I remember of those hours of peril was the clear view I had of the little storm-tossed boat on the Sea of Galilee, and of Jesus coming to the frightened disciples, in the fourth watch of the night, walking on the sea. I could almost see the rough, stormy waves fall down to quiet, still *rest* as His feet touched them. What a calm behind, where His feet have trod! What a storm ahead, where as yet He has not been!

About 4 a.m. there came a huge, roaring billow bursting with a tremendous dash against the vessel. It was followed by a noisy dash of broken glass and china, and many shouts and screams from all parts of the ship. We were nearly thrown out, and could lie still no longer. Turning up the light, we found our cabin a perfect wreck. Everything piled in confusion on the floor, our cabin boxes hurled forward, the water-bottle and washing-basin smashed in pieces. Wrapping ourselves up, we went into the adjoining cabin to our friends, Miss Walker and Miss Williams, also missionaries to China. Outside, the tempest raged, the wind roared like thunder, the waves tossed high; but inside that little cabin as we read together the precious promises of the 91st Psalm, and in prayer committed ourselves and all of you afresh into God's keeping, "a great calm" and "the peace which passeth understanding" flooded our souls.

With you in England it was about 9 or 10 p.m., and we felt many of you would be praying for us then.

About 5 a.m. there was a slight lull, and we heard that the ship had been turned round. Having gone back some distance she was steered forward again, keeping clear of the storm.

A good deal of damage had been done, and part of the Hong-kong mail destroyed; a large amount of china and glass was smashed, and iron bars on deck were wrenched by the force of the tempest.

We are tossing about still on a rough sea, and having a sorry time *physically* speaking, but our hearts are full of praise to God for His wonderful deliverance. We have proved that He is indeed able to make "the depths of the sea a way for the redeemed to pass over."—(Is. li. 10. R.V.)

S.S. ROSETTA. HONG-KONG.
November 19th.

"Then are they glad because they be quiet; so He bringeth them unto their desired haven."—Ps. cvii. 30.

Truly we were glad this morning when, after a week of storm and tempest, we quietly entered the calm of the beautiful harbour of Hong-kong. Our "desired haven," the land where God would have us be, used to seem so far, far away, but now, there at last is *China!* "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy Name."

We have had a very happy day at Hong-kong. This morning we went to the Seamen's Church, and in the afternoon visited Miss Johnstone's school for Chinese girls.

This morning, as we looked towards our new country for the first time, we thought of those memorable words of yearning uttered in his dying hour by Francis Xavier, with hands outstretched towards the great, closed Empire: "O rock, rock, when wilt thou open to my Master?"

Thank God for the doors opened there now to the Gospel, and for the band of missionaries scattered throughout the land. But how few they are among so many! With Xavier we cry: "Yet more, O my God, yet more." I do thank God that it pleased Him "to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen"; and that "unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

"Christ, the Son of God, hath sent me
Through the midnight lands;
Mine the mighty ordination,
Of His piercèd hands.

* * * * *

Mine the message, grand and glorious,
Strange, unsealed surprise,—
That the goal is God's Belovèd,
Christ in Paradise."

From "Hymns of Tersteegen,"
by FRANCIS BEVAN.

Think of this Empire of the East, stretching its coast-line three thousand miles by the Pacific Ocean—four hundred and thirty thousand square miles larger in area than all Europe—four degrees wider than the whole United States—including one quarter of the Continent of Asia and one-fourteenth of the habitable globe within its borders—its circuit half the circumference of the world in which we live!

China's death-rate would bury all London in seven months, all New York city in two, all the United States in less than seven years, all the United Kingdom in four years and a half.

Think of its people, numbering one quarter of the human race—six times as many as in all the United States—equal to the population of Europe, or of Africa, North America, South America, and Australasia! Twenty-four thousand die in China every day!

To reach this inconceivable mass of humanity there are only fifteen hundred messengers of Christ.

“A need, a need known, and the power to meet that need constitute a call.”

From “Regions Beyond,” 1896.

CHAPTER II.

CHINA AT LAST.

"The Lord thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came unto this place."—DEUT. i. 31.

SHANG-HAI.
November, 1893.

WE are really in China now—in the land to which we know God has called us to live and work for Him. May God grant that our lives may be to His glory, and that increasingly it may be "my earnest expectation and my hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness . . . Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or death."

Our hearts are full of praise and thanksgiving to God for our safe journey to this far-away land. Through all the partings, through the loneliness and longings within, and through many dangers from winds and waves, storm and tempest without, we have found God to be indeed a very present help in trouble; and thus in the calm of a restful confidence in God, He has brought us to this dark land.

We anchored at Wu-seng on Thursday night, November 23rd; it was, however, not until 9.10 the following morning that we stepped down the gangway of the *Rosetta* into a small steam-tender, and quickly moved away from the vessel which had been our home for three long weeks. We had learnt many lessons on board, and shall always remember with much gratitude our varied experiences on the *Rosetta*; and yet it was with real, unmixed joy and thankfulness that we left her and found ourselves steaming up the mouth of the Yang-tsi. Through the windows of the tender we had a good view of the river, and were interested in the variety of native ships and boats that we passed;

there were Chinese trading vessels, curious fishing-smacks, large, awkward-looking junks, little *sam-pans*, and many others. We noticed that on the front of many of the native boats two large *eyes* were painted. The Chinese, we were told, do this in the hope of ensuring a safe course for their vessels.

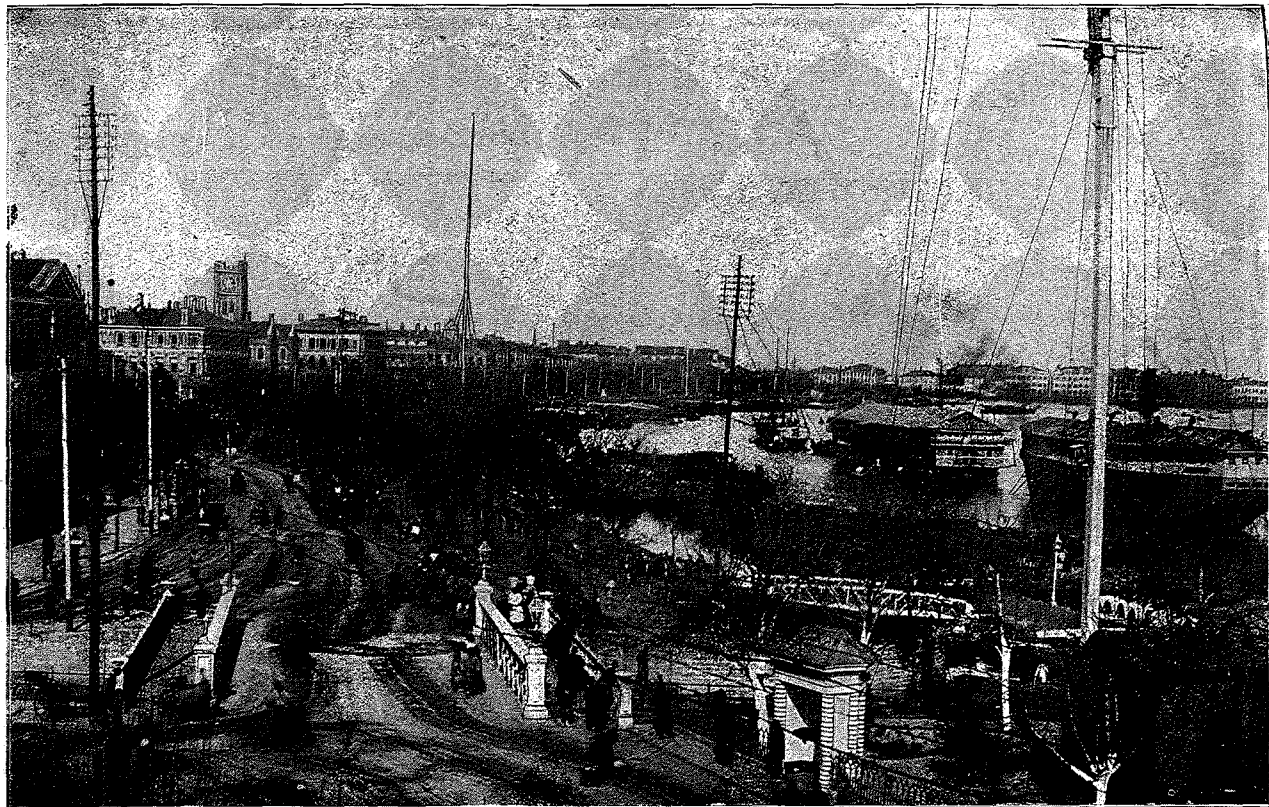
Three or four missionary friends met us at the landing-stage, and how strange it seemed to be talking English to people in Chinese dress!

A few minutes later we found ourselves being hurried along in *jinrickshas* drawn by Chinese coolies through the rather English-looking streets, until we came to a sudden stop before a large building, over the front of which I saw the words: "China Inland Mission." A thrill of thankful joy filled my heart that God had raised up this great Mission, and so abundantly blessed its work in this dark land. We received a warm welcome from Mr. Stevenson (Deputy Director) and other missionary friends in the Home.

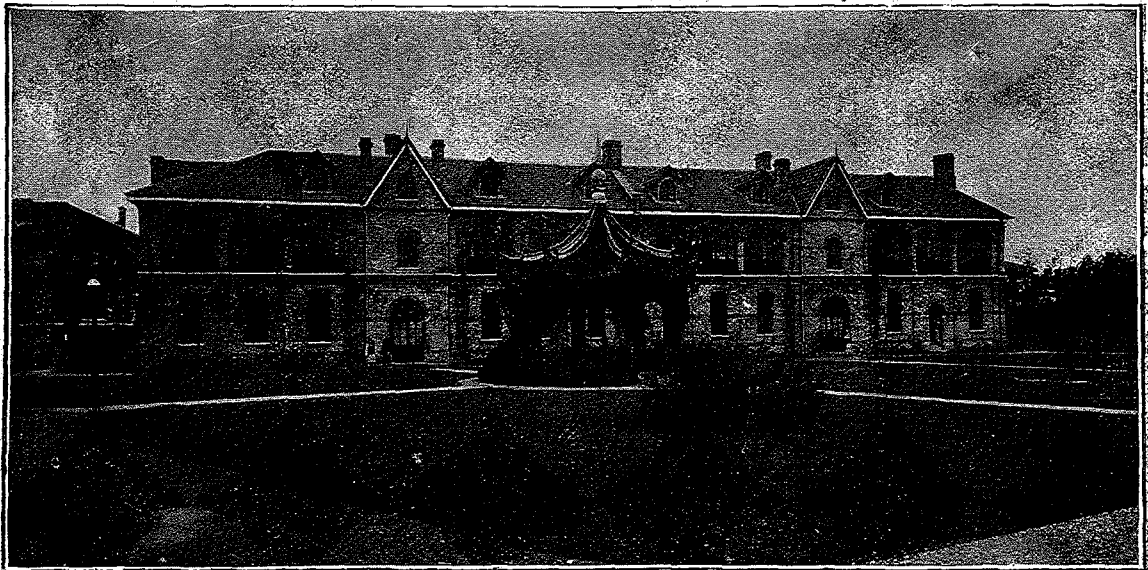
We spent five happy days in Shang-hai, preparing for going inland to Iang-cheo. We met many missionaries, some fresh from their different spheres of work in the interior, others living in Shang-hai and pouring out their lives for God, through their ministry of love on behalf of their fellow-missionaries in the inland stations. It was a great joy to meet them, and their kind words very much encouraged us.

I think you would like our Chinese costume. I am sure I shall, when more accustomed to it. I am glad my first Chinese dress is a *blue* one. It makes me think of the high priest wearing the blue ephod when ministering before the people to remind them of God's love. As we go among these people may God help us, by life and witness, faithfully to show forth God's great love to them in Christ Jesus!

We hope to leave Shang-hai to-morrow, travelling by small steamer to Chin-kiang, and then by native boat up the Grand Canal to Iang-cheo, where we hope to spend a few months studying the language and learning something of the manners and customs of the people, before going



THE BRITISH SETTLEMENT, SHANG-HAI.



PART OF THE CHINA INLAND MISSION PREMISES, SHANG-HAI.

further inland to the station to which we shall be appointed to work permanently. We shall also have the opportunity of seeing something of the mission work being done among the people of that great city; and thus we hope to gain experience which will help us in time to come.

YUNG-wo. YANG-TSI RIVER.
November 30th, 1893.

You would be much amused if you were suddenly to come into our little cabin on board this river-steamer. You would find me perched up on a ledge, which forms my berth, with my writing on my knee, and in Chinese dress. If I *look* anything like I *feel*, then I must indeed be a funny sight!

Being very cold, we have on a goodly number of garments, and over them all a thickly wadded coat, so that we look and feel a most portly size. On our heads, however, we have nothing but a little black band, and on our feet thin shoes made of cotton material.

We are a large missionary party on board; ten of us have just arrived from England, and are going inland for the first time with Miss Hanbury, who is in charge of the Ladies' Missionary Home at Iang-cheo. She has been several years in China, and for the greater part of the time has worked in North-east Si-ch'uan, the district to which I shall probably be sent.

She is taking such care of us, trying, as far as she is able, to make us quite comfortable, even in these strange circumstances. Our meals are great fun! We all (twelve in number) gather together in the largest cabin we have (made to hold six), and there, seated on the berths, or on any available box or basket, using the berths also as tables, we have, as you may imagine, a merry time. In addition to all ordinary picnic difficulties of managing with a limited supply of things, or of adjusting one's cup just where it is least likely to topple over, we have a still more serious matter to settle, and that is, how best to manage our long, wide sleeves! The edges insist on finding their way into our tea or on to our plates, or, still worse, into some one else's,

and an upset altogether is not unusual. I suppose in time we shall be as expert and adroit in the management of them as the natives themselves.

The food supplied for second-class passengers on board these steamers is, of course, strictly Chinese ; and, as we are not yet sufficiently naturalised to enjoy Chinese rice and the questionable and most uninviting oily delicacies that accompany it, Miss Hanbury brought an abundant supply of English provisions for the journey with her from Shang-hai, so we are doing splendidly.

Our journey up the Yang-tsi has been very interesting. Though the country on the whole in this part of its course is flat, we have now and again caught glimpses of distant hills. When near to the banks, the cities and pagodas, the strange houses and temples, and the funny little children playing about, have all interested us. The river, the waters of which are muddy and brown, is in parts very broad,—a mile or more, I believe,—but the width varies constantly.

LANG-CHEO.

December 8th, 1893.

We had a bright and happy welcome to Chin-kiang from Dr. and Mrs. Cox; and the next morning continued our journey by small native boat to Iang-cheo. Though only fifteen miles distant from Chin-kiang up the Grand Canal, it took us seven or eight hours to reach the city.

On arriving at the landing-place, near one of the gates of the city, we left the boat; and sedan-chairs and wheelbarrows were called. I mounted one of the latter with another missionary, and we were pushed or jerked along over the rough, dirty, winding alleys, thronged with dense crowds of people. Many a time our coolie had to push us up into a corner to let another barrow or chair pass, the road being too narrow to allow of two abreast.

At last we reached the house that is home to us now. It stands between two large heathen temples in one of the most wicked cities in China. Humanly speaking, we are in the midst of dangers; but the power of God keeps us in "perfect peace."

It is so nice to be here at last, after our seven weeks' journey. Every one is so kind, and the house is homelike and comfortable. But the *reality* that we are in China presses upon us in many ways; the daily coming in contact with a heathen teacher, and our earnest longing for his salvation, coupled with our utter inability to say one word to him; the walks through the dense crowds in the narrow, dirty streets of the city; the many temples and shrines; the opium dens; the sin and sorrow written on nearly every face; the cry of "foreign devil,"—all remind us that we are in China. The stillness of the night is broken by the sound of the temple gongs or the monotonous wail of some poor bereaved family, varied by the discordant chanting of the hired priests. These sounds seem to me the echo of the exceeding bitter cry, that rises to Heaven unceasingly from the three hundred thousand inhabitants of this great city. Thank God, He has heard it:—"I have heard their cry . . . I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them."

Our days are quiet, but very busy, being chiefly given to the study of the language. We study six hours a day, two of these being spent with the Chinese teacher.

This morning, as I sat with my teacher repeating the words after him over and over again in their various tones, the ludicrous side of the whole position struck me very forcibly. I had, however, to restrain my amusement, as to show it would have been a dreadful breach of Chinese etiquette! The room is almost bare except for two tables, a form, and a few chairs; the walls are hung with long Chinese scrolls; the window looks out into a courtyard, where women are washing and working in their strange ways.

Inside the room are two Chinese tutors, one at each table—untidy-looking men with sun-browned faces and shaven heads hidden under their black caps, from beneath which hang their long, black pigtailed; their clothes are well padded and not over-clean; their finger-nails are *very* long, and they dig them mercilessly into the books, leaving indelible marks. Opposite each teacher are two figures, which, in spite of

all the Chinese garb, hair-dressing, etc., will persist in retaining an excessively "foreign look."

The language is difficult, very difficult indeed, and beyond any ability in us; but through Him who is "perfect in knowledge" we can do *all* things, and in His own good time we shall be able to tell forth His salvation to these dark souls among whom we live.

Whilst I study, I seem to learn more of God than of the language. His lessons are often hard to learn, but in time to come we shall be glad we learnt them now, before coming face to face with the blackness of heathenism. Some words in a letter from England have helped me so much:

"Fear not the language; it will be yours before long; but there is no need to wait for *words* to show forth Christ to the heathen—the *life* can be fragrant; it can breathe forth love and sympathy, purity and beauty, holiness, goodness wherever it goes—*it can manifest forth Jesus Christ.*"

Iang-cheo is a large and busy city, with a population of about three hundred thousand. The missionary workers are but few. Here, in the Home, assisting Miss Hanbury, are three ladies, who, besides helping us with our studies, are doing all they can to reach the people around with the Gospel.

In another part of the city are two more—Miss Henry and Miss Box—who have a very interesting work among women and children. They have asked me to spend an afternoon with them soon, and I am very much looking forward to seeing their little Chinese house and something of the work being done at that end of the city. The evangelist who helps them is a man full of zeal for God's work. He comes from the country, and at certain seasons of the year has to return home to help in the field-work; but he is always glad when this is over, and he can again give up his time entirely to spreading the news of Salvation.

At another house in the city are Mr. and Mrs. Andrew. In connection with their house there is Miss Murray's boarding-school for Chinese girls, now in the charge of Miss Meyer and Miss Arpiainen, Miss Murray being at home on furlough.

Mr. Andrew superintends all the work at Iang-cheo and

at the other four mission stations further north on the Grand Canal.

Our first Chinese service interested us very much, and the singing of Chinese words to the English tunes sounded so quaint; it was hearty, though not melodious, and the dear people seemed to put their whole heart—and body too—into the singing!

I am very happy—happier now than ever I was before coming to China. Not for anything the world could offer would I be anywhere else. For *me* the Lord is *here*, and my joy is to be with Him. Where He would have us be is where we realise His nearness most. Nothing but Himself could draw me now from China. “It is good to be here.” “He hath put gladness in my heart.”

“O teach me, Lord, that I may teach
The precious things Thou dost impart;
And wing my words, that they may reach
The hidden depths of many a heart.

O fill me with Thy fulness, Lord,
Until my very heart o’erflow
In kindling thought and glowing word,
Thy love to tell, Thy praise to show.”

F. R. H.

If you could stand now beneath those hands, outstretched towards a tired world; if you could look into that face, lit with unutterable love for the world for which He died; if you turned from Him with your heart burning with that same love, would your first glance be towards a land where one in every five has found the Christ, and the other four have heard of Him over and over again? Would you not rather turn to where but one in every fifteen hundred has found Him, and of the other fourteen hundred and ninety-nine, but few have ever heard His Name?

SHERWOOD EDDY.

CHAPTER III.

CHRISTMAS IN CHINA.

“Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed.”—1 JOHN iii. 20.
“The Holy Child Jesus.”—ACTS iv. 27.

LANG-CHEO.

December 28th, 1893.

CHRISTMAS in China! Two years ago when first I read “In the Far East,” there was a cold, dismal ring in the thought; but *now* it is not so, for I know something of the joy of being in China for Christ’s sake!

“Better than earthly presence, e’en the dearest,
Is the great blessing that our partings bring;
For in our loneliest moments, God is nearest,
And from our sorrows heavenly comforts spring,
For God is with us.”

On Saturday, the 23rd, we decorated this our first Chinese home with texts and evergreens, and a few of us prepared a bran-pie as a surprise for the little children of some of the missionaries. It reminded me of our Christmas preparations for the little ones at home; indeed, our hearts were all the time linked with memories of days gone by. I have missed you all so much this happy Christmas time, and have longed that you were here in China too. But this cannot be, we are henceforth “separate . . . unto the work.” On Christmas Eve we had a praise meeting. One after another the old Christmas hymns were sung, and never had they seemed to me more beautiful, or their message sweeter than then!

Outside, all was quiet except for the sound of a passing footstep on the rough road, or the sad ring of the temple gong, which every few moments broke the stillness that

pervaded this great, heathen city. Inside, our hearts so hushed seemed almost to catch the sound of the angels' song : "On earth peace, goodwill towards men."

* * * * *

On Christmas morning we found the dining-room decorated, the tables bright with flowers, and presents on every plate. But our Christmas joy seemed full when Miss Hanbury came in laden with letters from the homeland for all of us.

During the morning we had a bright Chinese service conducted by Mr. Andrews. The Christians seemed so happy, and so thoroughly to enjoy the singing, in spite of the tunes being conspicuous by their absence!

Towards the close of the service, A. and R. were called out to an opium-case. Oh, how real this made our first Christmas in China!

They were not away long, for they were called *too late!* They arrived to find life passing away. Again, as so often, it was a young girl—a servant, probably a slave-girl in a wealthy family. Driven to desperation by some more than usually cruel treatment, she had that morning taken a large dose of opium, and in wine, to hasten its effects. Quickly the poison did its work, and it was only when native remedies had been tried and failed, that a messenger was sent for the "foreign doctor."

Too late, too late! Another precious soul, for whom Christ died, had gone to its unknown future! "Redeemed, and she did not know it." Another precious soul to be *missing* in that day when Christ makes up His jewels. Surely this poor girl was included in the command : "Preach the Gospel *to every creature!*" She never heard it!

These words keep ringing in my mind : "Keep this man ; if by any means he be missing, then shall thy life be for his life."

Whom had God made security for this young girl? Whom did He call, saying, "The Lord hath need of thee in China," and who listened not to His voice? or, who was commissioned to *pray* this soul into the Kingdom, and waxed faint at the throne of grace? To whom will He sorrowfully utter

the sad, reproachful words : “ Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these, ye did it *not* unto Me ? ”

And this is but *one* of the very many sad, sad lives passing away into darkness every day. Do our ears not hear “ the cry as of pain ” that rises unceasingly from China ? or, are we accustomed to the fact that a million a month in China are dying without God, that every hour fourteen hundred sink into Christless graves, and that every day twenty-four thousand pass for ever beyond our reach ?

To God, each one of all China’s four hundred millions is infinitely precious. He loves them all, these poor lost ones ; and loving, He gives : “ God *so* loved the world, that He *gave* His only begotten Son ” to die for the sins of the whole world. “ Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us : and we *ought* to lay down our lives for the brethren.”

It is this Love, the Love of Calvary, that these perishing souls around need. Oh, that God would make us channels, though which this Love might reach hundreds of them !

The time is so short. “ Yet a very little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” In this little while let us live and work, and suffer and die, if need be, for Jesus’ sake and the Gospel’s.

“ A little while !—and *then* the Hallelujah !
Eternity’s long, deep thanksgiving psalm ! ”

I saw the stars of the morning wait
On their lofty towers to watch the land,
As a little child stole up to the Gate,
And knocked with a tiny, trembling hand.

A wreath of flowers on her jet-black hair,
The light of youth in her shining eyes,
And the look of an earnest purpose there,
As of one who must win a place in the skies.

"I am only a little child, dear Lord,
And my feet are stained already with sin,
But they said you had sent the children word
To come to the Gate and enter in."

The Man at the Gate looked up and smiled,
A heavenly smile, and fair to see;
And He opened, and bent to the pleading child:
"I am willing, with all My heart," said He.

From "Ezekiel," by B. M.

CHAPTER IV.

ONE OF HIS JEWELS.

"Jesus called a little child unto Him."—MATT. xviii. 2.

"Is it well with the child?" . . . "It is well."—2 KINGS iv. 26.

LANG-CHHO.

February 8th, 1894.

PERHAPS some children at home may like to hear about a Chinese girl who died a few days ago.

Dear little Siao-mao! She had been ill for weeks and suffered much. She was eleven years old, her mother's treasure, and a favourite with all the children of their neighbourhood. Before her illness she came here regularly to Miss Bertha Porter's class for children, and was quick to learn texts and hymns, and her little heart was full of love for, and simple trust in, Jesus Christ.

Mrs. Ch'en, the child's mother, has not shown much interest in the Gospel, though for some time Bertha held a class in her house every Sunday afternoon. When the child had been ill some time, I went with Bertha to see her. The house was a nice one, much cleaner than any other Chinese house I have seen. In the centre room were the family idols, and on the doors were posted ugly, paper gods.

Little Siao-mao was in bed in an inner room. She looked up as we entered, and I was struck with her sweet face. Her large, black eyes were shaded by long, dark lashes, a rosy flush covered her cheeks, and her black hair, roughened by being in bed, encircled her little face with curls. She held Bertha's hand, and seemed happy as she spoke of Jesus. Her mother said it was always the same—that in spite of weakness and pain the child would repeat texts and hymns, stopping to pray when the pain was severe, and, as the mother told us

this, the little one looked up, saying, "Jesus always comes to help me when the pain is very bad."

She had by her an old, white-faced, wax doll, which she valued greatly, and she was delighted with a new one we had taken with us that day. Before leaving we knelt at her bedside and commended the little one to the Good Shepherd's care.

Days passed by, and the child grew worse. Bertha visited her often, but each time found her weaker than before; and gradually the little life ebbed away. When conscious, she would still repeat hymns, or just keep saying, "Jesus, Jesus." At last, the doctors told the mother her child would die.

Oh, how little we can realise the deep, deep sorrow of the broken heart of a lost soul! Poor, sorrowing mother! she loved her child, she idolised her, lived for her, and now the child was going—going where? As far as the poor mother believed, it was to an unknown eternity of pain and sorrow. Oh, the agony of that mother's heart! Her precious little one going away, and going *there*!

One morning Bertha was sent for. She found the child unconscious and very weak. Many idolatrous and superstitious preparations were being made. As sick people are generally taken outside the house to die, the child was no longer in bed; she was lying on her mother's lap in the courtyard, dressed in many gay and pretty garments, all new and fresh. These had been prepared so that she might be well supplied with clothing in the unknown world! Around the unconscious child many relatives and friends were weeping and making much ado. One tall, grown-up son knelt down by the little one's side and burst into tears.

Dear little Siao-mao, she lay there quite unconscious of the bright garments with which they had clothed her, or of the crowd around her. She was nearing the threshold of Heaven, her feet had nearly reached the heavenly gates, the Good Shepherd had lifted His little lamb in His loving, mighty arms, and was carrying her through the valley of the shadow. . . on and on through the pearly gates to

"The Home for little children
Above the bright blue sky."

And there,—“for ever with the Lord,”—clothed in her pure white robe and touching her harp of gold, is that little Chinese girl, joining her praises to those of the angelic host around the throne of God.

How beautiful to the King of kings, how precious in His sight must be this little redeemed one, this jewel in His crown, found amid the dense darkness and wickedness of China!

* * * * *

But whilst *we* rejoiced that the little one was “safe in the arms of Jesus,” there was terrible mourning and sorrow in her home. Her mother seemed well-nigh distracted. Every possible thing, which, according to their ideas, would relieve the child’s torture in her future life, was done. Priests sang chants over the little dead body, paper money was burnt, and, so that the child might have all her favourite playthings with her in the Great Unknown, the fond-hearted mother burnt all the child’s toys and her two dolls.

Oh, the ignorance and darkness, the sorrow and sin, the superstition and terror that bind down these poor, dark, hopeless souls!

What can we in our weakness do against such odds as these? Nothing, absolutely nothing, but “with *God* all things are possible.”

When we remember the difficulty of acquiring the Chinese language; the dwarfing conservatism and over-running pride of China, which looks only to her own past for a model; ancestral worship, with its terrible grip on man, woman, and child; Chinese Buddhism, with its ignorant, immoral priesthood, and gross forms of idolatry; the thirty million Mohammedans of the Western provinces; the universal ignorance which enslaves the people to a thousand superstitions; the discouraging prevalence of deception and falsehood entering into every relation of life; the wide-spread dishonesty which is the logical result of the fact that China is the greatest nation of gamblers in the world; impurity in all its unnameable forms; the Opium curse, which cost last year \$220,000,000—enough, as one has said, to make ten million opium slaves, and bring want to one hundred million human beings; the amount of physical suffering which is incredible and appalling, and the utter absence of medical science apart from one medical missionary to every two million people; the one hundred and eighty million women who are virtually in slavery;—when we remember all these things, and the dreadful fact that here is a country regulated not by the living, but by the dead, can we question that China presents the greatest combination of difficulties of any mission field? We believe that Morrison's prayer before he was appointed to China was literally answered—the prayer that God would station him where the difficulties were greatest and to all human appearance the most insurmountable.

JOHN R. MOTT.

CHAPTER V.

“IS IT FOR ME?”

“Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.”—Is. liii. 4.

LANG-CHEO.
March 30th, 1894.

FOR the last few weeks I have wanted to tell you of my first visiting experiences, but they filled my heart so full of yearning towards the perishing millions of dark, sin-bound China that I have been too sad for writing; but rest and comfort came when I cast the burden upon the Lord.

“Peace, perfect peace, with sorrows surging round?—
On Jesus’ bosom nought but calm is found.”

Outside the city walls, away in the country, all is beautiful now, for the trees and flowers are bursting forth into new life and beauty; while the bright songs of the birds and the hum of insects show that summer is nigh, and everything in Nature speaks of God’s love.

Inside the city walls are sin and wickedness, misery and wretchedness everywhere; ignorance, sorrow, sin, and pain on nearly every face, telling of the weary, heavy-laden hearts and sin-stricken souls. There are idols on every door and in every house, temples or shrines in every street, signs everywhere of the iron chains of error and superstition with which the people are bound. Immediately outside the city, as far as eye can see, are the graves innumerable of countless generations of precious souls, redeemed, and they knew it not, who have passed away—*without* Christ! All this below—and did our eyes see this *alone*, our hearts would break, but above it all is God’s blue sky, reminding us again of His love for all these dark, perishing souls.

“Behold, what manner of love!” “God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

One bright afternoon lately, I visited some hamlets outside the city with Miss Bertha Porter, one of the three missionaries who live in the Home with Miss Hanbury. We started about midday, Mrs. Chang, a Chinese Christian, accompanying us.

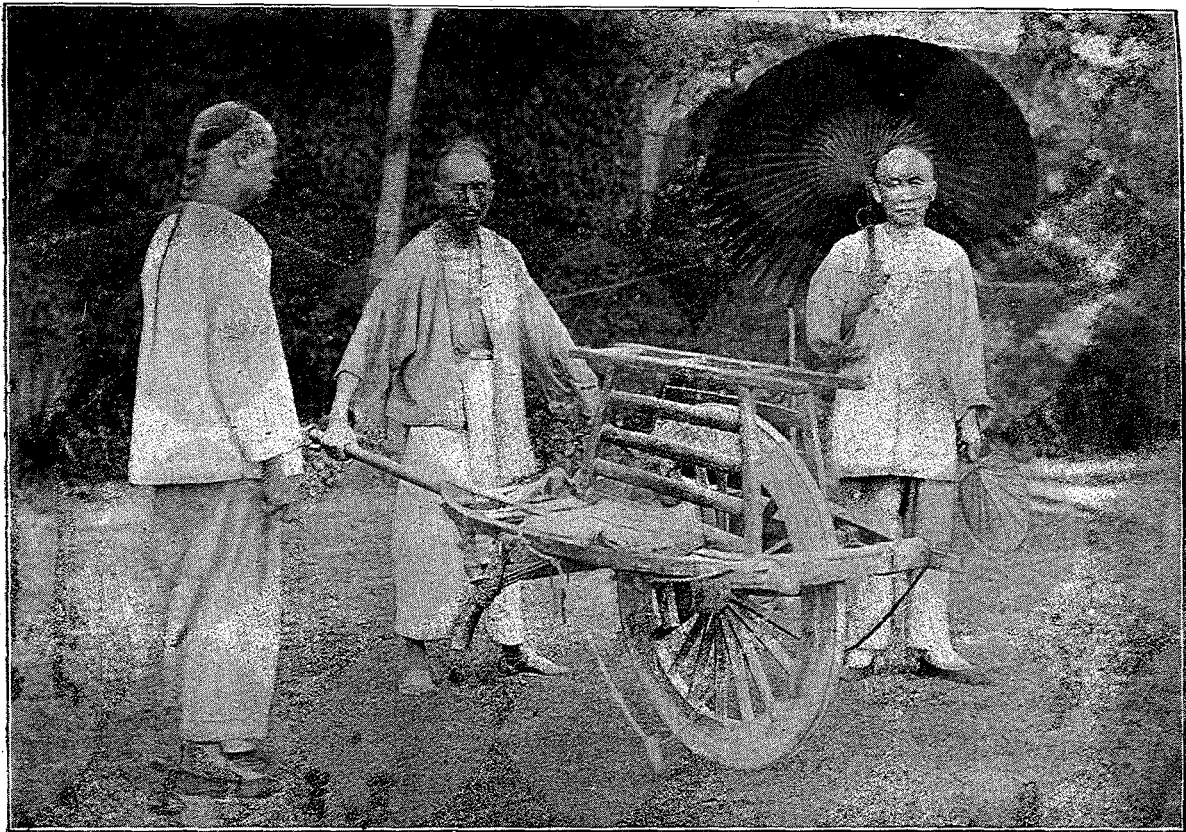
We rode our wheel-barrow through the streets, but as soon as we got outside the city walls we were glad to walk, for the roads are rough, and barrow-riding anything but pleasant. On drawing near a small village, we slackened our pace and walked (or, rather, crawled at the snail's rate, correct for Chinese women) along the narrow streets.

Numbers of people followed, but it was some minutes before we had an opportunity of speaking to any one. Presently, however, we were given a form to sit on in the open street, and at once a great crowd gathered round us. Men, women, and children came out of their houses, some bringing their work with them, while others, it being dinner-time, brought their rice and chopsticks, and continued their meal as we spoke to them. Travellers and heavily laden coolies stopped as they passed by, the latter laying down their burdens as they listened. How we did long that they would as readily lay down their heavy burden of sin at the Saviour's feet, and go on their way rejoicing!

At first, dozens of funny questions about “foreigners” had to be answered. “Were we born a hundred years old?” is a very ordinary question. They seemed convinced we were, and on being told our age they added it to a hundred, so as to know our real age!

Another thing that puzzles them is why we have not black hair as they all have. Bertha amused them by saying that if they would tell her why their's was black, she *might* be able to explain why ours was not!

At length the questions flagged, and Bertha and Mrs. Chang spoke to them in turns about Jesus Christ and His love for them. Everything was still around, the people listened quietly, and the sun was shining brightly upon us. It was



CHINESE BARROW : WAITING FOR HIRE.

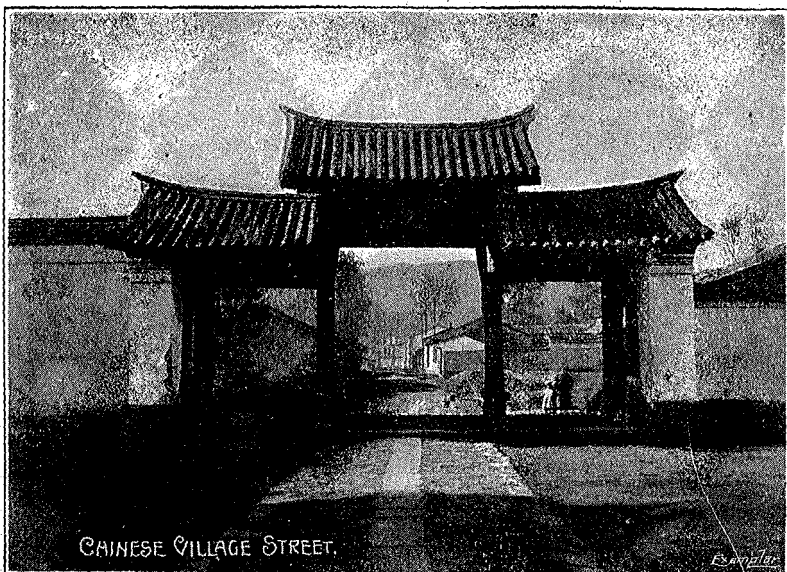


Photo by]

[Capt. Watts-Jones, R.E.

A QUIET VILLAGE STREET.



Photo by]

[Mr. Jensen.

SEDAN-CHAIR FOR LONG-DISTANCE JOURNEYS.

the first time I had seen a Chinese crowd hearing the Glad Tidings, and I shall never forget it. I understood almost nothing of what was said, but I felt it a privilege to be there to pray for these poor dark souls, as they heard of God's great love and Jesus Christ Whom He had sent. We did not stay long, being anxious to reach a more distant village. They pressed us to stay, but we thought of regions still beyond, which we longed to reach that day, not knowing when we might come again. As we turned from them, a number of people followed us through the village and some distance beyond; then they bade us farewell, entreating us to come again soon and tell them more.

As we came away, Bertha said to me: "It is such a *joy* to tell out the Gospel to those who have never heard; every time I do so my heart seems to overflow with deep, deep gladness." Oh, how I longed for the time when I should know this joy too!

Cutting across a wild waste-ground, we made for some groups of houses we could see in the far distance. Wandering slowly past the first of these, Bertha soon got a few words with a kind-looking woman at her door. After the usual greeting, "Have you eaten your rice?" was exchanged, she asked where we were going, and what had brought us out so far. On hearing that we had come from the city to tell them good news, she at once begged us to sit down and tell her. Forms were brought, and no sooner were we seated, than some men, women, and children, who had been watching us at a respectful distance, flocked around us, and again we were the centre of a small crowd.

The usual questions had to be answered, and, as most of these people had never before seen a foreigner, it took some time to satisfy their curiosity. They thought we were spirits, and evinced much surprise when they found that we dress and speak, eat and drink as they do.

Here I think they listened to the Gospel even more eagerly than the others had done, and their questions showed an intelligent interest. Then, once more, as we came away, we were asked "to come again quickly and tell them more."

Alas! we cannot tell when these will hear again. On

every hand there are open doors for the Gospel, and dark souls are waiting for Light, athirst for something they know not what. This is indeed "the day of salvation." "The fields are white unto harvest, *but the labourers are few* : pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest."

Wending our way further across the wide fields, and walking with some difficulty along the narrow paths, separating one field from another, we reached a small group of some six or seven houses. We were invited into one of these, and immediately there was a hue and cry for all the neighbours to come and listen. The tiny room was soon packed as tight as possible, and Bertha was beginning to speak, when there was a sudden stir among the people and a general rush to the help of an old, infirm woman—over eighty and quite blind—who wished to hear too. Dear old woman! they all seemed so fond of her, and made her as comfortable as possible under the circumstances.

Mrs. Chang sat down on a stool at her feet, and began to speak to her. "You are like yon bright, setting sun," said she; "you are going down quickly. Do you know where you are going?"

"No," answered the woman; "how should I know?"

Then Mrs. Chang told her the glad news of Jesus and His love, and of the Home of many mansions that He has gone to prepare for those who love Him. Oh, how eagerly the woman listened! When Bertha saw her intense hungering, she beckoned all the others outside, to speak to them there. I was spell-bound, and felt I must wait and pray.

Again and again Mrs. Chang went over the sweet story of how Jesus loved and died for sinners. Poor old woman! as she listened she kept repeating parts of it to herself, and occasionally would interrupt Mrs. Chang, asking: "But is it for *me*? I never knew before, no one came to tell me; I have no time now, I am too old, and I have never heard before."

Mrs. Chang showed her it was not a case of time, wherein to accumulate merit through our *good works*, but simply of faith in Jesus Christ, Who had died for her; then the old

wrinkled face became brighter, and my prayer turned to praise, as I felt instinctively that the Light of the world was shining into that dark, heathen soul.

"Tell it me all again," she would say, whenever her teacher paused; and with loving, gentle patience Mrs. Chang would repeat what she wanted her especially to remember, and also taught her the short prayer: "Lord Jesus, wash away my sins."

But it was getting late, the sun was setting, and we were far from home. As we left her, she pathetically entreated us to come again soon: "*Very* soon," she said, "because I am going down quickly. Come back very soon, and tell it me all again."

Reluctantly we moved away, the little crowd of people watching us until we were out of sight, and calling to us to come again soon.

* * * * *

"Going down quickly"—the words ring in my ears. Is it not the cry of China's four hundred and fifty millions? It is said that every day in China twenty-four thousand souls pass away into the dark unknown of a future without Christ.

"Going down quickly,"—dear old woman! The Lord Jesus knows and loves her, and "He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness."

I believe the true Light shone into her heart that day, and that it will go on shining there "more and more unto the perfect day" when, her sun of time having set, she will ascend into the glory-land and live for ever in the light of the Sun of Righteousness Himself. With what joy will the blind eyes be opened to see Him face to face!

One Sunday afternoon lately I went to visit some Chinese people with Miss Ferriman, another of the missionaries working in this city. We had had rather a disappointing time in one house, the people showing no desire to listen to the Truth, caring only to hear about our foreign manners and customs, when suddenly, as we were going away, a poor woman in the crowd asked us if we would come to her house and tell her the Gospel. Gladly we followed her, and it was not long before we reached her hut, one among the

great number of these wretched hovels that are to be seen everywhere, both inside and outside the city walls. On a form outside we sat down, and the woman listened well, as did also many in the crowd that gradually surrounded us.

One old woman specially interested me. For some time I had noticed her standing among the people, with a bundle of incense in her hand, listening attentively. Then, becoming more and more interested, she elbowed her way through the crowd, and, sitting down on a stool near us, fixed her eyes on Miss Ferriman as she heard for the first time the story of how the Lord Jesus died for sinners. His love and sufferings seemed to touch her heart, and, as we came away, she said she knew all she had heard was true, but, as she dared not give up the idols, she would henceforth worship them *and* Jesus Christ; and then she added quietly, "But I will always worship the Lord Jesus *first*." Poor dark soul! God grant that very soon the Holy Spirit may enlighten her darkness, and then it will be "Jesus *only*!"

Do pray for this great city with its three hundred thousand dark, heathen souls. One wonders however they are to be reached, and *individually* too, for the command is: "Preach the Gospel *to every creature*."

"Oh! who will come, salvation's story telling,
Looking to Jesus, counting not the cost?"

"The cost! Some may ask what *is* the cost? Much, very much, more than *words* can ever tell! It means loneliness and sorrow, toil and trouble, weariness and painfulness, crowdings and riotings, sickness, and it may mean *death* for Jesus' sake."

"Sacrifice has its needs be!" Surely it is so. There is a world to save. Life cometh by death. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." "He suffered that He might bring us to God."

But we have the infinitely "manifold more" that follows all sacrifice—the joy of His presence—and the absolute

realised certainty that we are "with the King for His work." We have, too, the hope set before us, of sharing in the joy of the great Harvest Home, when "They shall come from the east and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God" (Luke xiii. 29).

"From earth's wide bounds, from ocean's farthest coast,
Through gates of pearl streams in the countless host,
Singing to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,—
Alleluia!"

China has vast, unreached masses of population in every one of her eighteen provinces. She still has fourteen hundred cities, with an estimated population of over one hundred million, without missionaries. It is estimated that she has over one million unevangelised villages. China not only has the greatest, but the most vigorous, unreached masses of people in the world. What people have such remarkable staying power, such large capacity for work, such patient endurance of hardship and suffering? Surely God has had a purpose in preserving the integrity of this nation for four thousand years. Notwithstanding all that has been said of the evils of China, we have seen no people which has impressed us as possessing such strength. The qualities which have made the Chinese such efficient agents of evil, will, under the transforming, directing, and energising power of the Holy Spirit, make them one of the mightiest forces for the upbuilding of the Kingdom of God. Their influence is destined to be increasingly felt far beyond the limits of the Middle Kingdom, for they are the greatest colonisers of the Orient. The more we reflect on the strong traits of this people, the more we are impressed with what Napoleon said: "When China is moved it will change the face of the globe."

JOHN R. MOTT,

CHAPTER VI.

LIFE AT IANG-CHEO.

“Thou shalt speak My words unto them.”—EZEK. ii. 7.

IANG-CHEO.

February 2nd, 1895.

THE months, that have passed since last I wrote, have been full of varied experiences in which we have proved in deeper measure God's love and care for us.

The Japanese War, the want of a good escort, and my health have all prevented my going further inland yet. Meanwhile, I am busy here—studying every morning, and generally visiting in the afternoons, and three evenings a week I teach one of our house-women to read and repeat texts and hymns.

Of the study of the language, some one has said: “To acquire the Chinese language is a work for men with bodies of brass, lungs of steel, heads of oak, hands of spring steel, eyes of eagles, hearts of apostles, memories of angels, and lives of Methuselah!”

The Chinese vocabulary consists of forty thousand words, or, as they are generally called, “characters.” Analysing these “characters,” we find each has what we call a “root” or “radical,” termed by the Chinese a “mother character,” and of these there are as many as two hundred and fourteen, forming in a way the Chinese alphabet, if we might so call it. Chinese characters were originally little pictures, resembling somewhat the old Egyptian hieroglyphics, and intended to represent ordinary objects around us. For example, the Chinese idea of “home” is represented by a pig under a roof. The character for *peace* shows a woman extinguished.

Their idea of a *book* is most_expressive, being "a pencil that speaks."

Many words in actual pronunciation are the same, but the tone of the voice in which they are spoken makes all the difference to the meaning. For instance, "*t'ang*" in one tone means "soup" or "gravy"; in another tone it signifies "sugar" or "treacle." You will wonder however we can remember these fine differences in sound, but if once you experience having meat served up in treacle instead of gravy you would not forget again! It is reckoned that, for ordinary talk, we need to know six thousand characters in all their varied tones; so you see we have our work cut out for some time!

God does not now give "the gift of tongues" as He did of old, but day by day He helps us as we patiently and faithfully study "as unto Him"; and when we come more into contact with the people we shall, we hope, be able gradually to speak to them intelligibly.

Since last I wrote, a great sorrow has come to us, for dear Bertha Porter (mentioned in former letters) has passed away. She was ill only a few weeks, and then she gladly went to her eternal rest, and now, with little Siao-mao and the old woman, who was "going down quickly," and many others whom she brought to a knowledge of Christ, she sees the King in His beauty, and serves Him face to face. We miss her sadly, but the separation is only for the "very little while," "till He come."

Miss Hanbury has left us to fill an important post at Chefoo, and Miss Murray has returned here to the work she was doing before she went home for furlough. Mr. Andrew, who is in charge of the work of this station, has had the joy of baptising three or four men and women, who have shown by their changed lives and faithful witness that they are true believers in Jesus Christ and earnest in their desire to serve God. We do trust that they will be strong in the Lord. Mr. Andrew's earnest, untiring service has been a means of blessing to many of us. Every morning he goes on to the streets or into the tea-shops to witness for Christ; and in the afternoons, as we sit studying in our little rooms upstairs, we

can hear him preaching the Gospel in the chapel below, the door of which opens on to the street. Hearing him thus faithfully proclaiming the Glad Tidings in spite of cold or heat, opposition, mockery, or hardness of men's hearts, has stimulated us much to work on harder than ever at the language. May God soon give the increase to the much faithful sowing of the seed which has for years been going on in Iang-cheo, and may a rich harvest be reaped to His glory here!

The Chinese New Year's Day, which this year fell on January 26th, is a great day of rejoicing all over China. For weeks before, we had seen preparations of every description in progress in the streets and houses of the city. We, too, had been busy, making preparations for a happy day for all the native Christians. On the 26th they were here early, offering us their congratulations for the New Year. This is done, not by shaking one another's hands, as in England, but by shaking one's own hands and bowing (ladies slightly, gentlemen very low). At 11 a.m. a large meeting was held in the chapel, when Mr. Andrew spoke on the responsibility of another year begun. Dinner followed—a real Chinese one—which, to some of us, was anything but an enjoyment!

In the afternoon a Christmas-tree for the children was the attraction. The tree was prettily decorated and laden with toys and useful presents, most of them being gifts from kind English friends, who, if they had seen the bright, happy faces of these little Chinese children, would have been so glad that they had remembered them.

Amongst the guests who visited us that day was Mrs. Ch'en, little Siao-mao's mother. She says she believes the Gospel, but as yet she takes no decided step, and, I believe, the idols are still in her house. She cannot come here often, because the way is long and her feet are very small.

About the New Year time I went to a Chinese feast. Four of us were invited to dinner by some Christian women at the West Gate, where two lady-missionaries are working. We sat down—eight of us—at a square table with no table-cloth, no knives and forks, no plates or glasses, nothing but a pair of chopsticks and a small china spoon with ketchup in it, at each person's place. In the middle of the table was a large

centre bowl containing fowl and sea-slugs ! How well I can see the disgust on all your faces ! But, after all, it was not so *very* bad ; sea-slugs are like small eels, the worst thing about them (except their taste !) being their extreme slipperiness and jelly-like consistency. Around the centre dish were eight little saucers, containing salted pork, bacon, black preserved eggs ; minced pork with chopped seaweed, melon seeds, orange slices, jelly made from hips and haws, and monkey-nut toffee.

The proceedings began by a piece of paper being handed to each person. The chief guest, that is, the one in the place of honour (the order of seats being rigidly observed), is the first to put her chopsticks into the centre dish, thus giving the signal to begin operations. At once all set to work, each one picking out the daintiest morsels with one's own chopsticks and passing them on to one's neighbour. As our little spoons were the only receptacles we had for all the food our kind neighbours would insist on giving us, you can imagine the state of the table. The good woman next to me was most lavish in her attentions, and kept piling one thing after another on to my small spoon, and when that could hold no more, nothing daunted, she put them on the bare table in front of me. I could not keep pace with her generosity, and found it most convenient to follow the Chinese custom of passing on to some one else the biggest and daintiest morsel I had ! It was all I could do to keep a straight face and not to feel queer as the slippery sea-slugs were hauled out of the centre dish. There certainly was many a slip between the cup and the lip then ! In fact, my portion never reached its destination at all. (Chinese dogs are most convenient animals ; always present under the table at feasts, they meekly await any discarded delicacy that may fall to their share.)

That dish being removed, and whilst waiting for the next, the sweetmeats were distributed, most evenly and exactly ! These were at once wrapped in the paper provided, and put away in our pockets to take home.

In all, there were six courses, that is, six different dishes occupied the centre of the table in turn. They were :

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1st. Fowl and sea-slugs. | 6th. Four centre dishes, <i>viz.</i> : |
| 2nd. Shrimps and garlic. | (1) Slices of fat pork. |
| 3rd. Fish and seaweed. | (2) Chicken, etc. |
| 4th. Winkles and onions. | (3) Pork, prawns, and
cabbage. |
| 5th. Sweet chestnuts. | (4) One large fish. |

I cannot describe how all these mixtures tasted ; suffice it to say they were not tempting, and every mouthful seemed worse than the last, and my horror deepened as bowl after bowl succeeded each other in rapid and awful succession. With the sixth course each person was given a bowl of dry rice ; but my neighbour, seeing that I had really come to the end of my capacities, had already relaxed her persuasive arguments, and now kindly relieved me of most of the rice, wondering all the time how it could be that I did not show my appreciation of such a good feast by keeping up to the very end !

There was but little conversation ; for one thing we had no time to talk, for either we had to be on the *qui vive* to see what special dainty some kind friend would suddenly cause to alight in front of us, or our whole attention was given to frantic attempts to pick up some slippery morsel with our chopsticks. Then, too, eating is too serious a matter to the Chinese to allow of much talking during the performance.

The dinner over, a grand finale took place : a bowl of boiling water and a questionable-looking towel were brought in. The towel was dipped in the boiling water, well wrung, then passed round to each guest in turn, to wipe her hands and face. No dry towel was provided, the steaming hot one being considered sufficient.

The whole ceremony now being over, in accordance with Chinese etiquette we at once left our kind friends, thanking them enthusiastically in the general Chinese way for their hospitality.

I sincerely hope my next feast may be long coming ! Still, older missionaries say that we shall get accustomed even to Chinese feasts, and that in time we shall probably, to some degree, really enjoy them !

A homeless Stranger amongst us came
To this land of death and mourning,
He walked in a path of sorrow and shame,
Through insult, and hate, and scorning.

A Man of Sorrows, of toil and tears,
An outcast Man, and a lonely;
But He looked on me, and through endless years
Him must I love—Him only!

Then from this sad and sorrowful land,—
From this land of tears He departed;
But the light of His eyes, and the touch of His hand,
Had left me broken-hearted.

And I clave to Him as He turned His face
From the land that was mine no longer;
The land I had loved in the ancient days,
Ere I knew the love that was stronger.

And I would abide where He abode,
And follow His steps for ever;
His people, my people; His God, my God,
In the land beyond the river.

And where He died would I also die:
Far dearer a grave beside Him,
Than a kingly place among living men,
The place which they denied Him.

From "Hymns of Tersteegen."

CHAPTER VII.

THE ROUTE FOR THE FAR WEST.

"Get thee out . . . unto a land that I will show thee . . . and I will bless thee, . . . and thou shalt be a blessing."—GEN. xii. 1-2.

"At the command of the Lord they journeyed."—NUM. ix. 23.

NATIVE BOAT. YANG-TSI' RIVER BEYOND I-CH'ANG.

May 21st, 1895.

At last I have started on my long journey inland to the far western province of Si-ch'uan, the largest of the eighteen provinces of China. I am appointed to work in the Pao-ning district of East Si-ch'uan at a small country station, called Sin-tien-tsi.

We left Iang-cheo on April 22nd, and reached Chin-kiang that same evening, and Hankow on the 28th. At both places we were delayed some days, and met with great kindness from Dr. and Mrs. Cox and Mr. and Mrs. Hudson Broomhall, who very thoughtfully supplied us with all we shall need for our journey up river. We are five of us journeying west, the other four having been but a few months in China. Miss Webster is on her way to Kuei-iang in the province of Kuei-cheo; Miss Roberts and Miss Thomas are bound for Sui-fu, a city on the Yang-tsi beyond Chung-king in West Si-ch'uan; and Miss Drake is going to join her sister, Mrs. A. T. Polhill-Turner, at Pa-cheo in East Si-ch'uan, four days' journey from my future station, Sin-tien-tsi. On arriving at I-ch'ang (May 14th) we were met by Mr. M. Broomhall, who very kindly attended to our luggage and brought us to this little house-boat, which has been our home ever since.

He had secured it for us a few days before, and had had it thoroughly cleaned, divided into three compartments, and clean, dry planks arranged as bedsteads, so that we need not,

as is usual on these boats, sleep on the floor. We were delighted with the clean, fresh, and bright aspect that it presented.

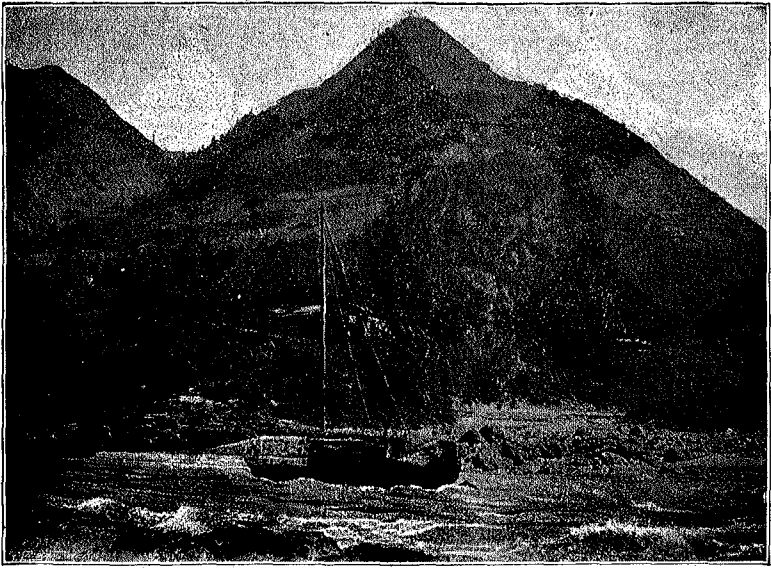
Our half-day at I-ch'ang was a very busy one, spent in unpacking and settling into the boat, buying food and all necessaries for the journey, changing our dollars and cents into *shoes* (or lumps) of silver and copper cash (one thousand of the latter equal about two shillings, English money).

For a servant we have a Christian man, Ch'en-si-fu, who is on his way back to Si-ch'uan, having been down to Hankow with some missionaries. His mother went with them as nurse to the children, and they agreed to serve us on their journey back. We have also with us a Chinaman, named Hsti, a Christian medical student who has been to Shang-hai and is now returning to his home in Si-ch'uan. Mr. Stevenson engaged him to travel with us as escort.

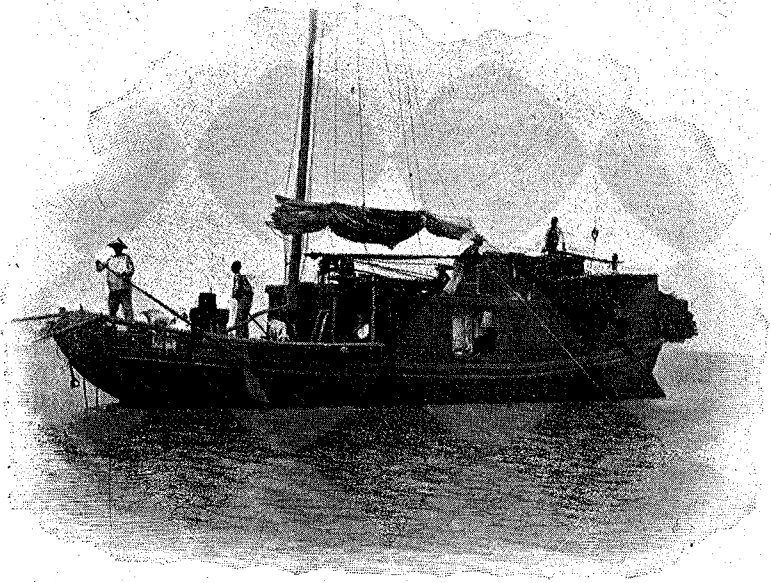
There are thirty boatmen on board, including the trackers, and they are kind, hard-working men. Alas! some of them are opium smokers, and it is sad to see them, already so wretchedly emaciated, lie down so often for more of the deadly drug. They smoke far into the night, and the fumes cause us to sleep heavily and to awake unrefreshed.

At this time of year, and, in greater or less degree, all through the year, the whirlpools and rapids of the Yang-tsü are dangerous. There are an innumerable number of small rapids where the danger is perhaps greater than at the larger ones, because we come upon them unawares, so no preparation can be made and we cannot get out and walk as we do when we reach the bigger rapids. Of these latter, there are three specially dangerous ones: the Ts'in T'an, the Ie T'an, and Fu T'an.

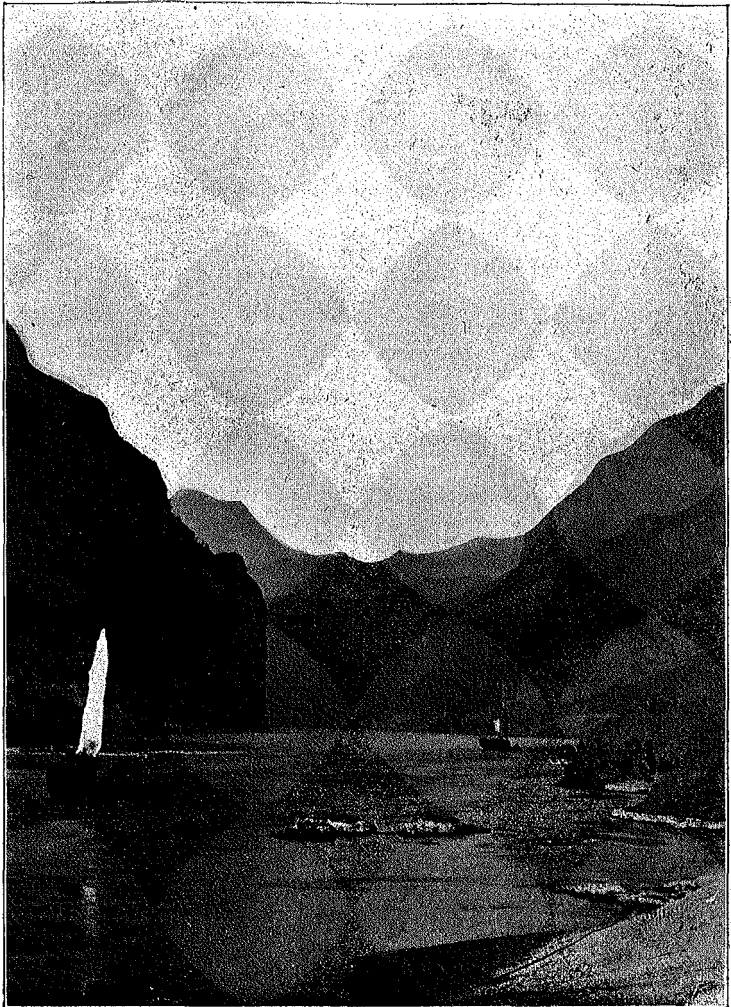
We safely passed the first last Saturday, and have now reached the Ie T'an (or Wild Rapid) and are awaiting our turn to go up. Only one boat can go over at a time, and there are still several to pass through before our turn will come. Great preparations are being made, and, maybe, we shall have sixty or one hundred men to drag us up. Loud screams and noises come from the boats near us; and every now and then some big, heavy junk bumps against our boat, hurling us away suddenly and jerking us mercilessly.



"IN PERILS OF WATERS."



CHINESE RIVER-BOAT.



From photo by] -

THE MI-T'AN GORGE, YANG-TSI.

[Mrs. Isabella Bishop.

The three Christian people from Si-ch'uan help us much to preach the Gospel at the little hamlets we pass when we are able to walk a little on the banks.

Almost every day since we left I-ch'ang we have had an opportunity of telling the Gospel to some one, or of leaving tracts or portions of Scripture behind. The first of the latter was given by Ch'en-si-fu to a young man of the custom-house at the entrance of the first gorge. It was a copy of St. Mark's Gospel, and we prayed that it might be blessed in that little place, just as years ago a copy of the same Gospel brought the knowledge of Salvation to two men in Ta-ning in Shan-si, and began that glorious work which has brought such glory to God ever since. The following evening, when wandering on the hillside after our boat had anchored for the night, we met two simple countrywomen. One was digging in a small plot of ground, and, at first, when we drew near, she was frightened, but when she found she understood what I said, she became more friendly and asked many questions.

Presently, an old woman came panting up the hill ; she had small feet, and, even with a crutch, walked with difficulty ; she had a dear, kind face, and we felt drawn to her at once.

"That's my mother," said the younger woman ; "talk to her ; she will understand."

And so she did. We told her about the true God, the God of love, and of Jesus her Saviour, and she listened, and kept repeating what we said, so that she might not forget.

As she knew some one who could read, we left with her also a copy of St. Mark's Gospel. When the sun set, we had to leave them and make our way back to the boat as quickly as we could over the rocks, ere it was too dark to see.

With stammering lips we had sown the seed, we had given them the Word, and then we left them. "It is God that giveth the increase."

May 22nd.

I told you yesterday how, at sunset, we were waiting to go over the Ie T'an, one of the worst rapids at this time of year. When our turn came it was dark, and the captain would not venture ; we were therefore the first to go over

this morning. About 6. a.m. we went ashore. We had taken the precaution of covering our bedding with oil-cloth and putting our crockery on the floor. At some distance from the river we sat down on a rock, commended the men and the boat to God's care, then watched the boat being tugged up the wild, rushing waters. More than a hundred men were at work, so you can imagine the force of the rapid. We saw some boats going *down* the stream, and they flew with the current like swift arrows. We hear that sometimes the journey down river from Chung-king to I-ch'ang can be done in as many *hours* as it takes *days* to go up!

How thankful we were to God when we saw our boat come over the rapid in safety, and, going on board again, found no damage had been done! Day by day we are claiming and proving the promise of God: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee."

* * * * *

I often wish I could describe to you this wonderfully grand scenery, or, better still, that you were all here to enjoy it with us. At first it reminded me of Wales, and Miss Webster said it was like Scotland, but we have long since decided that it far exceeds them both in grandeur and beauty. The great, high mountain peaks tower above us on either side, thickly wooded everywhere. The huge rocks are grand and rugged to a degree, and their nooks and crannies are filled with ferns and greenery.

Then the colouring all around is so striking. The varied greens of the wooded mountain-sides and the deep brown tints of the great, overhanging rocks harmonise beautifully with the soft blue sky above, or with the gold and crimson hues of the setting sun.

May 22nd, 10. p.m.

"I will give thee the treasures of darkness."

It is night, and I am perched up on my "*pu-kai*" (bedding) trying to write by the dim light of a lantern suspended from the roof. On the other side of the thin boards and curtain, which separate this room from the captain's place, lies a poor old man, an opium smoker, too tired to-night

to stay long over his poison. From outside comes the sound of the frogs croaking and the buzz of many insects, and on each side of us, the enormous rocks and gigantic mountains stretch ever upward into the bright, star-lit sky. But what appeals to me most is the sound of a boy's voice coming to us over the water from a boat anchored near by. He is reading aloud a tract received from us, and every now and again I catch the words: "God—Jesus—Saviour—Heavenly Father." I cannot tell you what depths these words have stirred within me! Here we are in far inland China on the great, lone Yang-tsi. It is night, but God's stars are shining through the darkness—the blacker the night the brighter they shine.

But there is a darker night around us than this, and it is darkness that can be felt—the darkness of dark, heathen souls. Thank God, there are stars—precious, redeemed souls—lighting up even this darkness; the Light is breaking through, and "darkest night shall end in brightest day."

The boyish voice reads on, and the words seem to ring from rock to rock, from hill to hill, and to re-echo through the land, bringing love and salvation, joy and peace to thousands, until the darkness is gone and the true Light shines—until "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea."

On anchoring this evening in this wild, rocky place, we went ashore and climbed up one of the high rocks, to see if we could get an opportunity of telling the Gospel in the only two houses visible for miles round. Ch'en-si-fu came with us, and soon began to talk to men at the first house while we went on to the further one; here a woman invited us to sit down, and a number of women and children gathered round us, appearing from we knew not where. I spoke to them of the one true God and His great love; and when Ch'en-si-fu joined us, he also very simply told them the Gospel.

A few were specially interested, and as we came away one of them said: "No one ever told us before, and to-morrow you will be going on, and who will come to tell us again, that we may understand?"

Oh, how the words ring in our hearts, stirring up deep longings that we had come years ago!

"Who will come?" "Who will tell us more?" The words echo still God's appeal to Isaiah: "Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?"

Oh, that some of God's people would come and take up work in the villages and hamlets along the Yang-tsi!

If you could visit with us the lonely huts of the poor, heathen women who live on these great, wild rocks, your hearts would ache for them, and would be full of longing to bring the love of Jesus Christ into their lives. Sometimes we cannot keep back the tears, as these unhappy, unloved, uncared-for women, old and young, hear for the first time of Jesus' love and sufferings, and as they ask so often: "Does He love *me*? Did He die for *me*? Then why did you not come and tell us sooner?" Before retracing our steps to the boat, we left with them Gospels and tracts.

Late this evening, about bed-time, we heard loud, inarticulate cries from the rocks, and, looking out, saw five or six men scrambling down the precipitous hillsides by the light of flaming torches. When they drew near the boat, we heard, to our great surprise and joy, that they had come for more of our "good books." We gave Ch'en-si-fu an assortment of books and tracts, and then watched the eager faces of the men as they bent over the precious books, reading their titles by the torch-light; more men were waiting on the bank, and every now and then one would cross over the plank to have a peep at the books. The boat front was also a strange sight, with twenty or thirty boatmen stretched in all directions, most of them asleep, while here and there some were still smoking the terrible opium. The little crowd round the books was a scene I shall ever remember with joy. The torches lit up the bright, eager faces of the men as they thanked Ch'en-si-fu and told him that, having heard at the cottages of the good words in the books, they had come for some for themselves ere we went on our way. We watched them as they once more climbed the rocks with their flaming torches, and we thought of what God has said of His own Word: "It shall not return unto Me void, but

it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”—(Is. lv. 11.)

A man from the neighbouring boat had received one of the books, and, I suppose, it was his that the little lad was reading just now. The light is still burning there, but the child's voice has ceased, and now all is still everywhere.

May 23rd.

This morning we passed through another magnificent gorge, and were sufficiently near the bank to thoroughly enjoy the beautiful ferns and trees, flowers and grasses. The boatmen often bring us flowers when they return to the boat after towing it along by the ropes. We are travelling, on an average, thirty miles a day. When we think of English express trains we smile; but, away from comparisons, we are quite content with our daily rate of progress.

The Chinese have a proverb: “Slow is fast; fast is slow”; and they act upon it too!

As a rule, we start each morning, if everything is favourable, about 4.30, and continue, with sometimes frequent delays owing to rapids, currents, rocks, or other boats, until dusk.

The rope that the men tie on the rocks, by which to pull up the boat, is apt to break at some critical moment, with the result that the boat goes whirling down the stream in imminent danger of dashing against a rock or another boat, and of being utterly destroyed. But though our ropes have broken many times, God has preserved us in safety and kept us restful through every danger.

The boatmen get alarmingly excited, screaming wildly to each other and making no end of commotion. At first this used to frighten us, but we are accustomed to it now, and have learnt it is just their way, and they seem to work better when able to give vent freely to their feelings.

This afternoon Miss R. and I were busy superintending some cooking. We have come to the end of our bread; it lasted us well, for we got it at I-ch'ang nine days ago. The last loaves were certainly dry, but still we were thankful to have them, as we have not yet been able to buy any more along the banks. We have plenty of other food, however—good soups

and tinned meats, fresh vegetables and rice, condensed milk and butter; and we have no difficulty in buying eggs and fowls, the former being about eight or ten for a penny, the latter about fivepence halfpenny each. Of course this is far more in value when counted out in Chinese cash, of which thirty or forty equal a penny.

But to run out of bread was a serious matter, for we are generally very hungry, and have not yet got accustomed to depend entirely upon rice as the Chinese do, therefore we tried our hands at bread-making. We have flour and all we need, except proper fire accommodation. Our stove, as we call it, answers most purposes very well. It is a large, square paraffin-oil tin, lined throughout with bricks, and we burn charcoal in it. On this is placed the Chinese "ho," or iron pan, in which we can boil or fry whatever we like—but we were at a loss to know how to *bake* in it. However, Ch'en-si-fu said we need not be anxious, he would "devise a plan" (a thing the Chinese are quick at doing, being well acquainted with necessity—the mother of invention); and so indeed he did, for a short while after he triumphantly brought in his production. It *looked* like a good thick scone, but *felt* like a fair sized stone! However we did justice to it, and we hope to be able to buy Chinese steamed bread to-morrow.

May 24th.

Last night about 6.30 we anchored at the bottom of one of the very highest rocks we have yet passed. Seeing a tiny hut built at a great distance up the side of the rock, we determined to reach it and see if any one lived there to whom we could speak of Jesus. When, after a good hard pull, we reached the house, a thin, wrinkled, old woman brought us stools and asked us to rest awhile.

Through the open door of the hut we could see two men taking their meal by the dimmest of lights, their lamp being most primitive, merely the pith of a reed dipped in a saucer of oil.

The old woman brought us her tobacco-pipe and invited us to smoke! On our refusing this, she busied herself preparing tea for us. But at last I dissuaded her from

doing so by saying we could only stay a few moments and had come to tell her something. Thereupon she sat down close to me, and, holding her thin, wrinkled hand in mine, I again had the great joy of telling the old, old Story to one who had never heard.

"It seems each time I tell it
More wonderfully sweet."

Mr. Hsü followed us and preached very plainly to them. The old woman kept turning to me, as she listened, to say they were "*good words*." The men, too, listened well; they had never seen foreigners before, and the words they heard were new and strange to them. We left a Gospel with them, and trust it will be "the power of God unto salvation" to them. Again came the questions as to how they were to hear more, and who could come and explain the good words of the book, and we could answer nothing. The old woman had a painful, hacking cough. She said she was seventy-five years of age. Poor old woman, so weak and ill, so near we could see, to the grave, this was the *first*, and probably it will be the *only* time she may ever hear of the love of Jesus and how He had died for her redemption! Surely it was not by *chance* that we had anchored there! God knows where there are longing souls seeking for Light, and day by day He is giving us the joy of bringing some of these into touch with Him. There is no joy on earth to compare with the joy of bringing a soul to Christ, especially one who, so far as we can tell, but for our coming out here, would probably never hear the story of the Cross.

May 25th.

Yesterday about midday we anchored in a lovely rocky place, and were told we could go no further until the wind changed. The only house to be seen was far above us, right up an enormous rock, and in the midday heat we dared not attempt to reach it. We were not a little disappointed, for we long each day to have an opportunity of leading some one to Christ, for

"At the close of the day it is sweet to say,
'I have brought some lost one home.'"

About 2.30 p.m. a woman walked down the rock to our boat. I invited her to come in. At first she was frightened, but when Mrs. Ch'en added her persuasions, and the boatmen put out the long board for her, she gathered up courage and came in. She was young and had a quiet, gentle face.

We gave her some tea, and she soon became friendly and told us that she lived in the house on the rock. I tried to find out her name, but she began such a complicated genealogy as to her family relations that we were rather mystified in the end as to what her present name may be, but we think it is *Chang*. It was a real joy to watch her astonished face as Mrs. Ch'en told her of the love of Jesus Christ in His death for us. It was a story she had never heard before, and as she listened to how Jesus went to Calvary and died on the Cross, her sad face told us how she felt, and I believe God opened her heart and shed upon it the blessed Gospel Light.

When her husband came down to fetch her away, I gave her a copy of one of the Gospels. She said no one in the house could read, but asked if she might keep it, saying perhaps some one would be sent that way by the God of Heaven to read the precious Word to her. As we sailed slowly up the river, we could see her standing at her door waving to us and watching us until we were out of sight. I can see her still, as I saw her then, far above us on the rock-side; and I trust and pray that I may see her again among those from "the land of Sinim" who shall gather round the throne of God!

May 25th.

A few moments ago I was called to speak to some women in a boat anchored near us, and waiting, as we are, to go over another rapid. I found there were three of them, quite young women, travelling our way to K'uei-fu with their brother. We began our acquaintance with the usual questions as to whether we have eaten our rice, our names, ages, where we have come from, and where we are going, etc., etc. The question invariably put, "What have you come for?" gives us at once an opportunity of telling them of God and

His Son Jesus Christ. Our time being very short—indeed it was but a few moments—I called Mrs. Ch'en, knowing they would understand her so much better than they would us. We left them some books, which, they said, their brother would read to them as they journey on. And so we cast the bread upon the waters, and know that in some way or another God will give the increase, and we shall find it again after many days.

June 4th.

The last few days we have passed through many dangers. Owing to the force of the down-current we have been obliged to hug the shore, and this has occasioned much danger from rocks; we have had a good many hard bumps, and three or four times our rope has broken, causing us to slip back a long way with great rapidity. We have already seen two sad wrecks, and have realised our danger as we passed over the wild, surging rapids; but in the midst of it all, there has been in our hearts that wonderful "peace of God which passeth all understanding."

A few days ago, whilst visiting several houses on the river-bank, a little lad of eleven or twelve followed us from house to house, listening with interest to all we said. On hearing that he was quick at learning, and was to be the scholar of the family, we gave him a Gospel, and told him that he would find in it all we had been saying and much more. Very pleased, he thanked us warmly. Who knows how God may bless the lad through that book, and make him a blessing in the village?

"Lord, speak to me, that I may speak
 In living echoes of Thy tone;
 As Thou hast sought, so let me seek
 Thy erring children, lost and lone."

F. R. H.

Tarry thou the Lord's leisure !

Whilst all day long the soldier warring stands,
Child, I have need of thine uplifted hands;
Forth to the field some souls I send to-day ;
Low at My feet I keep the rest to *pray*.
Here is thy station, see thou do thy part,
Breathing out incense from thy bruised heart !

CHAPTER VIII.

SENT BACK.

“That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, . . . might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”—1 PETER. i. 7.

NATIVE BOAT. YANG-TSŪ RIVER.

June 18th, 1895.

It seems more like two months than two weeks since I wrote last, for so much has happened since, and now, instead of arriving at Chung-king, we are hastening *down* river again to Hankow. Whilst at Wan-hsien, we heard of the outbreak of riots in Ch'en-tu and other cities in Si-ch'uan; but it was not until we had been another week on our journey up-river that a special messenger from Chung-king reached us, bringing a letter from Mr. Willett, the missionary in charge of the China Inland Mission work in that city. His letter ran thus:

“Owing to the spread of the riots, which began at Ch'en-tu on May 28th, and have now touched several other places, the Consul orders all ladies from these stations to leave for down-river. Some of our missionaries leave here to-morrow morning for I-ch'ang, and we are providing boat room for your party with them. If the officials thought it possible to stave off a riot in this place [Chung-king], we would let you come on here, but they fear trouble is sure to occur when the approaching yearly examinations begin.”

You can imagine our disappointment on the receipt of this letter, and yet we could not dwell on our own sorrow, when so many of our fellow-missionaries were in such danger

and suffering! Two days later we were met by the friends mentioned by Mr. Willett, and we joined them on this boat.

The riots began at Ch'en-tu, the capital of the province of Si-ch'uan. The cause is not yet exactly known; there are secret societies at work everywhere, seeking for plunder, and the riots may have been instigated by wicked men belonging to some of these, as the rioters are attacking the foreigners' houses and carrying away all the booty they can find.

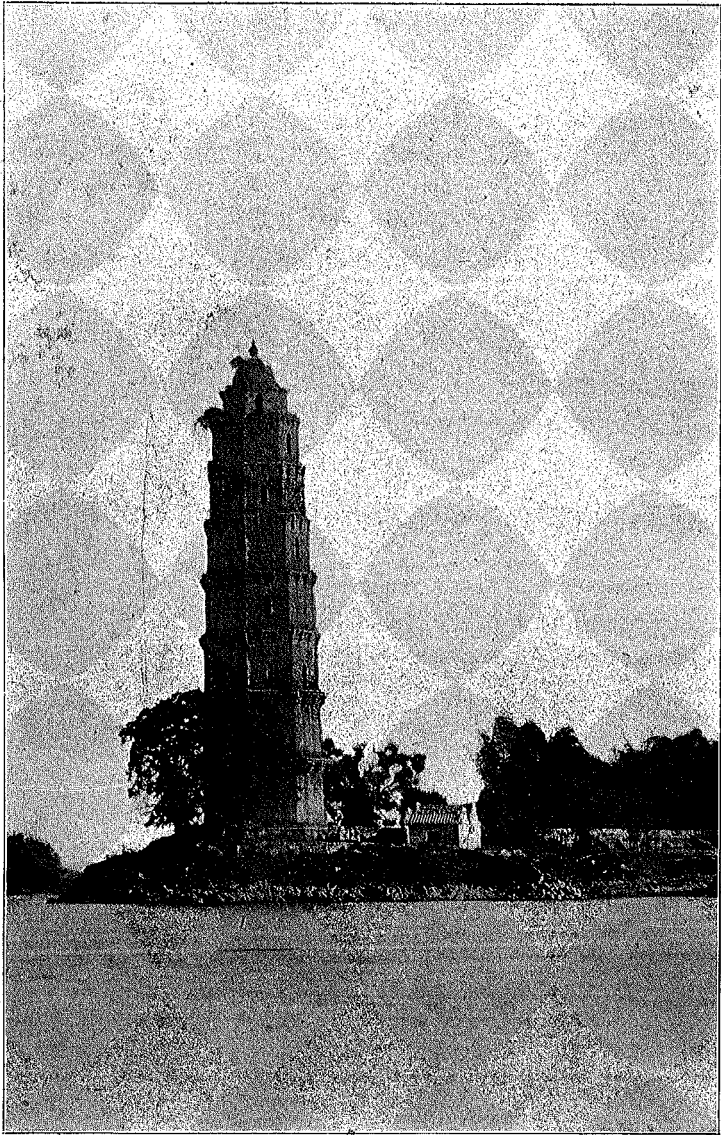
At Ch'en-tu, the houses of the American, Canadian, China Inland, and Roman Catholic Missions have been destroyed and burnt. The missionaries were for some time in the *ia-men* (the mandarin's residence) for refuge, but ere now they will probably have reached Chung-king. There were twenty-eight foreigners in all housed in the *ia-men*, ten or eleven of them being little children.

At Kia-ting, the missionaries are quite safe in fairly comfortable quarters provided for them by the native officials, but their houses have been looted, and almost everything stolen. At Sui-fu, the officials were in readiness to withstand any attack that should be made, and so Mr. and Mrs. Faers and their little ones came away safely.

Mrs. Gray Owen and some others of the missionaries, whom we have joined on this boat, come from Lu-cheo, a city on the Yang-tsi, between Sui-fu and Chung-king. They left before the rioters had reached them, and their house was officially sealed, and soldiers were appointed to guard the place.

This, the mandarin said, would secure the premises until the yearly examinations began; but then he could not guarantee anything. He can restrain his own people, but finds it difficult to control the students who come in hundreds into the city from all the surrounding districts.

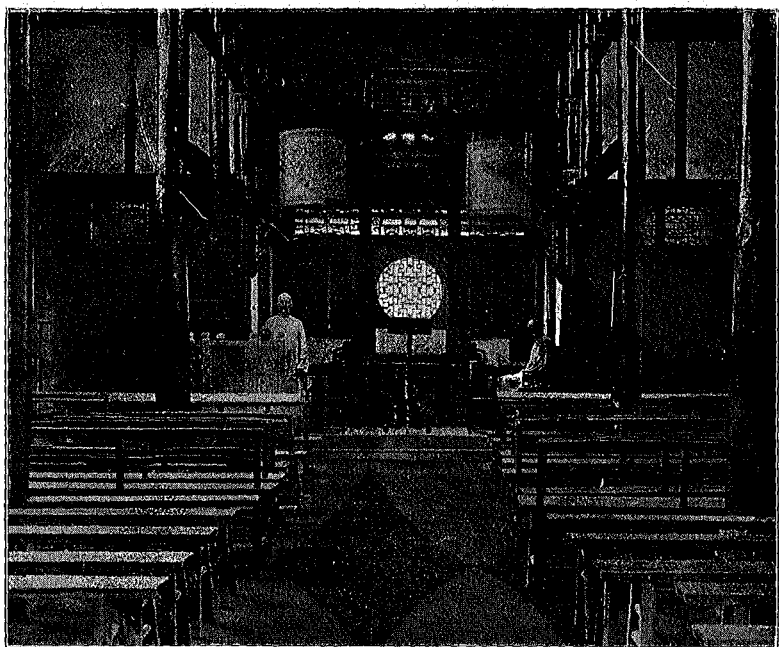
The missionaries are very disappointed at being obliged to leave their work just now; it was all so bright and happy, and the people were coming regularly to their houses for teaching. We do trust it will not be long before we are able to return to Si-ch'uan! We have not yet had any news of disturbances in Pao-ning or the cities of that part of the



From photo by

[Mrs. Isabella Bishop.]

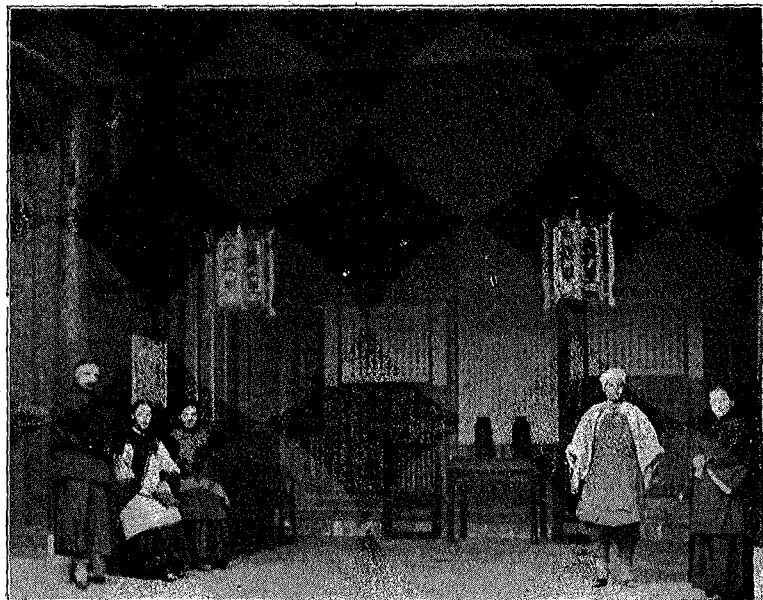
WAN-HSIEN PAGODA.



From photo by]

[M. Beauchamp.

PA-CHEO CHURCH.



From photo by]

[Mrs. Isabella Bishop.

THE GUEST-HALL, WAN-HSIEN MISSION-HOUSE.

province, and we hope that the troubles may not reach the missionaries there.

We have been advised to keep as quiet and concealed as possible when nearing cities and villages. The heat is intense—96° or 98° on an average, but rising often to 104°. We feel it much, closed up in this little boat, which is about the same size as our last one—but there we were only five, here we are ten. At nights we lie in rows on the floor. The night before last a heavy thunderstorm came on, and the rain poured in through the roof and the many side-cracks of the boat. Some of us took refuge under umbrellas, while others curled like snails in the only dry places to be found.

We calculated that the journey to Chung-king would have taken about six weeks, and we had already been five weeks on our way when we turned back. The journey down to I-ch'ang will occupy one week. This will give you some idea of the force of the currents and rapids. But the down-journey tries us more, our nerves being ever on the strain. The whirlpools and rapids are very dangerous, and as we rush along with the current, the boat swings and lurches very much.

God knows what it has meant to us to turn away from the province to which we thought He had called us to serve Him, and “*we* know that all things work together for good to them that love God.” “God’s leadings lead to God’s glory.”

“Father, I come to Thee ; I dare not tread
 Upon the unknown way without Thy hand ;
 I am not strong to go alone, but Thou
 Wilt lead me in the path Thyself hast planned.

Thy presence is enough, I do not ask
 To understand the many changeful ways ;
 This only do I seek—my Lord, my God—
 That Thou wilt tune my life to sound Thy praise.

With restful confidence I onward go,
 Not knowing what may be in store for me,
 But well content, if Thou, dear Lord, dost know,
 And I may walk each day and hour with Thee.”

E. M. G.

THE NU ERH CHING ; OR, CLASSIC FOR GIRLS.

Translated from the Chinese by Prof. Isaac Taylor Headland, Peking University

FROM SEVEN TILL TWENTY.

When the wheel of life's at seven,
You should study woman's ways,
Leave your bed when day is breaking, early thus begin the days.
Comb your tresses smooth and shiny, keep yourself both clean and neat,
Bind your "lilies" * tight and tidy, never go upon the street.

When the wheel's at eight or over,
While you gradually grow,
Both your old and younger brothers you should intimately know,
And while peacefully partaking of the tea and rice and wine,
About eating much or little never quarrel, while you dine.

When the wheel at ten is turning,
You should never idle be,
To the making of their clothing and the mending you should see,
Your position should be daily sitting at your mother's feet,
Nor, excepting on an errand, should you go upon the street.

When the wheel has turned eleven,
You have grown to womanhood,
And all culinary matters should be clearly understood.
If for fancy-work from cooking you can save some precious hours,
You should spend them in embroid'ring ornamental leaves and flowers.

When the wheel has turned to thirteen,
You propriety should prize,
When your presence people enter you politely should arise,
'Towards your aunts, your father's sisters and his younger brothers' wives,
You should not neglect your manners from the nearness of your lives.

When the wheel has turned to fifteen,
Or when twenty years have past,
As a girl with home and kindred these will surely be your last,
While expert in all employments that compose a woman's life,
You should study as a daughter all the duties of a wife.

From the *Chinese Recorder*, December, 1895.

* The small feet of a Chinese woman.

CHAPTER IX.

TA-KU-T'ANG.

“Ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.”—HEB. x. 36.

TA-KU-T'ANG. KIANG-SI.

October, 1895.

I CAME here in August to spend the few months that must elapse before our return to Si-ch'uan, in helping in the work of this place. Ta-ku-t'ang is a small fishing town situated at the extreme north of the lovely Po-yang Lake in the province of Kiang-si.

The little place of three thousand five hundred inhabitants is built round the bottom of a hill, which, for some months in the year, is quite an island. From the position of our house, near the top of the hill, we look down upon the busy little town below and command an extensive view of the distant mountains, which are higher than those of Wales or Scotland. Between us and the mountains stretch the calm waters of the lake, studded here and there with pretty little islands.

The sunrises and sunsets have been glorious; and many are the precious lessons God has taught me as I watched with Him at sunrise, or as the rich, golden sunsets reflected their glory upon our faces. “We all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

It was here, in this quiet, beautiful spot, that towards the beginning of August, the terrible news reached us of the massacre at Ku-cheng of the Rev. and Mrs. R. Stewart and their two children, and of the faithful missionary ladies with them. Our hearts sympathise deeply with the dear, little orphaned children and all the bereaved relatives; and

we sorrow much for the inestimable loss which the growing work in Fuh-kien has suffered.

But, whilst we grieve, we cannot but think of the joy in Heaven over the ten "found faithful unto death" and "counted worthy" of a martyr's crown.

May the "God of all consolation" comfort the mourners at home and the dear Chinese Christians, and hasten the day when His glory shall be revealed through this sorrow, so that "they may be glad also with exceeding joy!"

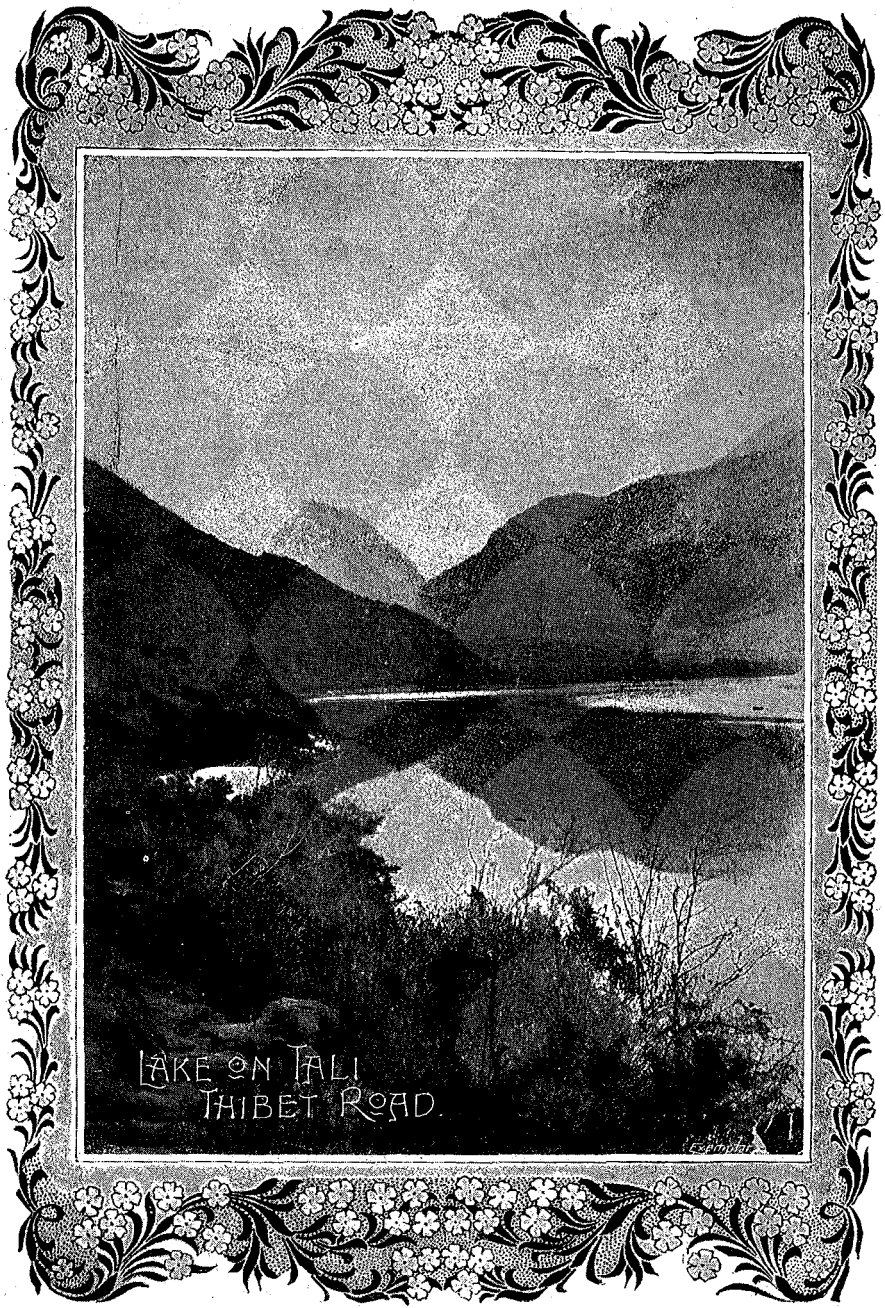
During the last months news has come of risings and riots in many parts of this dark land. Though the Si-ch'uan riots have been subdued, the Mohammedan rebellion in Kan-suh still continues; and our latest news was that Lan-cheo and Ts'in-cheo have been threatened with siege.

In Yunnan troubles have begun, and wild reports are circulated. In this place a riot was feared. Wild rumours had excited the people against foreigners, and for a few days it seemed uncertain whether we should remain here or not, but all is quiet now, and we are able to go on with our work as usual. China seems on the verge of a great crisis, and we wonder how it will turn. Whatever happens we feel sure it will eventually lead to the extension of Christ's kingdom in this land. It is such a blessed privilege to be in China at this time!

* * * * *

The Gospel has been preached in Ta-ku-t'ang for many years, but "the time of harvest is not yet." The people are friendly, and always ready to welcome us to their houses. They *listen* as we tell them the Gospel, but there it seems to rest with most of them; they do not grasp that this great Salvation is for them through faith in Jesus Christ. Others know the Gospel well, but are hardened in sin and will not yield. The willing, eager listeners are very few. Still we must not relax our energies, but rather remember God's command: "Thou shalt speak My words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear."—(Ezek. ii. 7.)

"In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall



LAKE ON TALI
THIBET ROAD.

From photo by Capt. Wallis-Jones, R.E.



READY FOR SCHOOL.



REPEATING HER LESSON.

prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."

I often think of 1 Cor. ix. 10. (R.V.) as I visit these people. "He that ploweth *ought* to plow in hope; and he that thresheth in the hope of partaking."

In God's own good time the harvest *will* come, and "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

Of the three thousand five hundred souls in this place, only seven or eight are baptised Christians. Mrs. Cameron, who is in charge of the work here, feels convinced there are many secret believers, afraid of taking a definite stand as Christians. We trust that as they increase in the knowledge of God, the love of Christ will constrain them to confess Him before men.

Ta-ku-t'ang people are largely employed in making and sending away incense, crackers, paper money, and other things connected with idolatry. The place seems Satan's stronghold now, but we believe the day is soon coming when it will be God's scene of power, His victory ground where He will show forth His power and glory. If Satan is mighty, we know *God is Almighty*.

Out here in China we need, as Miss H. Newcombe said, "to lay hold on the reality of the words: 'I believe in God, the Father, Almighty.'"

* * * * *

On first coming here in August the heat was too great to allow of our doing more than continuing our daily study of the language; but, since the cooler weather began, we have been able to go among the people regularly, and they have consequently been coming up to see us more frequently.

Sometimes I have gone out with a Chinese Christian woman only, but more often with Miss Hedlund, a Swedish missionary, who is soon leaving for work in Shan-si, or with Mrs. Cameron.

One day lately, when in the town with the latter, we were invited into a large house and made very welcome.

Numbers of people followed us in without any ceremony,

until, at last, the evangelist, who was with us, was obliged to take his stand at the door to prevent any more from crowding in. An unhappy-looking little girl at once attracted my attention. She was a pretty child, but in her bright, black eyes there was a frightened, cowed look, that told the bitter story of an unhappy life. I beckoned to her to come and sit on a form by me, and she brightened up as I stroked her hand; but I had no opportunity of speaking to her then, for while Mrs. Cameron was speaking the little girl slipped suddenly away.

Since that day we have seen her often, and have been able, in a few small ways, to bring a little happiness into her life. Next year she is to leave her own home to take up her abode with the parents of the boy to whom she is betrothed. Though her own home is not a happy one, her prospects for the future are no brighter. I do hope that ere she leaves Ta-ku-t'ang she may have learnt to know and love the Lord Jesus, so that through all the troubles of her life she may find Him her Friend and Helper.

The first time I went out visiting here was with Mrs. Ts'ui, a Christian woman. We went to a house across the lake. In a plot of ground near by was a poor, decrepit, old woman, wearily gathering vegetables. After some words of greeting, she sat down beside us on a few planks of wood. She was thin and ill, very deaf, and altogether miserable. She told us all her griefs and sorrows, and how she had one son an inveterate opium-smoker. We tried to tell her of Jesus her Saviour, Who was touched with the feeling of her infirmities; but the story seemed too full of *love* for her to understand all at once. Poor, suffering woman! she knew nothing of *love*, and the thought that the Son of God loved *her* and died for *her* was strange indeed to her lonely, unloved heart.

The following day we went again, and found her lying ill on a heap of straw in her miserable hovel, which was one small room, with mud floor and walls, no window, no light, and no outlet for smoke except the door—and this she liked shut!

She seemed pleased to see us, and was very grateful for

the food Mrs. Cameron had given us for her. Again we spoke to her of Jesus, and we thought she grasped a little of the precious message. Her mind was dull and very dark ; but there are no hearts *too* dark for "the Light of the world" to penetrate ! She lingered a few weeks, growing weaker and weaker. We saw her often, and spoke much to her of Jesus ; and then one morning we heard she was *dead*.

And what can we say of her now ? God, "full of compassion and plenteous in mercy," had led us to her ; the message of salvation was His, and we believe He touched her heart with His love, and that we shall meet her again in the presence of the King.

* * * * *

Last week, Mrs. Cameron and I, with T'ao Sien-seng, the evangelist, went into the town to look for "a house to let." For some time we have wanted to secure a house on the street to be used for a girls' school in the mornings, women's work in the afternoons, and for men's meetings at nights, when T'ao Sien-seng could be there. Up here on the hill-tops we are too far away from the people for the women and girls with very small feet to come to us often. Now the money needed for a house has been given, and we wish to put it into use at once.

House-hunting on a Chinese street ! It was so ridiculous that I found it difficult to conceal my amusement. A large and motley crowd followed us everywhere—they always do—and house-hunting was a special occasion, interesting to everybody ! On arriving at a house to be inspected, the crowd of people rushed in, and, if the owner were present, at once began praising and commending his house, each one screaming its special advantages at the top of his voice, as if we were stone-deaf.

The house which we finally selected consists of two rooms about the same size and fairly high, with walls of very thin planks of wood. There are no windows, but two doors, one opening on to the street and the other facing the lake. In the inner room—our future schoolroom—there is a narrow slit in the wall which we hope to enlarge into a nice window. Hideous idols were pasted on the walls and street

door, but these will easily wash off. It certainly looked a dismal place, in spite of all the people said in its favour; but a thorough cleaning and white-washing, with a few repairs and alterations, will make a great difference, and we are looking for good times there!

* * * * *

Every Sunday and Wednesday afternoons, while Mrs. Cameron has classes for men, I have a class for women, and generally twenty or thirty come. If newcomers predominate, it is often difficult to gain their attention, and until their first curiosity is satisfied, it is well to yield to them a little, and answer their many strange questions. After last Wednesday's class some women lingered for a talk. Among them was a woman, bright, careless, and full of fun. She told me with the utmost indifference that she had had six little girls, all of whom she had got rid of in their babyhood! As I looked at her, horrified, she said she did not want them; they were only girls, and did not all her neighbours do the same? Alas, for China's little girls! for China's women!

I long for an opportunity of doing something for the children, and shall be so thankful when our school is opened.

It is only too true what the evangelist told me a few days ago, that numbers of baby-girls "not wanted" have been cast into the lake!

"Only a little baby-girl dead by the river-side;
 Only a little Chinese child drowned in the floating tide!
 If she had only been a boy they would have heard her cry;
 But she was just a baby-girl, and so was left to die!
 There they have left her little form floating upon the wave;
 She was too young to have a soul; why should she have a grave?
 There's many another little one, perishing every day,
 Thrown by the road or the riverside, flung to the beasts of prey.
 Is there a mother's heart to-night, clasping her precious child,
 Willing to leave these helpless lambs out on the desert wild?
 Is there a little Christian girl, happy in love and home,
 Living in selfish ease, while they out on the mountains roam?
 Think of the little baby-girls over in China's land,
 Who seldom know a mother's love, or a father's guiding hand.
 Ask if there is not something more that even you can do;
 And if perhaps in China's land Jesus has need of you.

Only a little baby-girl, dead by the riverside ;
 Only a little Chinese child drowned in the floating tide.
 But it has brought a vision vast, dark as a nation's woe.
 Oh ! has it left some willing heart, answering : ' I will go ? ' "

* * * * *

There are a number of Chinese soldiers here in whom we are interested. One morning in July, much to Mrs. Cameron's surprise, a band of them arrived at the house, saying they had been sent by the Kiu-kiang Mandarin to protect the foreigners ! From what, we did not really know, neither did they ! However, they took up their encampment down the hillside, and there they have remained ever since.

They come almost daily to Chinese morning prayers, and some have shown evident signs of interest in the Bible-teaching they have received from Mrs. Cameron and the evangelist, T'ao Sien-seng. Not long ago their captain went for a few days to Kiu-kiang. Before leaving he asked Mrs. Cameron for some books and Gospels to distribute among his soldier friends there. T'ao Sien-seng is especially interested in these men, and very zealous in preaching to them, because he himself was once in the army. When he became a "soldier of Jesus Christ" he left it, as he said it was impossible to serve Christ faithfully there, and at the same time be obedient to the rules and customs of the Chinese army.

He has suffered much from persecution and trouble since then, but through it all he has bravely fought the good fight of faith, and is doing good work, and witnessing brightly for his Heavenly Captain in this place.

* * * * *

Soon after my arrival here in August, I heard that a box of mine, containing warm winter things, had been stolen. I had left it at one of the river-ports until I should start again for Si-ch'uan. The loss was a great one, meaning all my rugs, furs, wadded garments, and, in fact, all I should need for the cold weather. It was not until the cooler weather of October set in that I began to realise the loss ; but as the weeks have gone by, I have seen how God has brought blessing out of it.

Our hearts had long been sad that Mrs. Cheo, our house-woman, showed so little interest in the Gospel.

One cold Sunday evening in October, Mrs. Cameron and I found her in my room weeping, because she thought I should be so bitterly cold that night. I tried to console her; then we knelt down and asked God to show her His power to supply all our need of temporal, as well as spiritual, things. During the following week the post-messenger from Kiu-kiang brought a big parcel for me. Tearing off a corner, I saw it contained a rug, and, calling in Mrs. Cheo, we unpacked it together. Imagine her surprise on seeing a thick, warm rug issuing forth! She asked from where it had come. It had been sent anonymously; so we told her we did not know, except that *God* had sent it.

We were very much amused when she looked up to see if there was a hole in the roof through which it had been dropped down upon us! It was with joyful satisfaction that she spread it on my bed that night, and from that time she has seemed softened and more interested in the Truth, and her faith has, we believe, been strengthened.

I am getting quite rich in warm things again, so many kind friends have helped to supply my needs. It is beautiful to see how God knits us altogether into one family in this Mission. "If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it." I have realised this so much since being in China.

Two warm Jaeger rugs reached me at this time from England, sent by two friends who had not heard of my loss, but who wanted to send me something useful for the winter. Thus God supplied all my needs, until now "I have all and abound." "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him."

November 20th.

About the beginning of November, I went down to Shang-hai for a fortnight. On my return to Ta-ku-t'ang, I had a very warm welcome from Mrs. Cameron, and found the little girls' school had begun. The house had been nicely prepared, by which I chiefly mean it is *clean*—which, I am afraid, could not be said of another house in the street! The wooden planks which form the walls have been papered

to hide the cracks, and are now hung with bright-coloured Chinese scrolls, on which are written Scripture texts and hymns.

The school has begun with twenty little scholars, all more or less irregular in attendance. They come to school about 9 a.m., and are taught by a Christian man, named Chang.

Mrs. Cameron and I are often in and out of the schoolroom, and at one o'clock we give them a Scripture lesson and dismiss them. Two afternoons in the week they return after dinner for a sewing-class. They are dear little children, lovable and clinging. I love them dearly, but often wish I could give them a nice bath in Eau-de-Cologne!

Little Chinese girls have their hair well oiled, and plaited down their backs, or put up into a little knob behind, or often on one side of the head, with funny, bright ornaments stuck into it.

The boys have their little heads all shaved, except for a small tuft of hair, which is the hopeful beginning of the future pigtail. This little tuft rises erect from the top of the head until it is long enough to hang down behind, and it is generally tied with bright-coloured wool or cord.

Just now, because of the cold, the little boys and girls look more like dirty little bundles of cotton-wool than anything else. Their clothes are so thickly wadded that they can hardly run about at all, and they have to keep their arms stretched straight out because they have on so many clothes.

Nearly all our little girls have their feet bound tightly, and find it difficult and painful to walk. We hope that, as we get to know their parents better, we may be able to influence them to cease this cruel practice.

A few days ago, as we returned home from school, we passed the house of one of our school-girls, named U-ri (=Number five), and saw the little one in such sorrow, crying piteously, for her grandmother was binding the child's feet, turning the toes under, and it was such terrible pain. Mrs. Cameron reproved the woman, but to no avail. Their argument is that if the girl's feet are big (by which they mean the natural size) no one will have her for a wife and

“of what use is a girl if she is not married?” Poor little girls! From the beginning they are “not wanted” and unloved, and their little lives are full of sorrow and pain. I wish we could do more for them!

For one little child my heart aches much. She is a wee girlie, named Ü-chen (“Precious jewel”), with a dear, plaintive, little face and a sweet smile, but the beautiful dark eyes see nothing. The child is quite *blind*, and therefore no one wants her; no one seems to love her. It is such a rest to know that to One above this little “jewel” is exceedingly precious. “He gathereth the lambs with His arm, and carrieth them in His bosom.”

“I long for that blessed and glorious time,
The fairest and brightest and best,
When the dear little children of every clime
Shall crowd to His arms and be bless'd.”

* * * * *

A few days ago I went with Mrs. Cameron to see an old woman, named Iang. She has been ill for two or three months, but that day we found her better, and sitting in the sun making shoes. She is such a pretty old woman, reminding me of pictures of old French ladies. To-day, she told us how she had dreamt that a gorgeously decked sedan-chair had come to take her up to Heaven.

For a long time she has expressed her belief in the Gospel, and while she was ill the woman who nursed her often heard her praying.

Leaving Mrs. Iang, we visited a lady named Li. The day before, she had sent to ask Mrs. Cameron to come and see some one who was ill. We were received with all due etiquette, and shown into Mrs. Li's room. Delicious, clear green tea, highly scented with jasmine flowers, was brought in with cakes and sweetmeats. We found the patient was her husband, and that he had toothache! As it was a decayed tooth needing extraction, we could do nothing for him. Mrs. Li is a quiet, gentle girl of about nineteen or twenty. She is the third wife of a rich, influential official, a rough, cross man, whose temper is embittered through having no son—a terrible calamity in China, where a man's

happiness depends greatly on the number of his sons. This man has six daughters, but they reckon for very little in his estimation. A son is needed to carry on the ancestral worship of the family.

We had very little opportunity of speaking to Mrs. Li alone, but we hope now to visit her often.

Very soon I must leave all these dear people and start inland once again. It will be hard to say good-bye, but God's will is best, and His way perfect; and He has put in my heart a great desire towards the people of Sin-tien-tsi, the place where, I believe, He has called me to work permanently for Him.

When in Shang-hai I bought a copy of Miss F. M. Williams' book, "A New Thing," which describes the beginning of God's work in Sin-tien-tsi, and, on November 8th, when thinking about our future service there, the beautiful promise was flashed into my mind: "Thou shalt see *greater things* than these."—(John i. 50.)

In a few weeks time I expect I shall be setting forth on the journey to Sin-tien-tsi, there to prove the certainty of God's promise.

"All the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."—(2 Cor. i. 20.)

There is only *one* place in the wide world where *you* can have fulness of power. That is God's place for *you*.

Let him lead you *there*, and you will realise the fulness of His power through you *there*.

SHERWOOD EDDY.

CHAPTER X.

UP THE YANG-TSĪ AGAIN.

“We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it to you.”—NUM. x. 29.

NATIVE BOAT. YANG-TSĪ RIVER, BETWEEN I-CH'ANG AND WAN-HSIEN.
January, 1896.

AGAIN I write from a house-boat on the Yang-tsī, the mighty “son of the ocean,” for once more I am on my journey westwards to Sī-ch'uan. It was very hard to leave Ta-ku-t'ang; Mrs. Cameron and I had been very happy in the work there, and I had learnt to know and love many of the women and children. They are affectionate and loving, and quickly twine themselves round our hearts and lives.

I was specially sorry to leave Mrs. Cheo, the house-woman. The last Sunday I was at Ta-ku-t'ang, she told me she could never again trust in idols, she knew they were false and useless, and that henceforth she wanted to worship the one true God. I do trust she will serve Him faithfully!

I left Ta-ku-t'ang on December 16th, and on the 17th, at Kiu-kiang, joined the party going up-river under the charge of Bishop and Mrs. Cassels. There are eight of us and two children. I feel it is a privilege to travel with so many with whom I am to be associated in work in the North-east Sī-ch'uan district. One of the party is Miss F. M. Williams, with whom I hope to work at Sin-tien-tsī, a station opened by her in 1892, before she went home for furlough, after being nearly six years in the country.

* * * * *

At Hankow we were delayed ten days waiting for a steamer to I-ch'ang. Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Foster (London Missionary

Society) very kindly invited Miss Williams and me to stay with them. We had a happy time there, and were much interested in all we saw and heard of the work of the London Missionary Society.

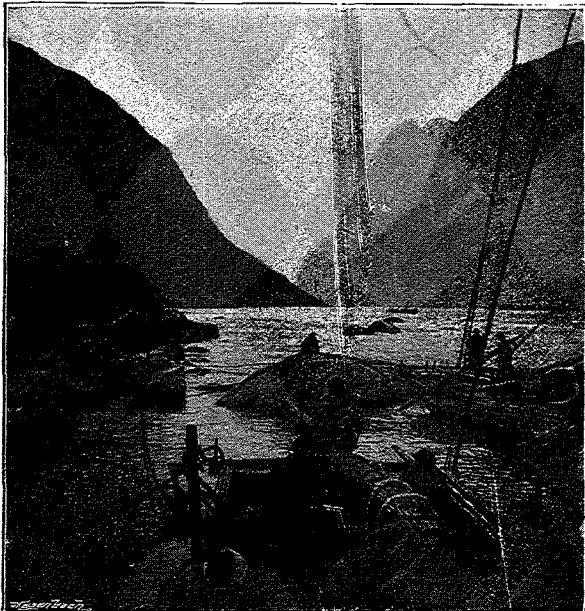
We left Hankow on December 27th, and reached I-ch'ang late on the last night of the year. In spite of our uncomfortable quarters, Miss Williams and I watched and prayed the New Year in, committing it to God with all our life and service at Sin-tien-tsi.

A strong, favourable wind has brought us up at a good rate through the gorges. These seem to me grander and more beautiful than ever; every corner rounded brings some new and beautiful view to light, and the changing lights and shades are lovely.

We have passed the worst rapids very successfully. It took us, however, part of three days to get over the Ts'in T'an, because at low water it is at its worst. Just as we were passing through the second stage of the rapid, a big salt junk, which had gone up before us, broke her rope and came rushing down in the swift and terrible current. We did not see her long, for she was quickly borne out of sight by the force of the water. Before we left the place we heard that the boat was a complete wreck, but that all the men on board had been saved.

One evening about sun-down our boat sprang a leak by scraping against a jagged rock. The men anchored at once, and most of us got on shore while the water was ladled out and the leak mended. The crack made was about a yard long, and it took the men a long time to patch it up. We heard they would do this with cotton wool, or even with rice, but eventually they managed to do it with an old garment! To our surprise it answered very well, enabling us to start the following morning at the usual time.

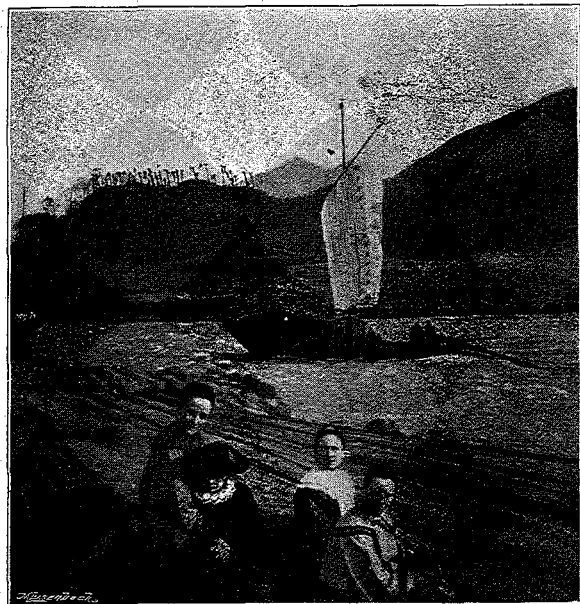
I had hoped to see again some of the people I met coming up the Yang-tsi before, but we have not anchored once at our last summer's stopping-places; and, having had such a good wind nearly all the way, we have travelled much more quickly than we did last year, and, consequently, have not often been able to visit the houses on the riverside. Occasionally,



From photo by]

[Miss F. M. Williams.

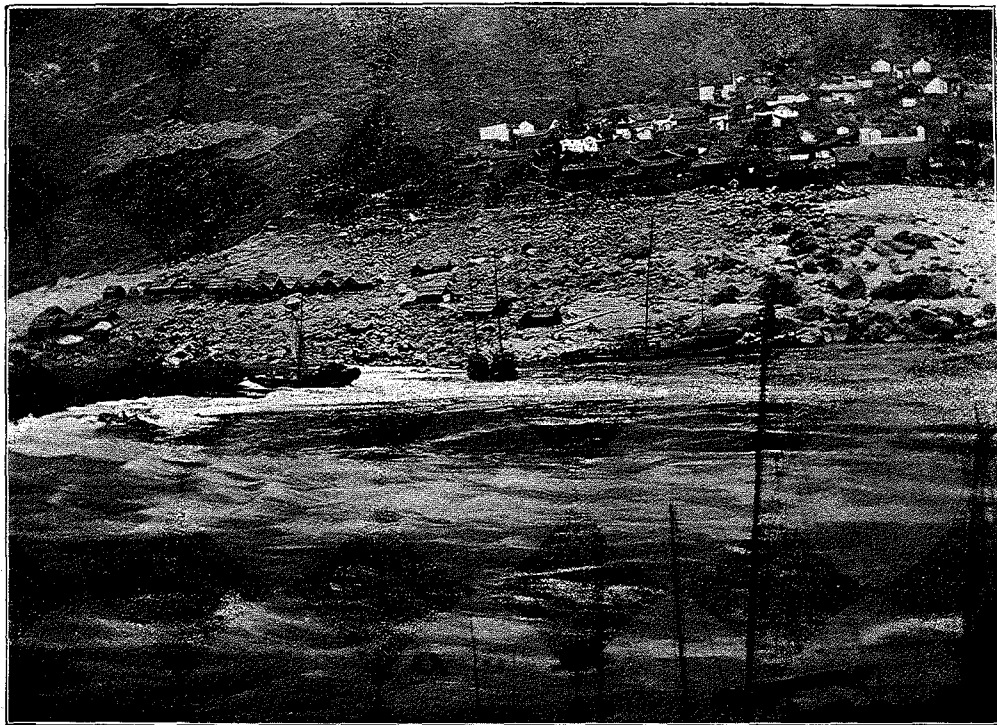
WAITING OUR TURN TO SURMOUNT THE SIN-T'AN RAPID :
YANG-TSĪ.



From photo by]

[Miss F. M. Williams.

ON THE RAPIDS : YANG-TSĪ.



From photo by

[Mrs. Isabella Bishop.

THE SIN-T'AN RAPID : YANG-TSI.

however, we have had opportunities for sowing the "seed" when walking on the banks.

We expect to reach Wan-hsien this evening. There we leave the boat, and will travel the remainder of our journey across country by sedan-chair. We do thank God for this safe and happy journey, throughout which, in the midst of so many and great dangers, He has watched over and protected us!

We have passed many walled cities and towns, many villages and hamlets on both sides of this great river, where there is not one single messenger of the Gospel, where all is dark, dark as night. How often we have prayed to the Lord of the harvest for more labourers!

At K'uei-fu, a large city of many thousands of people, there is just *one* Christian, a young man, named K'ong. He says it is so difficult to stand alone there in that great heathen city, and has written to Hankow, imploring for a missionary to be sent to K'uei-fu. Oh, that this cry may reach the ears of many in the homeland, and echo again and again in their hearts until, obedient to the call of God, they answer: "Here am I; send me, send me!"

"The Master calls! He calls for *thee*,
 Go forth at His Almighty word,
 Obedient to His last command,
 And tell to those who never heard,
 Who sit in deepest shades of night,
 That Christ has come to give them light!

* * * * *

The Master calls! Shall not thy heart
 In warm responsive love reply:
 'Lord, here am I; send *me*, send *me*,
 Thy willing slave—to live or die;
 An instrument unfit indeed,
 Yet Thou wilt give me what I need?'"

One day about noon, the very hottest part of the day, our vessel suddenly stopped. We soon found out the reason. A few poor Arabs in a small boat had hoisted their flag of distress. They were very many miles away from land, and had run out of water. Our huge vessel, going at the rate of sixteen miles an hour, was *bound* to stop and supply the need of these few thirsty men. Bucketful after bucketful of water was let down, and eagerly emptied into some receptacle in the boat. "How much will you give them?" we asked a quartermaster standing by. "Oh! as much as they want," was his answer. And then my thoughts flew to the *millions* perishing for lack of the "Living Water" in the lands to which our faces are turned, and then back to the loved homeland where there are, oh! so many of God's children who might be channels to convey the "Living Water" to some of these millions of heathen. Then came the prayer, "Father, show them the need of the thirsty millions, till they too are bound, from a sense of duty as well as compassion, to place the 'Living Water,' within their reach." Oh, if only our consecration and surrender of our all to Jesus was more real and more deep, these millions also might receive "as much as they want" of the Water of Life.

Extract from a letter written by MISS F. M. WILLIAMS en route to China.

CHAPTER XI.

BY SEDAN-CHAIR THROUGH SĪ-CH'UAN.

"Although . . . far off among the heathen, . . . yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come."—EZEK. xi. 16.

IN A CHINESE INN. ÜEN-PA-I.
January 24th, 1896.

WE have now been three days on our journey from Wan-hsien, and I am getting quite accustomed to Chinese inns. As these inns go, our quarters to-night are fairly good. Our room is of medium size with a small paper window, high up near the ceiling. On first entering, though it was broad daylight, being about 4.30 p.m., we could distinguish nothing; but gradually we saw that standing against the wall was a square rickety table, and on either side of it a wooden bed, with a suspicious-looking straw mattress on each. When a light (the pith of a rush in a saucer of oil) was brought, we covered the mattresses with oiled-cloths and spread out our bedding. While the others did that, I attacked the table, scrubbing it vigorously with the only thing available—*ts'ao-chi*—a most useful absorbent paper. To-night we can boast of a boarded floor,—an unusual luxury,—and that a more reasonable distance than usual separates us from the never-to-be-forgotten pigs!

We left Wan-hsien at daybreak on Tuesday, January 21st. As our party for East Sĭ-ch'uan was so large, it was thought best to divide it for the overland journey; Miss F. M. Williams, Miss Grint, and I have therefore started two days in advance of the others. We have kind, strong chair-bearers who have come all the way from Sin-tien-tsi to fetch us. It was good to see their joy at meeting Miss F. M. Williams again and their eagerness to tell her all the Sin-tien-tsi news.

We have each three chair-bearers and two coolies to carry our boxes and bedding, and a Pao-ning man is acting as our escort and servant. Every night in the inn, when the evening meal is over, they all come into our room for a short Bible-reading and prayer before going to rest.

Our three days' journey has been through the most magnificent scenery. The country is beautiful beyond description. The valleys are entirely laid out in fields of different grain and vegetables or in rice-fields, which, at this time of year, look like lakes.

The name of the province, *Sī-ch'uan*, is made up of two Chinese characters, meaning "four streams." The name is given on account of there being four large tributaries of the river *Yang-tsi* in this province, which are navigable for hundreds of miles and form a network of communication all over the province. *Sī-ch'uan* is the largest of the eighteen provinces of China and is about as large as Spain or three times as large as England, and has a population of more than twenty millions. It gives one an idea of wealth and prosperity. Not only are the valleys very productive, but the hills and mountains are so also, being terraced to a great height and well cultivated. Rice, wheat, barley, sugar-cane, and a great variety of vegetables are among its products.

The rice-field terraces are very pretty. We saw them yesterday in the rosy light of the morning, and as, from a great height, we looked down the mountain-sides upon them they were a lovely sight, especially in the wooded districts. We have seen a good deal of sugar-cane and oranges, this part of the province being noted for both. We have very much enjoyed the oranges; they are very cheap, about six or eight generally for a penny.

The road by which we are travelling is the high road to *Ch'en-tu*, and has been most wonderfully cut over the sides of steep mountains and down into the deep valleys. The whole country seems most fertile, and we wonder what mines of mineral wealth lie hidden in these great mountains.

To-day, as we came along, we saw coal lying on the surface of the ground, just as rocks jut out and fall to pieces on the roadsides in England. The Chinese are afraid of digging



From photo by]

BY SEDAN-CHAIR THROUGH SĪ-CH'UAN.

[Rev. A. Polhill Turner



Photo by]

A WAYSIDE INN, SĪ-CH'UAN.

[Mrs. Isabella Bishop.

deep mines for coal or any other mineral, lest they should disturb the spirits, which, they say, inhabit the interior of the earth.⁸

The country is well-wooded, bamboo and fir-trees being the most usual trees. The ferns are luxuriant and of every variety. To-day I saw the first bit of ivy that I have seen in China, and hailed such a faithful old friend with great delight!

K'Ü-HSIEN.

January 26th, 1896.

It is Sunday, and we have spent the day here in this tiny room at the back of a small inn on the outskirts of a busy, populous town. We have not ventured out at all, having been advised, before starting on our journey, to keep as quiet as possible, partly on account of the recent riots in this province, and partly because this is the time for the great examinations in the big cities around.

The chief charm of our room is a window looking out over the river. It is a paper one and will not open; but through its many holes and tears, we can see the distant mountains, and have real fresh air. We have enjoyed the rest and quiet of this little room; it has been a little "Bethel," where we have met with God in the midst of this heathen city.

"'A little Sanctuary' art Thou to me
Amongst the heathen where I dwell with Thee.
My heart has found its everlasting home,
Its sure abiding place where'er I roam.

'A little Sanctuary' art Thou to me;
Thus may I evermore 'dwell deep' in Thee;
And daily praise for blessed foretaste given
(In doing of Thy will) of 'days of Heaven.'

We have met here and there on our way a few who have listened well, as we sought to be "instant" in sowing "the seed of the Kingdom" by the wayside.

One old lady specially interested us. We overtook her one morning as she was slowly climbing a very steep hill, where she, like ourselves, had been unable to remain in the chair. Her feet were very small, and every few minutes she was obliged to rest. We helped her by giving her a

At last, after being carried about from place to place, the men found us a room in this inn, which is evidently a very poor place, but we are very thankful for it. It took us a long time to clean up and put things to rights here, for it is quite the worst room we have been in yet. However, we are fairly straight now, and have had some food; and, though only seven o'clock, we think it best to hasten to bed and put out the light, then we hope the noisy crowd outside will disperse. We are safe in God's Almighty keeping, and in spite of surroundings we shall, I expect, as usual, "sleep like tops." That "not wanted" rings in my ears still! It seems to me that at times like these, one does in some small measure enter into "the fellowship of His sufferings."

Christ knew what it was to be "not wanted," when "they besought Him to depart out of their coasts," and He Himself said: "The Son of Man hath not where to lay His head."

The very name, "foreign devil," by which we are so widely known, reminds us that "the disciple is not above his Master," for how often the Jews said of Jesus: "He hath a devil." "He was despised and rejected of men"; and "it is enough for the disciple to be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord."

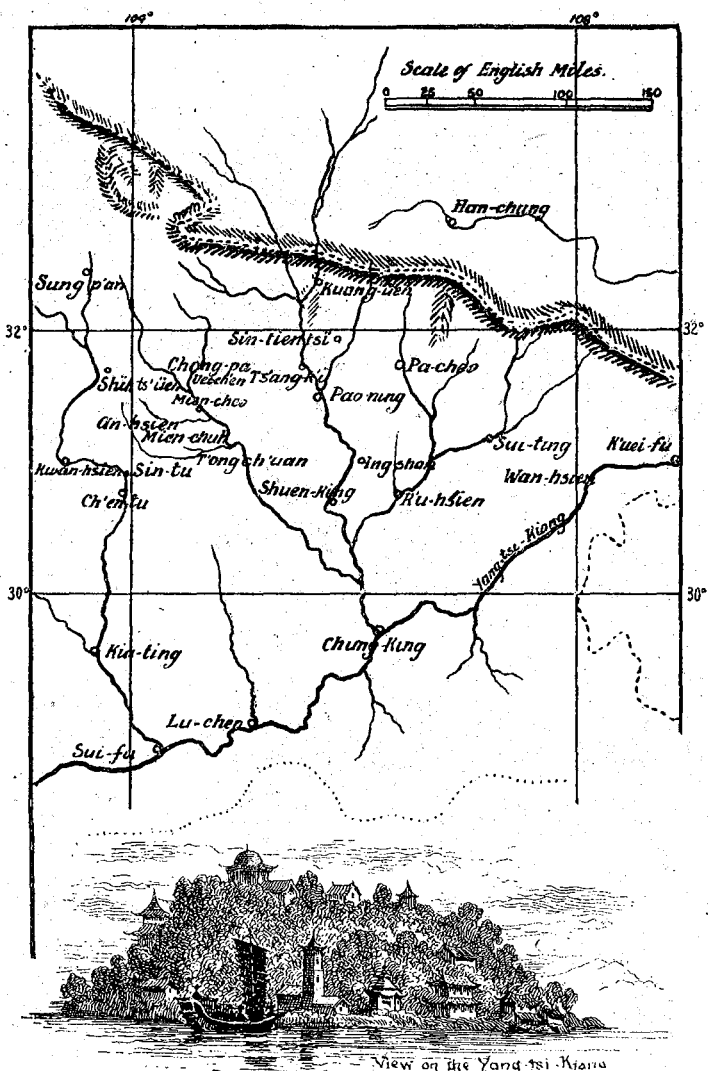
"Go, labour on; spend, and be spent,
Thy joy to do the Father's will;
It is the way the Master went,
Should not the servant tread it still?"

HSÜ-KIA-CH'ANG.

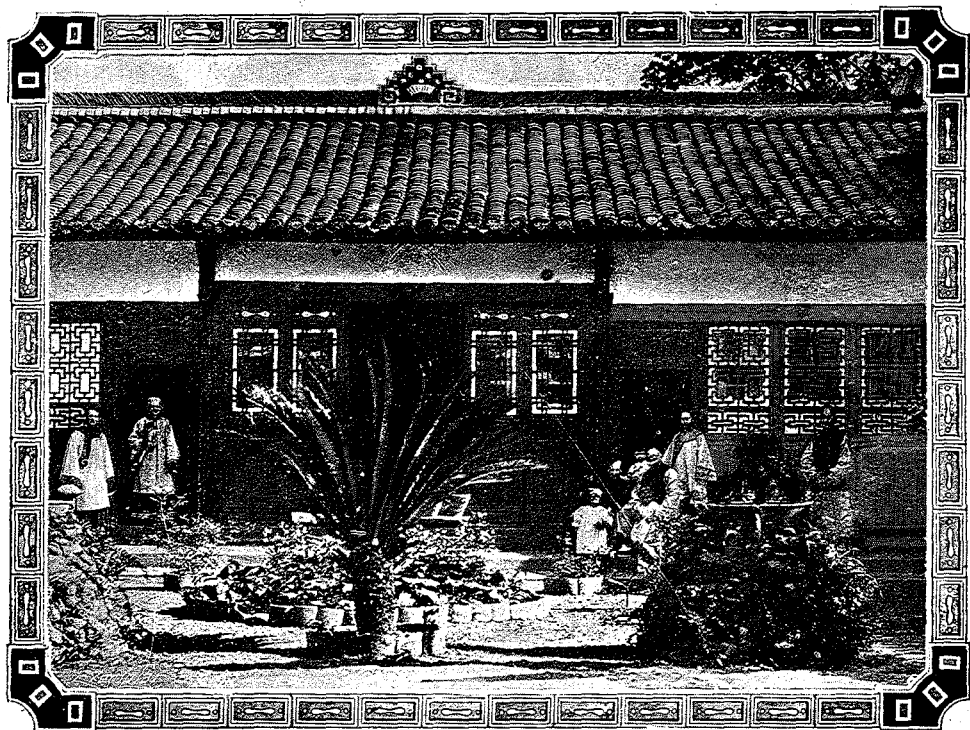
January 29th.

Another night—and again we find ourselves in strange quarters! But we have a wonderful tonic ever ready, which keeps us happy and bright; it is just the remembrance of these words: "For Jesus' sake." They lighten every burden and brighten every cloud.

To-day is the 15th of the Chinese month, and, therefore, a day of much idol-worship. We have seen incense burning at the wayside shrines, and men prostrating themselves before the hideous idols, and offering up fowls to the gods, killing them there before the idols and putting the blood on the stand, then taking them home for their own food.



MAP OF THE N.E. SĪ-CH'UAN DISTRICT.



From photo by

[Rev. A. Follhill Turner.]

MISSION HOME IN PAO-NING, SĪ-CH'UAN.

(Bishop and Mrs. Cassels and family, and other Missionary workers.)

These last few days of our journey we have felt the darkness of heathenism more than ever before. Between Wan-hsien and Pao-ning, a distance of three hundred English miles or more, there is not one single missionary station, not one messenger of the Gospel. How are the millions of people in these many cities, towns, and villages to be reached? "He, whom we love best, our Master and Lord, has bid us carry the Gospel to every creature; but we are such a small band of labourers; how are we to reach them all? Oh, that the Christian Church may see things as He sees them, that we may love as He loves, give as He gave—all!"

"I gave My life for thee;
 My precious blood I shed,
 That thou might'st ransomed be,
 And quickened from the dead.
 I gave My life for thee:
 What hast thou done for Me?"

PAO-NING.

February 3rd, 1896.

We arrived here on Friday night, January 31st, and had a most hearty welcome from the missionaries and native Christians. We were expected earlier in the day, and many of the school-boys and others had come a long way to welcome M., and were disappointed at not meeting us. She is well known and loved here, having worked in this station for some years before going to Sin-tien-tsi in 1892.

Pao-ning is a large city, situated on the Kia-ling River, one of the tributaries of the Yang-tsi. It forms the central station of the Church of England district of the China Inland Mission. The district is a large one, embracing the whole of East SĪ-ch'uan.

The work was begun in this district in 1886, when Pao-ning was the first station opened. Four other places have since become centres of work, *viz.*: Pa-cheo, Wan-hsien, Kuang-tien, and Sin-tien-tsi. There is work going on also in Shuen-k'ing, but as yet the missionaries have not been able to get a house there.

Yesterday, Sunday, we had the joy of meeting many of the native Christians and of forming some idea of the work

of this station. The morning service was taken by the Rev. E. O. Williams. It was preceded by two prayer-meetings for Christian men and women, and followed by separate classes for men, women, and children; all were well attended, as were also the service and classes in the afternoon.

At these latter a series of lessons on "the Acts of the Apostles" is now being taught, the same subject being taken at each class; after which all the people meet together in the chapel, and are catechised upon what they have learnt during the day. I was present at the boys' class, taken by Miss Ek, one of the workers at this station, and was surprised at the bright, intelligent answers they gave to her questions.

The church (see illustration, p. 163) is a nice light building, erected two years ago, largely through the contributions of the native Christians. It accommodates two hundred people. An interesting incident occurred on the day of the opening of the chapel. In the early morning Bishop Cassels was there alone, praying. Presently a man came in and knelt beside him.

On rising from his knees, Bishop Cassels found that the man had brought with him a *basketful of idols*, which he wished to burn that day, as a testimony that he desired henceforth to serve the one true God.

Since our arrival last Friday we have been very busy with different things, and a large number of the native Christians have called to see M. Many of these I knew well by name, and it was a great pleasure to meet them.

This afternoon we expect the arrival of Bishop and Mrs. Cassels and their party. The native Christians are preparing to give them a warm reception.

M. and I leave here at daybreak on Thursday, and expect to arrive at Sin-tien-tsai about midday on Friday.

Our hearts are filled with praise and thankfulness for all our Heavenly Father's care of us in the midst of perils by land and water.

Do pray for us that, as stewards of the Gospel, we may every day be found faithful!

* * * * *

Bishop Cassels and his party have arrived. They received a most hearty welcome from the people, several of the Christian men going about three miles to meet them, while the women and children assembled at the Mission House to welcome them. The courtyard was decorated with lanterns, and looked so pretty when they were lit up in the evening.

Soon after their arrival, a presentation was made to the Bishop consisting of a big Chinese hat, a pair of boots, a ham, and two chickens. They were presented to him on behalf of the Church by one of the older members, who made a little speech expressing gratitude to God for having brought their pastor back to them again in safety. We afterwards had a short thanksgiving service in the church, when the Bishop gave an address from the words: "Thou shalt see greater things than these."

This is the promise which, you may remember, was given to me last November in connection with my coming to Sin-tien-tsi with M. Since we started on our journey westward, it has again and again been repeated by God to one and another of our party; and in a letter from the Rev. E. O. Williams, Bishop Cassels heard that it had been chosen as this year's motto-text for the whole district.

"I cannot grasp the fulness, Lord, of this Thy word to me;
I have no line to sound the depths of Love's unfathomed sea,
Yet fain would I let down my net and be full filled by Thee."

The land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven : a land which the Lord thy God careth for : the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.—DEUT. xi. 11, 12.

CHAPTER XII.

ARRIVAL AT SIN-TIEN-TSĪ.

"The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."—
PS. cxxvi. 3.

"Thou shalt see greater things than these."—JOHN i. 50.

SIN-TIEN-TSĪ.

February 10th, 1896.

On Thursday, February 6th, M. and I left Pao-ning for this place. We were surprised on arriving at our resting-place for the night to find Mrs. Walter Taylor and M.'s old woman-servant, Ts'ai-ta-sao, had come from Sin-tien-tsi (forty "li" distant) to meet us. It was very nice to hear from them that the work had been steadily growing, and was being more and more blessed by God.

At daybreak, the following morning, we left the inn for the last stage of our long journey. We had not gone far before we saw Chao-ta-ning, the Bible-woman, coming to meet us. She had been visiting the previous day in a village thirty "li" from Sin-tien-tsi, and had remained there for the night, so that she might be one of the first to welcome us.

About five English miles from Sin-tien-tsi, we were met by a small crowd of people—Christians, Inquirers, and school-boys, led by a band of musicians. The orchestra consisted of a drum, a big gong, a long whistle, a pair of clappers, and another instrument of strange appearance and discordant sound. This latter quality, alas! characterised them all.

Directly we were within hearing distance, the band began. On reaching them we got out of our chairs to return the salutations of the crowd. When we started again, the band led the way, and at intervals crackers were let off in front of our chairs.

As we drew near the top of the hill, a short distance from the house, we saw about eighty or ninety men, women, and children waiting there to welcome us. It was, of course, all on account of M., whom the people love dearly. Again we left our chairs and returned their greetings. One old man, Hsüeh-ta-ie, was very much moved, and shed tears of joy as he welcomed her.

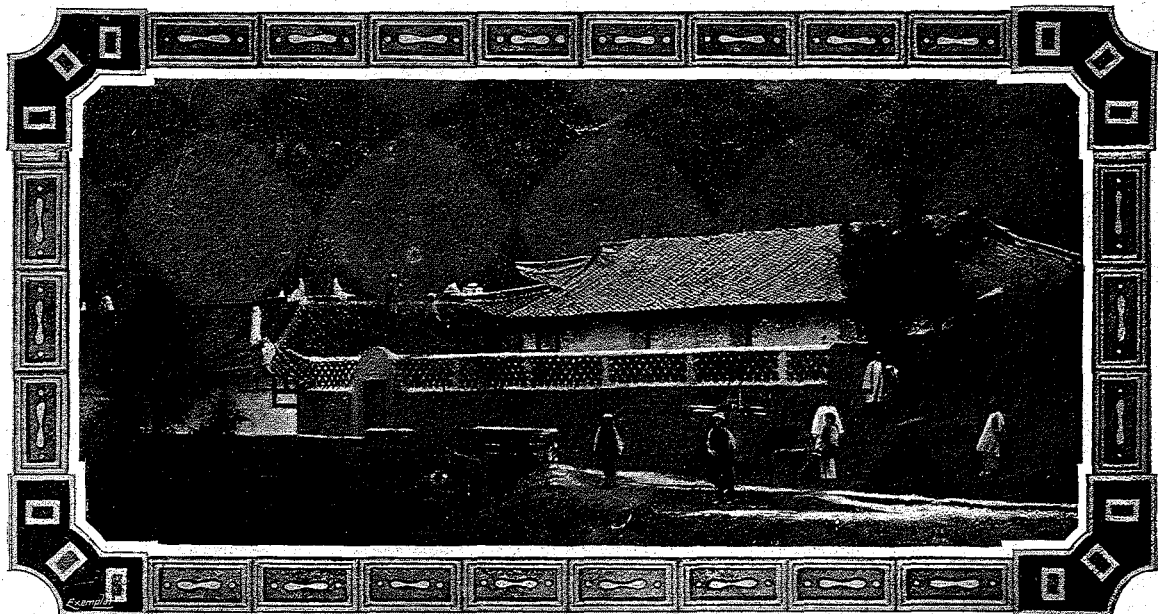
On arriving at the house, we gathered together in the little chapel for a thanksgiving service. It was a most touching meeting; and I saw many men and women crying for joy as they thanked God for bringing their teacher back again. They prayed for me, too, that my coming into their midst might be for blessing, and to God's glory. M. told them a little about her two years in England, and of the chastened joy with which her aged mother had again given her up for further service for God in China. She told them also of the bright word of promise which has so definitely and so repeatedly been given us for Sin-tien-tsi and the whole district: "Thou shalt see greater things than these." Old Hsüeh-ta-ie, the first man to become a Christian in this place, said a few touching words in the name of all present, and presented M. with a silk banner and two scrolls inscribed with words of welcome.

After the service tea and cakes were handed round, and then the people dispersed. They seem such simple, loving people, I long to know them all intimately, and for Jesus' sake "to spend and be spent" for them.

During the last two years, the work in this place has greatly increased. Mr. and Mrs. Walter Taylor have been in charge for the past year, and God has much blessed their labours. They will be leaving us in a few days to take charge of the work at Kuang-üen, a station two and a half days' journey north of us, and then M. and I will take up the work here.

* * * * *

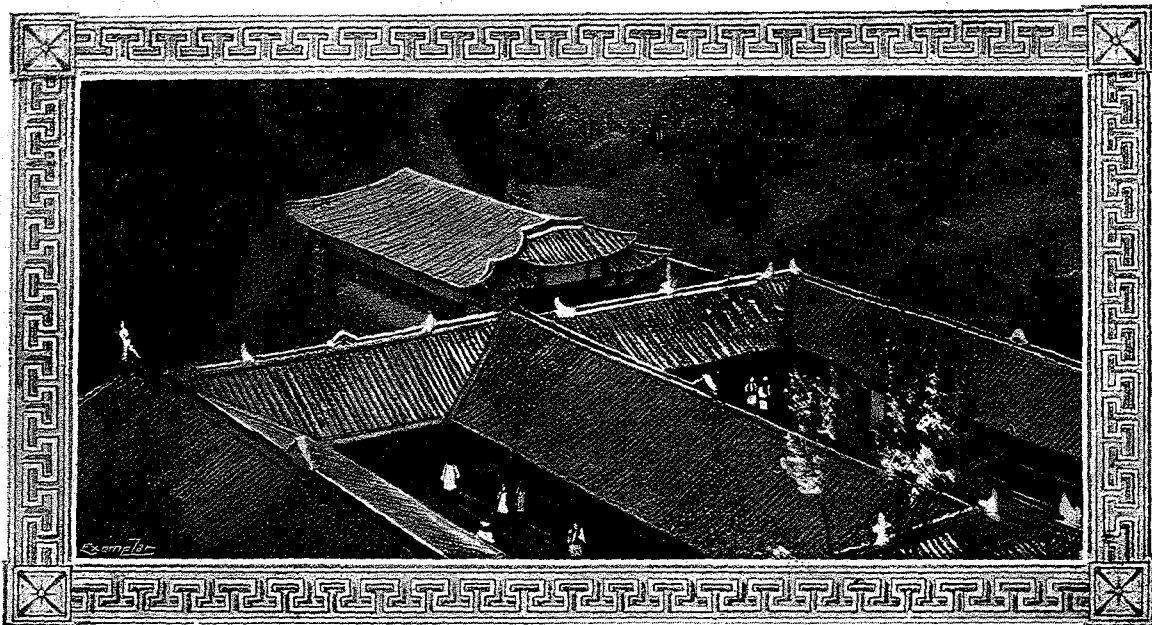
Sin-tien-tsi is the name of our *house*, not of any town, village, or market. It is a large building situated in the bend of a pretty, well-wooded hill. The house is divided into two parallel courts—the outer one, nearest to the high



From photo by

SIN-TIEN-TSÍ MISSION HOUSE, SEEN FROM THE ROAD.

[Rev. A. T. Polhill Turner.]



From photo by]

SIN-TIEN-TSI HOUSE AND CHAPEL (BUILT 1898), AS SEEN FROM THE HILL.

[Rev. A. T. Polhill Turner

road, being used for the native work, and containing chapel and guest-rooms, schoolroom, and servants' quarters ; while the inner courtyard we reserve for ourselves.

Up among the mountains, two thousand nine hundred feet above sea-level, and away from town and crowds, the house is admirably suited for a sanitarium, and throughout the summer is largely used as such for our fellow-missionaries from the busy cities of the district. To the south of us, the nearest mission station is Pao-ning, one and a half days' journey ; while to the north the nearest is Kuang-tien two and a half days distant ; Pa-cheo on our east is four days from us ; and to the west, at a distance of five days' journey, lies Mien-cheo, the nearest station of the Church Missionary Society in West China.

Since the beginning of the work here in 1892, God has blessed it abundantly, and it has increased steadily. The number of those baptised is eighteen, and many more are under instruction for baptism. The work among the boys is encouraging, and there are now about fourteen or fifteen boys in the school.

As we look out upon the work which God has given us to do, we feel our utter inability for it apart from Him ; but we have His promise : " My grace is sufficient for thee," and in *His* strength and power, we believe to see the " greater things " that He has promised.

“From glory unto glory!” what great things He hath done!
What wonders He hath shown us, what triumphs He hath won!
We marvel at the records of the blessings of the year!
But sweeter still than Christmas bells rings out His promise clear.
That “greater things,” far greater, our longing eyes shall see!
We can but wait and wonder what “greater things” shall be;
But glorious fulfilments rejoicingly we claim,
While pleading in the power of the All-prevailing Name.
The fulness of His blessing encompasseth our way;
The fulness of His promises crowns every brightening day;
The fulness of His Glory is beaming from above,
While more and more we realise the fulness of His love.

F. R. H.

CHAPTER XIII.

WHAT GOD HATH WROUGHT.

"I will make them and the places round about My hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing."—EZEK. xxxiv. 26.

SIN-TIEN-TSI. SI-CH'UAN.

April, 1896.

Two months have passed since we arrived here and were so heartily welcomed. During this time I have learnt to know and love the dear native Christians who form Christ's Church in this place.

Those of my readers who have read Miss F. M. Williams' book "A New Thing" will, I am sure, excuse me if, for the sake of those who have not, I repeat here a few facts about the beginning of missionary work in this station of Sin-tien-tsi. Real, definite work was begun in the autumn of 1892, when M. first came to live and work here. Several missionaries had visited the place previous to this time, and a few itinerations had been made in the neighbourhood.

The first person to be influenced by the Holy Spirit to believe in the one true God and to trust in Jesus Christ, was an old woman, named Chao, over thirty years of age, living three and a half miles from here. On her way home from market one day during the summer of 1892, she rested awhile in the porch of our house.

A native teacher, named Ho, a Christian man, seeing in her hand a bundle of incense-sticks, just purchased at market, told her that burning incense was quite useless, and that the true God wanted men to worship Him with their hearts and in their lives. As He went on to tell her the story of God's love through Jesus Christ, she exclaimed: "*This* is what

I have sought for—the true doctrine—and the way to obtain happiness in the future life.”

To this end she said she had taken the vegetarian vows upon her and most assiduously done all in her power to appease the gods, by constantly burning incense and worshipping the idols.

So convinced, however, was she of the truth of all Mr. Ho told her, that, before leaving, she gave him the bundle of incense to be destroyed, saying she wished henceforth to worship the true God only. Day after day she came here to be taught more, and the following Saturday she brought her household gods which she had torn down from the walls.

After the Sunday service, M. asked her if she were *willing* to burn the idols. Without any hesitation she answered: “I am willing; I hate them; they belong to the devil.” Thereupon, she struck a match and set fire to them herself. Being old and musty, they did not easily ignite. However, suddenly disappearing, Chao-ta-niang brought an armful of straw to her assistance. Throwing this upon the idols, they soon burnt away to ashes. Whilst they were burning, the hymn “I will follow Jesus” was sung; and then the question was asked: “Who else will follow Jesus?” An old man, named Hsüeh (of whom I will tell you presently), rose and said: “I and my family will henceforth follow Jesus.”

One of the women said to Chao-ta-niang after she had burnt the idols (among which was one—the god of fire): “See, you have burnt the fire-god, and he could not defend himself!”

Those were the first idols burnt here, and she was the first person to publicly confess her trust in God.

From that day she grew in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. When M. came to work here in the autumn of that year, Chao-ta-niang came regularly for teaching, and was wonderfully quick in learning to repeat hymns and texts, and also began to learn the Chinese character, so as to be able in time to read the Testament.

In March, 1893, she and Mr. Hsüeh were baptised. We often thank God for these “living stones” which form the foundation of this Church, and which have been so much

used of God to build up "the spiritual Temple" in this place.—(1 Peter ii. 5.)

In 1895, Chao-ta-niang was set apart as Bible-woman for this station; and now the greater part of her time is spent in preaching the Gospel in the markets and villages around. Her son is now a Christian, and several of her family are also interested in the faith.

She is always thanking us for having come so far to preach the Gospel, and seems as if she could never express her gratitude sufficiently. The other day she suggested writing to our Queen to thank her for allowing us to come! She cannot believe that the Queen does not know of our existence, and when we told her the Queen would not be able to read a Chinese letter, she said resignedly: "Never mind, I shall be able to pay my greetings to her, and to thank her with my own mouth in Heaven."

The second family to give up their idols was that of the old man named Hsüeh, who is an influential and a well-to-do farmer, over sixty years of age, living five "li" from our house. He first heard the Gospel in 1890, and for two years he kept coming to hear more, whenever there was a missionary staying here. From the beginning he showed great interest, and often shed tears as he listened to the story of our Lord's sufferings. His faith in idols was shaken, but for a long time his wife and four sons were all against his doing away with "the gods of many generations"; but every evening when the time came for his sons to worship the idols, old Hsüeh-ta-ie would leave the house for a walk round the fields.

It was in September, 1892, while in conversation with Ho Sien-seng, the native teacher, that he realised what an awful thing it is to serve the devil, and then and there he assembled his family together to choose whom they would serve. Together they agreed to serve the Lord. The sons at once took down all the family and household gods, and gave them to Ho Sien-Seng to be burnt.

Soon after they had done this, the Hsüeh family met with severe persecution from their neighbours and friends; but the old man and his sons were determined not to be moved

by these things, and since that time they have, by God's grace, been true and faithful, and have witnessed bravely for the Truth.

The old man, Hsüeh-ta-ic, was baptised in March, 1893, and since then his wife, two sons, and a grandson—aged about eighteen—have also been baptised.

We often visit dear old Mrs. Hsüeh, who has been ill for a long time; her eyesight has failed, and she is now almost blind. As we were sitting with her to-day, she said that sometimes she dreams she can see, and then comes the disappointment of waking up to find herself still in darkness. She loves to hear about the Home above, where her eyes will be opened and she will see "the King in His beauty."

Last year she was very ill for months, and there seemed no hope of her recovery. But she prayed earnestly that God would spare her until M. returned from England; He graciously answered her prayer, and it was touching to see her joy when M. visited her for the first time after her return.

She is so gentle and sweet, and we find her growing more and more so, as she nears Home. Sometimes she takes my hand in hers, and stroking it, calls me her *mei-mei* i.e. "little sister"—because her maiden name was the same as mine (*Tai* pronounced *dye*). In her weakness, she has become a pillar of strength to this little church through her prayers.

Mr. and Mrs. Hsüeh's youngest son, Hsüeh-lao-iao, is an earnest Christian man, aged about twenty-four or twenty-five. He was convinced of the falsity of idols in 1892, when he helped to destroy the household gods. From that time he attended the services and meetings regularly, and, being unable to read, and desiring greatly to read the Bible for himself, he used to come up here in the evenings, when his day's work was done, to be taught Chinese characters by our teacher.

For some time, however, he would not acknowledge himself a believer, because he longed first to have a tangible *proof* through his own personal experience that our God was the true God, and that He heard and answered prayer. This

was given him one cold wintry day, when he had been on business across hills and valleys some distance from his home. Ere he returned in the evening a dense mist came on, and very soon he lost his way on the mountain-side. It was a dangerous part, and he could see nothing of the path, and had no stick with which to feel his way; a false step might at any instant have hurled him over some steep precipice. After wandering about in despair for some time, suddenly he thought of what he had heard of the living God, and recognised in his circumstances an opportunity of proving if He really were *true* and answered prayer. Thereupon, lifting up his heart for the first time to God in prayer, he asked God to help him and to lead him safely on his way. Almost immediately, his foot knocked against something, which proved to be a big stick, which enabled him to carefully feel his way, and ere long he had reached home in safety. From that moment he believed in God and the power of prayer.

As Hsüeh-lao-iao told us a few days ago of this experience, he concluded by saying that since he became a Christian God has blessed him and his family, and that his farming has prospered as it had never done before.

Another leading Christian man of this Church is a chair-bearer, called Uang-lao-ta. He lives in a tiny house in a beautiful valley at the back of our hill. There are seven in the family—the old mother, her two sons and their wives, and two dear little grandchildren.

The two sons first heard the Gospel in 1892 from Bishop Cassels, and the younger brother would have willingly destroyed the idols then, but Uang-lao-ta was afraid lest some calamity might ensue. He knew in his *heart* that the Gospel was *true*, but wished to serve God and keep his idols too!

Later in the year, when M. began work here, she visited the family often, and they came regularly to be taught more of the Truth.

One day, when in their home, she told Uang-lao-ta that God could not bless him if he still clung to the idols; and it was then that he decided to destroy them, and did so at once.

There was one special idol of which they were much afraid, but that day, the younger brother, seizing a hammer, broke the idol in pieces, dug a hole in the garden, and buried all the bits; and Uang-lao-ta, referring to this a few days ago, said: "It has not again injured me or any of my family, and the Lord God Almighty has blessed and protected us ever since."

Dear old Mrs. Uang understood the plan of Redemption through having the "Wordless Book" explained to her. Looking at the white page one day, she said: "I believe Jesus has changed *your* heart, but will He change *mine*? I am only an old woman, who works in the fields!"

How good to know that with God there is no respect of persons, that all are alike *precious* in His sight, that every soul is "of great value" because bought with the precious blood of Jesus Christ. The other day as we sat with her in her little house, she said: "I am old and poor, and have no sense and no memory, but my heart is full of peace, because one thing I know, Jesus loved *me* and gave Himself for *me*."

The younger son causes his mother and elder brother much sorrow and anxiety, because he has become a heavy opium smoker, and all the attempts made to break him of this deadly habit have so far failed. Though the first in the family to be convinced of the truth of the Gospel in 1892, he has never gone forward, and is now, in 1896, the only one not baptised. He does but little work, and lives on his poor little wife's hardly earned wages, and is a continual source of sorrow to the whole family. The elder brother prays constantly for him, and longs for his salvation.

I have written thus fully of the beginning of the work here, because I do want you to thoroughly understand all about the growth of this little Church, and to be able definitely to help us by prayer both for the Church as a whole and for its separate members. Your prayer work is intensely real. "Prayer moves the Hand that rules the world."

Early in the year we had the great pleasure of a visit from Mrs. Isabella Bishop, the renowned traveller. She spent nearly a week with us, and interested us greatly by all she

told us of her travels in missionary lands. She very kindly took several photographs of the place and people for us, among them, one of Mrs. Chao, the Bible-woman.

Mrs. Chao had never been photographed before, and, at the last moment, just as Mrs. Bishop was about to remove the cap, she was busily engaged in finding No. 77 in the hymn-book she held in her hand. It is her favourite hymn—"I'm not ashamed to own my Lord." Mrs. Bishop was much touched with this little incident, so characteristic of the old Bible-woman.

While staying at Pao-ning, Mrs. Bishop greatly cheered the hearts of the missionaries there by her generous gift of a hospital, to be opened under the name of the "Henrietta Bird Memorial Hospital" as soon as a doctor and nurse are appointed.

The greater part of every morning I am engaged in the medical work. In fine weather I have an average of about twenty patients a day. I do trust this part of the work will be a means of help to many. Chao-ta-niang, the Bible-woman, is always with me in the guest hall. We try to tell about the "Good Physician" to each one as they come; and we believe that through the medical work many hear the Gospel who might otherwise never do so.

Every fine afternoon M. and I visit the homes of the people, taking Mrs. Chao with us. The houses being so scattered, we are not often able to visit more than one a day. The distances are great and the roads bad, but the welcome that always awaits us makes up for all the difficulties of the way. And as we cross the hills, or go down into the valleys around, a joy deeper than words fills our hearts with gratitude for the privilege of being Christ's ambassadors to the heathen. It is good to be allowed to pass on a word of cheer to some of the Christians, or to be seeking some of His "other sheep" to bring them into the fold. "It is good for us to be here."

"Seek the coming of Christ's kingdom,
Seek the souls around to win them,
Seek to Jesus Christ to bring them,
Seek this first."

Assuredly it is not foreign intercourse that is ruining China, but this dreadful poison [opium]. Oh, the grief and desolation it has brought to our people! In its swift, deadly course it is spreading devastation everywhere, wrecking the minds and eating away the strength and wealth of its victims. The ruin of the mind is the most woeful of its many deleterious effects . . . in the deadly drug, we are self-steeped, seeking poverty, imbecility, death, destruction.

CHANG-CH'IH-TUNG. VICEROY OF HU-PEH AND HU-NAN.

CHAPTER XIV.

CHINA'S SORROW.

SIN-TIEN-TSI,
June, 1896.

IN April, Bishop Cassels held a Confirmation service here, when eleven men and five women were confirmed. We believe that the service, and the special preparation classes that had previously been held, were times of real blessing to them all.

It was very sweet to hear their simple words of faith and trust in Jesus Christ, when, at the service, the Bishop spoke to them one by one. Old Mrs. Uang said again: "One thing I know—Jesus is my Saviour," and dear blind old Mrs. Hsüeh said: "Through God's grace my heart is true and I have but one desire, to get forward on my way to heaven."

After the service, a man, who has been attending the Sunday meetings for some time, burnt his idols, and some of the natives commended him to God in prayer.

Of course, this was a great step for him to take—the burning of his idols—but leaving the false gods does not always mean accepting the true God; and as yet this man has not given any evidence of change of heart. But we trust that his salvation may be one of the "greater things" which we are looking for.

During the last month we have been asked for medicine for nine or ten cases of opium poisoning, and in every case except one the medicine was effectual in restoring life.

In one house we found the patient was a young girl of seventeen, who had taken the poison because of a quarrel with her mother-in-law. Our short acquaintance with the

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latter drew out our sympathy for the poor girl, for the woman was a real "scold." We have since seen the girl occasionally and she seems grateful now for our having helped her. She is married to a boy of eleven years of age! Another day we were asked for medicine for a child of *three* years of age! The child had found some opium on the bed where his parents had been smoking, and had swallowed it! Oh, how often we see that the children suffer for the sins of the parents!

A Chinese lady, named Peh, has been staying with us to break off the habit of opium smoking. She has taken it for twenty years. Poor woman, she has a sad story. She is only thirty years old, and first acquired a taste for the deadly drug when ten years old, through having to light her parents' opium-pipes.

Her husband dislikes her very much, saying she is only an expense and trouble to him, so he has married another wife, and this poor lady asked us to help her to break off the opium smoking, hoping thus to win back her husband's favour.

She reads well, which is unusual with Chinese women, and spent much time every day when with us in reading the New Testament. She stayed here about six weeks, and we believe she is now quite cured. A week or two before she left she expressed her desire to be a Christian. We do trust that she may find the rest and peace of knowing Jesus Christ as her own Saviour!

Since she left us we have visited her in her own home near Huai-shu-pa. She was very pleased to see us, and welcomed us warmly. We were so glad to hear from the other members of the family that she had not taken the opium again, and that she had been teaching them the Bible truths learnt when with us.

One case of attempted opium suicide which we attended was that of a man, named Muh, who had taken the poison because of a quarrel with his wife. This was a difficult case, the man having taken the poison some hours before. In time, however, the medicine took effect.

Liu-ta-niang, a Christian woman from Pa-cheo, who had

accompanied us, spoke very earnestly to the man and his family, urging them to leave their idols and trust in the living God. One reason for the number of opium cases we have had lately is, that the people are now gathering in the opium from the fields. The poppy-heads are ripe, and it is sad, indeed, to see the people in the fields among the poppies, splitting up the capsules.

A writer has said: "You may go through China and find tens of thousands of towns and villages with no trace of the Bible or of Christian influence, but you will scarcely find a hamlet where the opium-pipe does not reign. We have given China something beside the Gospel, something that is doing more harm in a *week* than the united efforts of all our Christian missionaries are doing good in a *year*. Opium demoralises the people, and makes more slaves than the slave-trade."

A missionary in China, preaching to a company in the open air, spoke about hell, when one in the crowd said: "Yes, we know about hell; since England sent us opium China has been a hell."

It is good to know that such a large number of God's servants in England are banded together to do all in their power by prayer and witness to remove the terrible curse of opium from this country.

I have read that a Chinese teacher compared its ravages with the last plague of Egypt, because there is hardly a family in China without one victim to this awful scourge.

Our Sunday services are very well attended, between sixty and eighty generally being present. Many come four or five miles. If you could see the position of this house, and look round about on the hills and valleys by which it is surrounded, with hardly a house to be seen anywhere, you would wonder, as I did at first and often do still, wherever they all come from. But they *do* come and regularly, some bringing their rice with them, so as to be able to stay for the afternoon service.

About a month ago we hired a room at a little market, called U-li-tsï, about four miles from here, and now every Sunday afternoon a meeting is held there, conducted generally

by our teacher, Sie Sien-seng, with the help of one or two other Christian men. We do trust that this new branch of the work may be blessed, and that many men and women in U-li-tsi may turn to the Lord.

Before M. went home, within a short distance of our house, and on the high road, was a small opium-den—a very den of iniquity. It was her great desire to buy up the place, and turn it to use in God's service. Kind friends in England, hearing of this, collected sufficient money for this to be done on her return. When she came back, however, she found that the house had been rented to us, the landlady having given it up of her own free will, because she has become a believer in the Gospel! The first Sunday we were here she broke her opium-pipe and lamp before the whole congregation, and we hope she will now become Christ's true disciple. What an abundant answer God had given to the prayers of His faithful servants in England! It always cheers us to find proofs like this that the link of prayer makes you and us fellow-labourers in the same harvest-field.

Some of the money contributed in England has been used in repairing the broken-down old place, which has been whitewashed, newly thatched, and nicely fitted up with all necessary furniture. Tracts are pasted outside and a notice giving the dates of Sundays. Much to our joy, we have living in it dear old Mrs. Chao, the Bible-woman! It has meant much to her to leave her own comfortable home, where she dwelt with her only son, adopted grandson, and daughter, and to live alone in this small two-roomed house on the high road. But she is glad to do or suffer anything for Jesus' sake.

We asked her one day if she were ever lonely there by herself. She answered brightly: "Oh no! there are always two of us living there—the Lord Jesus and myself."

Her words echoed those of the Master: "Alone, yet not alone; for the Father is with Me."

Living at this little house on the side of the road, she has very many opportunities of telling passers-by of the true God, and we hope that the preaching of the Gospel there

may be "the power of God unto salvation to many precious souls," and that thus "it shall come to pass that in the place where it was said of them, Ye are not My people, *there* it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God."—(Hos. i. 10.)

The Master said unto His servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

The servant said, Lord, it is done as Thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

The Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that My house may be filled.—LUKE xiv. 21-23.

CHAPTER XV.

VISITING THE VILLAGES.

“Jesus went round about the villages teaching.”

SIN-TIEN-TSI
October 9th, 1896.

Now that the heat of summer is over, M. and I have been able to visit some of the more distant villages.

Amongst some of the markets visited lately is Liu-k'i-pa, a place about six or seven miles from here. It was the first time that foreigners had ever been seen there, and though the welcome we received was not so cordial as we generally have at other places, where we are better known, still we had an interested group of listeners as we told the Gospel, and we quite hope the way is now opened for many future visits to that place.

On our way home we spent half an hour in a house where the people were most friendly, and ready to listen to the Gospel. They had been to me for medicine, and expressed much gratitude for it.

An old, white-haired man, named Chang, listened as only those listen who realise that they stand on the brink of a Christless eternity. He asked searching and intelligent questions, and was anxious to learn all he could in the short time we were there. We were sorry to have to come away so soon, but a long walk lay before us still. Before we left, a little boy climbed up a tree and picked us some nice, big pears, which we found most refreshing as we hurried home.

We long to go again to that house, but it means the best part of a day to do so, and with so many needy ones nearer us, it is impossible to often visit these more distant places.

We are but two here, very weak and helpless, and all

around us on the mountain sides, and down in the valleys, and far away beyond them, there are thousands of perishing souls quite unreached as yet.

“ How many sheep are straying, far from the Saviour's fold !
 Upon the lonely mountains they shiver with the cold ;
 Within the tangled thickets, where poisoned vines do creep
 And over rocky ledges wander the poor lost sheep.
 O come, let us go and find them,
 In the paths of death they roam ;
 At the close of the day 'twill be sweet to say :
 ' I have brought some lost one home.' ”

Another day we went to U-li-tsi, a market four miles away. A girl living there had taken opium-poison the day before, and we had sent her medicine. She was only sixteen and had taken the poison because she was “ tired of living.” We were thankful to find she had recovered. Though the girl herself was not grateful to us for the medicine, her relatives were, and offered us the use of a room in their house for preaching, whenever we liked to go. We hope, God willing, to avail ourselves frequently of this offer during the winter.

San-ch'uan-si is another village we have been able to reach lately. It is ten or twelve miles distant, over a rough, mountainous road. We had not long arrived at the inn, where we intended spending the night, and were having a nice talk with a crowd who had gathered round us, when a little slave girl from the one wealthy family of the place ran in, bringing us an invitation to eat the evening meal with them. Meng Lao-ie, a local mandarin, was away, but his mother, over seventy years of age, was at home and his wife and children. They are all opium smokers, and every now and again one or another would lie down on the couch where the opium lamp was burning, and smoke, even while in conversation with us. During the evening they asked us to read our books and to sing to them. They like to listen, though as yet they show no real interest in the Gospel. We were ravenously hungry ere the meal was ready, which was not until seven o'clock. We had eaten nothing but a few biscuits since our breakfast, and had had the long mountain walk since. It was not surprising therefore that we were

ready for *anything*, even to the hard, unripe persimmons which preceded the meal, and the slices of fat bacon which ushered in the rest of the food!

On our return to the inn we found the landlady waiting for a chat, and she said that many people had been in and out during the evening to see if we had returned.

Next morning we had some good talks with those who came to see us, and one little girl repeated quite correctly the last verse of a hymn which she had been taught four years ago by a missionary who visited the place. As we left the village quite a little crowd of people watched us, waving until we were out of sight, and calling out to us to "go away slowly, and come back quickly."

One afternoon, as we were returning home from visiting one of the Inquirers,* we took a short cut through a beautiful wood. Suddenly coming in sight of an old house, the Bible-woman told us a man was lying there very, very ill, all hope of his recovery having been given up, as for four days, with the exception of a little opium to ease his pain, he had taken nothing. As we drew near the house, a son came out and pressed us to go in and see his father, who, he said, had given up the worship of idols and was a believer in the Gospel, having often been to our services. We went in and sat for a few moments with the old man, who was certainly very weak. His face brightened as we spoke to him of Jesus, and said we would pray for him. After this some of the Christians visited him regularly and took him nourishing things, but he gradually grew weaker and weaker until he peacefully passed away. The day before his death he called his sons around him, and in the presence of the Bible-woman, told them he was dying a Christian, and wished them to bury him as such, and exhorted them to put away all idolatry and serve the true and only God.

After his death the two younger sons would not allow their elder brother to carry out the father's wishes, and insisted on following the heathen customs. The elder son attends our services now, and seems to be seeking after the Truth.

Another day on our return from Liu-k'i-pa we passed the

* Candidates for baptism.

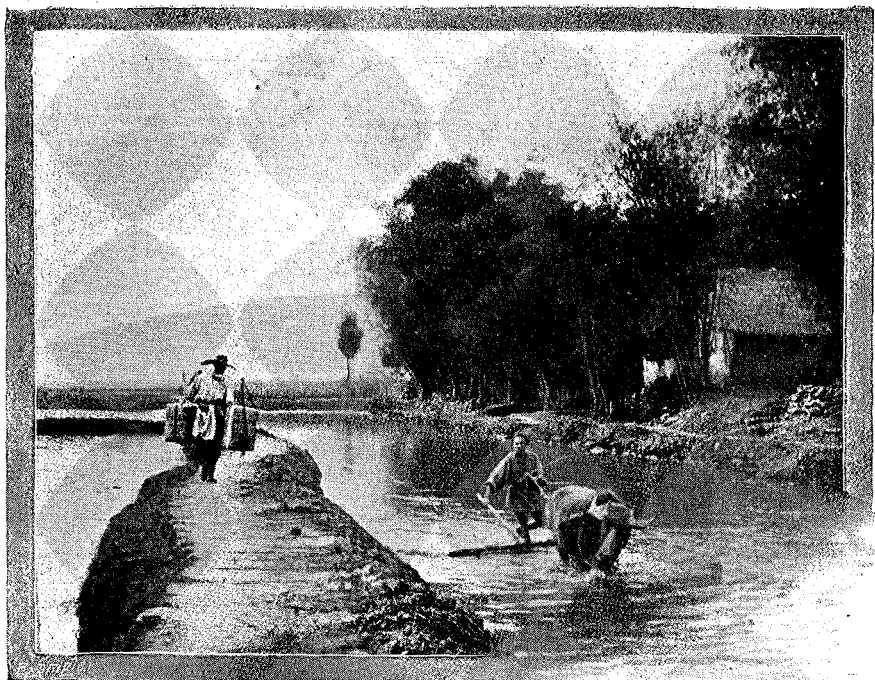
house of Mrs. Long, one of the Inquirers. She was grinding corn in the courtyard. Stopping to speak to her, we found her in great sorrow. Nine days previously her little boy, twelve years of age, had gone out to gather firewood, and had never returned. His father had searched for him everywhere, but in vain, and they were forced to come to the conclusion that he had been killed by some wild beast, and had been carried off to one of the great caves we so often see in these wild mountains. Poor sorrowing mother! how could we comfort her? We felt unable, face to face with such a sorrow as hers, to say anything but remind her of "the God of all comfort."

It is no uncommon thing up in this mountainous country for little children to be thus attacked and carried off by leopards, even in broad daylight, and lately we have heard of several of these sad cases.

The last few weeks have been a very busy time with the country people, for they have been gathering in the rice harvest. The different stages in the cultivation of rice have interested us a great deal. During the winter the water-fields, which look like lakes among the valleys, lie fallow, unless drained and used for an early bean-crop. Early in the spring the fields are ploughed—water-buffaloes being used for this purpose. Then, after heavy rain has fallen, the seed, known at this stage as "*kuh-tsi*," is sown in small fields, being thrown broadcast upon the water, illustrating the verse: "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days."—(Ecc. xi. 1.)

When the young shoots have grown to a height of six or seven inches, they are transplanted in rows in larger fields, and are then called "*iang-tsi*." In the autumn comes the ingathering, and this is followed by the threshing and winnowing of the rice. Now it is known as "*mi*," and when cooked and ready for table the rice is called "*fan*."

Two Sundays ago we had a Harvest-Thanksgiving service. All Saturday afternoon we had a merry time with our school-boys, helping to arrange the various offerings, that the people had willingly brought to the God Who had given them such an abundant harvest.



PLOUGHING A RICE-FIELD.

7

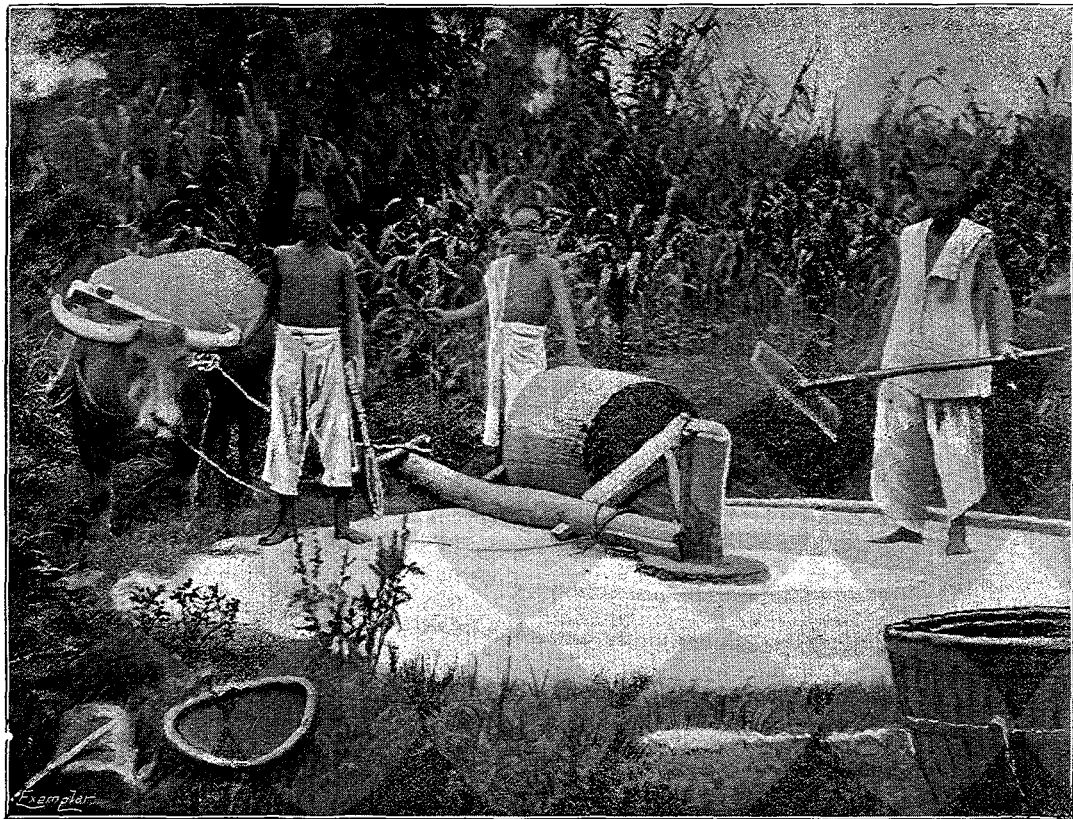


From photo by]

Exemplar

[Mr. Jensen.

THRASHING RICE.



A CHINESE THRESHING FLOOR.

When all was arranged it was a wonderful sight indeed ! Many baskets of rice were there, wheat, flour, Indian corn, turnips, egg-plant, ginger, persimmons, oranges, pears, pomegranates, marrows of various kinds, beetroot, peas, and many other things, the English names of which I do not know.

It was good to see the happiness and pride of the dear people as they brought in their offerings.

Bishop Cassels was here and preached on the words : “ Ye are God’s tilled land.”—(1 Cor. iii. 9. R.V. m.)

“ For souls redeemed, for sins forgiven,
For means of grace and hopes of heaven,
What can to Thee, O Lord, be given,
Who givest all ? ”

Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd.—**JOHN x, 16.**

The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.—**JOHN x. 11.**

Wilt *thou* lay down thy life for My sake?—**JOHN xiii. 38.**

Saviour, do with me what Thy heart desireth,
For Thine own glory, make the most of me,
Tune Thou my life to all Thy will requireth,
Thy 'whatsoever' shall its keynote be.

CHAPTER XVI.

DAYBREAK IN THE VALLEYS.

“The valleys shall abound in corn; yea, they shall sing.”—Ps. lxxv. 13. S.V.

SIN-TIEN-TSI.

November, 1896.

THIS bright promise has been in my mind and prayers lately, and I want to tell you how God is beginning to send “the springs into the valleys” all around us.

This is, as you know, “a land of valleys and hills,” and looking down from the top of the hill behind our house (which Mrs. Chao likes to call “the Lord’s hill”) we have often pointed to a house here, or another there, where, as yet, the people are, if not utterly opposed to the Gospel, quite indifferent to it. But we thank God that “the fountains are opened in the midst of the valleys” and that there are now a few homes where the true Light has entered, and they stand out like bright harbour-lights across the dark waters of heathenism.

One of these, the home of the Christian tailor (see “A New Thing”), we visit often to teach his wife, Mrs. T’ang. When first we visited her, she seemed so dull and hard, and if we said anything about the Gospel, she would quickly try to silence us by saying “*that* was only for the men” (an idea quite Chinese, for the husbands and eldest sons perform the idolatrous rites and ancestral worship for the whole family).

We persevered, however, and went regularly to teach her, and by degrees she changed completely. The dulness and hardness all went, as she slowly took in the sweet story of the Saviour’s love, and when this was spread abroad

in her heart by the Holy Spirit, she became so bright and loving, and eager to bring others to feel the glow of Divine love also.

She is making rapid progress with reading, and can repeat many hymns and Scripture texts. I heard another woman compliment her one day on the rapidity with which she learnt. Mrs. T'ang answered :

“Of course, I *must* be quick. My husband has been walking this Heavenly road two years; I want to catch him up, so that we can go forward together.”

Another day, M. remarked to some women, how very well Mrs. T'ang's fields looked. One of the women said :

“Probably her fields are sheltered from the wind.”

“No,” replied T'ang-ta-sao, “they are fully exposed to all the force of the wind; but when it blows hard, I ask our Heavenly Father to take care of our crops, and He always does.”

Leaving the valley where Mr. and Mrs. T'ang live we enter another, in which are two houses only very recently opened to the Gospel.

At one of these we received a warm welcome lately, whereas two or three years ago, when M. visited the same family for the first time, they sent their dogs out to stop her entering the house. We attribute the change to the fact that one of their boys has this year attended our school; they do not as yet show any interest in the Gospel, but we hope this will come as we visit them oftener.

At the other house in the same valley live people of the name of Uang. A few days ago their little two-year-old boy was drowned in a pond near the house; seeing a buffalo standing in the pond he had gone in too, and very soon sank in the mud and was drowned. We went down to express our sympathy with the poor mother and grandmother, who were in terrible distress. The latter kept saying: “I used to call the child and he would come back to me at once, but now I call and call in vain; I shall never see him more.” Hers was “sorrow without hope.” What a terrible sorrow it is! We spoke to her of the Christian's “sure and certain

hope," and longed that she might have the comfort we have of knowing that death separates only "till He come." We are praying that through the sorrow this family may obtain everlasting joy and gladness.

In quite another valley at the back of our hill are two houses, very far apart, and in each is an old Christian woman, named Li. In July they were baptised by Bishop Cassels, together with Mrs. Sie, our teacher's wife, and his eldest son, aged thirty.

For a week previous to the baptisms we invited Mrs. Sie and the two Mrs. Li (one aged eighty and the other sixty-six) to stay with us for special instruction. It was sweet to hear the old people repeat what they had been taught, and to find them so very clear about the plain, essential truths of the Gospel. The eighty-year old Mrs. Li had her own version of the lines :

"Jesus loves me, this I know,
For the Bible tells me so"—

for she would say :

"Jesus loves me, this I know,
He has washed me white as snow."

When asked where Jesus Christ was, she answered: "Where Siao-tsie (their name for us) is, there Jesus is"; and the other said: "Jesus is in heaven, but He comes to Sin-tien-tsi every Sunday." Dear old women! It was sweet to know they had realised His presence here. When the one of sixty-six heard how Jesus was preparing a place in heaven for her, she said she knew that was because He loved her, and wanted her with Him in heaven, just as we, because we loved them, had asked them to stay with us at Sin-tien-tsi. One of them told us her prayer before meals was: "My God, food comes from Thee, drink comes from Thee; God, I thank Thee."

Belonging to the family of Mrs. Li of sixty-six, is an old man, who has been a regular comer to all services and meetings for some time past. He wears a large slouch hat (of the old cavalier style) and has a beautiful face.

For weeks before we knew his name we called him to each other, "the man with the angel-face." He is a quiet, simple man, "full of faith and power," and we believe he will become a pillar of strength in this little church.

It was a very great joy to us to see these dear people baptised, and we do pray that they may be kept "following on to know the Lord," and that they may be the first-fruits of a rich harvest yet to be gathered in from that valley where they live.

Another valley scene comes before me as I write. At a house in a well-wooded and beautiful valley, rich in ferns and flowers, all is sadness and grief, for a little baby-girl after a long illness has just died. The parents are Inquirers, and asked that the child might have a Christian burial. It was conducted by the evangelist. Standing there by the side of that tiny grave with a little band of native Christians, our hearts were moved as we sang the hymn, so sweet in Chinese :

"When He cometh, when He cometh
To make up His jewels."

We were so glad to be able to comfort the mother by telling her that the little one was "safe in the arms of Jesus."

In June we spent three days at Ts'ang-k'i, our nearest city, twenty-three English miles distant. Three of our chair-bearers were Christians, and we had also with us Uang-ta-sao, a Christian woman, the wife of one of the chair-bearers.

On our way we had opportunities of sowing the seed of the Kingdom at two market-places—Ch'a-tien-tsi and Huai-shu-pa. It was sown in weakness, but God can raise it in power.

At Ts'ang-k'i we had a very hearty welcome from the people who had gathered around us in the inn. Most of them recognised M. and were delighted to see her again. The inn-people entertained us to a small feast in M.'s honour, but it was very hard to do justice to it. We had only a very short time for teaching the people, as a heavy

thunderstorm came on, causing them all to quickly hasten home.

The following morning we visited Liu Sien-seng, an old Christian man, living in the city—the *only* witness there ; we were glad to hear from many that he is faithful in telling others of Jesus Christ.

After seeing him, we walked five English miles to the house of Sie Sien-seng, our teacher and evangelist here. We had such a warm reception, and were reminded of the house of Cornelius, when we saw the numbers that were gathered together to hear the Word of God. We were most encouraged to find how Sie Sien-seng and his sons had been witnessing for Christ, so that there are now several people in that neighbourhood seeking after the Truth. We *long* for more opportunities of going there to teach them further. Every Sunday a meeting, conducted by the eldest son, is held in the house, and is well attended.

That night we had a good time with the people at Ts'ang-k'i. The landlady of the inn was very kind to us, turning out of her own room that we might be comfortable.

The following day we returned home, thankful that we had had the opportunity of speaking to so many of the true and living God.

Since our return we have been able to send a copy of the New Testament to the mandarin at Ts'ang-k'i, and we trust that God's Word may bring eternal life to his soul.

There is another visit to one of the valleys I must write about before closing this letter.

M. and I with Chao-ta-niang went to see an old woman, Chang-ta-sao, who had come here occasionally and whom we had not visited before. After a long, pretty and, to us, a new walk along the hillside, we reached her house. Her delight at seeing us was genuine. Many neighbours gathered together, and we had an exceptionally good time with them, as they listened to the sweet story of Jesus Christ.

Chang-ta-sao is very deaf, and some of her neighbours were regretting this fact, fearing that she could not hear what we said. She was sitting close to M. and, taking her hand in hers and stroking it as she talked,—a habit of tenderness

peculiar to the old woman,—she answered something like this :

“ *These* words I do hear, though I am deaf and stupid ; and I know I am a sinner, and that Jesus died to save me from my sin.”

We came away full of thankfulness to God for letting the Light shine into that dear old woman’s heart. She is very true and faithful, and suffers very severe persecution and ridicule from her unbelieving relatives, who tell her they will never let her be baptised.

I am sure there are many like this old woman in China, true, earnest believers, placed in such circumstances that they have never been enrolled on any church book, but their names are written in Heaven.

Many are being gathered into the Kingdom of God, all unknown to the missionary, but reached, nevertheless, by the Spirit of God working through the native Christians, or enlightening the pages of scattered Gospels and tracts.

Another day we spent in visiting a family, named Loh, living in a valley about twenty miles away. They had pressed us to come and see their two children, who are both consumptive, and are the only ones left of a large family.

How we longed to help them ! But with such a disease, how little we could do !

Whilst at their house several people came to see us and heard the Gospel for the first time. We had with us a supply of Christian books and tracts, and were glad to leave some with those who could read.

We trust that our visit will result in blessing to some in that distant valley.

Had I time, there are many others of whom I might also write, who are coming up from the valleys around to learn about the true God.

Returning home from visiting one day, we met a woman on the hillside. As we passed, she said to Mrs. Chao : “ How happy they look ! ”

“ Of course they do,” said the Bible-woman. “ Those who love Jesus are always happy.”

And, indeed, we are *very* happy in the work here.

“Thou hast put gladness in my heart” is so true, as we “go forth into the field,” and see the springs of Living Water flowing through the valleys.

We do long to be kept so near to God, praising and trusting Him, that Ps. lxxxiv. 6, may be true of us: “Passing through the valley of weeping they make it a place of springs; yea, the early rain covereth it with blessings.”

But while we praise God with full hearts for the precious first-fruits we have been allowed to gather for His glory, we realise that the valleys are many and broad, and that the Lord has promised “abundance of corn.” “The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few.”

“He was not willing that any should perish;
 Jesus enthroned in the glory above,
 Saw our poor fallen world, pitied our sorrows,
 Poured out His Life for us—wonderful Love!

Perishing! perishing! thronging our pathway,
 Hearts break with burdens too heavy to bear.
 Jesus would save, but there’s no one to tell them,
 No one to lift them from sin and despair.

Perishing! perishing! hark how they call us:
 ‘Bring us your Saviour, oh, tell us of Him!
 We are so weary, so heavily laden,
 And with long weeping our eyes have grown dim.’

Perishing! perishing! harvest is passing,
 Reapers are few, and the night draweth near,
 Jesus is calling thee, haste to the reaping,
 Thou shalt have souls, precious souls for thy hire.”

A. B. S.

Jesus loves you, little children,
And He died as much for you,
As for any grown-up person,
Though He loves them dearly too.

Jesus watches o'er you, children,
With a Shepherd's tender care ;
While He calls the sheep to follow,
You upon His arms He'll bear.

Jesus calls His little children,
Telling them there's work to do,
That He can't give grown-up people,
But that He can trust to you.

Soon He's coming for the children
Who have loved Him and are His,
And around Him they shall gather,
For of such the Kingdom is.

CHAPTER XVII.

OUR BOYS' SCHOOL.

“Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the Kingdom of God.”--MARK x. 14.

December, 1896.

OUR boys' school is a source of much pleasure to us. It was opened in 1893 by M., and is entirely supported (as well as the Pao-ning Boys' School) by the kind contributions of her own family friends.

The schoolroom is in our outer courtyard. It is a large room with four good-sized paper windows and whitewashed walls, on which are hung brightly coloured scrolls bearing Scripture texts or hymns.

There are six little low tables in the room, and round these the boys sit and study, while the teacher has a big table, so placed that he commands a view of the whole room.

School begins soon after sunrise and, with a short interval for dinner, lasts until dark.

The way the boys study would very much amuse our English school-boys, who would think this a queer school indeed!

As far as possible those studying the same lesson will sit together at the same table. There is one teacher for them all, and when the boys are assembled he tells them to begin, and then—oh! the hubbub and confusion, the noise and the bellowing that ensues and continues throughout the day!

They all learn their lessons together, each one repeating his at the very top of his voice, all in the room doing the same thing at the same time, though the lessons may be all different.

This is the educational process by which the lessons are supposed to be transferred to the memory of the learner.

I remarked about it once, but was assured that Chinese children could not possibly learn in any other way; that their ancestors had done so too, and that the greater the noise the better pleased the teachers would be.

When the lesson is learnt, the boy repeats it to the teacher, with his back turned to him and the book. This is done that the teacher may be sure the pupil is not furtively glancing at the book.

Our school-teacher, Sie Sien-seng, who acts also as our evangelist, is a good Christian man, not eloquent in preaching, but living a humble, consistent life; his influence is bearing fruit among his scholars and the people around.

He was converted before M. went home for furlough, being utterly broken down at a little farewell service held before she left. The Holy Spirit worked in many undecided hearts that day, and his among them; and when the meeting was over, he said: "Up to this time I believed the Doctrine, but now I believe *the Lord Jesus Christ is my own Saviour.*"

Since that time he has steadfastly gone forward, and has, we believe, been the means of leading others to know God.

The boys spend half the day at their Scripture lessons, and the other half at Chinese classics.

The Chinese as a nation have remarkable memories, and the boys can commit to memory whole books, without understanding—or ever dreaming of inquiring—the meaning of a single line.

"Chinese studies have been compared to 'gnawing a wooden pear.' Tedious and profitless, the learning acquired with an incredible amount of labour is of no actual value in after life. The Chinese youth, however, masters two lessons thoroughly—those of obedience and respect for authority, and industry. Of independent thought he has no conception. He does as others do, without asking why, or even imagining any other way."

We have three Scripture classes a day with our boys. Two in the morning, M. taking one for the elder lads, members of the Children's Scripture Union, and I the other



From photo by]

SOME OF THE SCHOOL-BOYS, SIN-TIEN-TSI.

[Rev. A. T. Polhill Turner

Their teacher, Sie-Sien-Seng and his son in the background. The boys, just dismissed for home, have their books in the baskets slung on their backs, and the sticks are for protection against dogs, leopards or other wild animals.



From photo by

[Miss F. M. Williams.]

SCHOOLBOYS AT DINNER.



OLD MRS. LI AND HER FAMILY.

P'ieh-ua-tsi, one of the school-boys, at the back.

(See Chap. xxiii.)

for the smaller boys, and the third in the evening, when they repeat the lessons learnt during the day.

The number of the boys varies between seventeen and twenty. They are dear little lads, most of them coming from very poor homes. We are trying to make their school-days happy. As a rule a Chinese school-boy's life is dreary and monotonous in the extreme. They have no Saturdays or any regular holidays, except a month at the New Year time; they come off badly too in the way of amusements, and know nothing of cricket or football, and "as to climbing, or running, or jumping, or anything of an athletic nature, it is not in their line at all."

But they have their games all the same, such as flying kites, spinning tops, playing shuttle-cock with their heels, target-shooting with a small stick sharpened at the end, and a few others.

Once a month we invite them all to a meat dinner. I wish you could see how they relish it! Poor little laddies, I expect it is the only time that some of them get a proper meal, and can eat as much as they want!

The half-yearly prize-giving is a great stimulus to the boys and a real delight to us.

M. has a good magic-lantern with a splendid set of Scripture slides, which she shows every two or three months to the people. Two of the elder lads manage the lantern and change the slides, while M. explains them. These Lantern Meetings are always well attended and much appreciated, especially by the boys.

We have four boys living here with us. The eldest is Sie-ü-seng, aged seventeen. He is the teacher's third son, and is here for study with his father, who is anxious that he should pass examinations and become a good scholar.

The second boy is Heh-ua-tsi from a village one hundred *li* from here. He is fourteen years of age and an earnest little Christian. He was baptised at Pao-ning when the new church was opened in 1893. At his baptism he gave the following testimony:—"Some months ago I was in the fields picking sticks, and near me were some women who

were talking to each other about the way to Heaven and a good Lord. I did not understand what they said, so I asked them, and they told me more ; but as I went home I forgot what they had said, and only remembered the one word—‘Lord.’ As soon as I could, I went and asked the women again about the good words. They taught me a verse of ‘Jesus loves me,’ and I went home and told mother ; and I began to pray. The women asked me to go to their house on Sundays for worship, and mother and I went. They said the idol must be destroyed. At first I was afraid of this, but at last, when we were influenced by the Holy Spirit, we put them away, and now I only want to be an earnest disciple of the Lord Jesus.”* His influence in the school is helpful. We trust that before this lad there is a glorious future of useful service for God.

The third, a dear, quiet little boy, named Tong-ua-tsi (“the child of winter”) aged ten, has only recently come to us.

He is the son of our former landlord, who, with his wife and two elder sons, are inveterate opium smokers. Though related to the best and wealthiest family in the neighbourhood, they are all now practically beggars, having been reduced to this condition through the opium.

We have long wanted to get Tong-ua-tsi away from the evil influences of his home, but it was only a few weeks ago that we saw our way to doing this. His parents left home to carry on a lawsuit in a neighbouring city ; they shut up the house, leaving the child to find a home where he could. In his loneliness, he came to us for refuge, and shyly asked M. if he might stay here until they returned, saying he would try and pay back the money for his rice some day !

Dear little fellow ! he did not know that his coming was an answer to our prayers.

When his parents returned in a few weeks’ time they were only too glad to let him stay on, and now he is quite a member of our household, going to school all day, and, whenever free, doing all he can to help every one else.

He is a quiet, thoughtful child, and seems fond of Bible-

* From “A New Thing,” by Miss F. M. Williams.

study. We hope that he, too, will become an earnest and true Christian.

The youngest of our four boarders is Hai-p'ing-tsi, eight years old. He is a queer little fellow, very amenable to kindness, but in every possible way the essence of mischief. He is the terror of the whole establishment, because no one ever can guess what next piece of mischief his active brain is planning.

He is always in every one's way, and is perpetually in trouble with the teacher for running out of school, or for, in some way, upsetting the equanimity of the other scholars.

His singing very much amuses us. With head thrown back and face all puckered, and keeping up a swaying motion all the time, he opens his mouth wide, and out come volumes of sound, drowning all the fruitless attempts of other boys to make themselves heard!

He is the grandson of Uang-ts'ong-i, the evangelist who some years ago voluntarily received one thousand strokes "for Jesus' sake and the Gospel's," instead of Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Polhill-Turner at Sung-p'an on the borders of Thibet.*

In connection with this, the Bible-woman told us a very amusing story about Hai-p'ing-tsi. He was going home for the holidays and Mrs. Chao laughingly said to him: "Hai-p'ing-tsi, I suppose you will not come back here after the holidays, as the teacher so often beats you?"

Drawing himself up to his full height, the little fellow answered: "Chao-ta-niang, my grandfather was beaten at Sung-p'an, and *he* did not mind; Sie Sien-seng may beat me, but *I* will not mind; for the more bitterness we eat in this world, the greater will be our happiness in the next!"

The poor little boy did not distinguish between the *causes* of the beatings. He was beaten for his naughtiness, while his grandfather suffered "for the Gospel's sake."

It brought back to mind our own school-days to see his excitement at going home for the holidays, and to watch him pack and unpack his *pei-lan-tsi* (basket). We gave him some sweets, dried persimmons, oranges, and monkey-nuts to

* See the booklet "Wang," by Bishop Cassels, China Inland Mission.

take home, but we hear they were nearly all eaten before he started !

One morning he slipped into the room where I was attending to the patients, and hearing me speak to one about the true God, he drew near, and said to her : " All my lifetime I will not worship these mud gods."

Another day we asked him what he was going to do when grown-up. He very quickly answered : " I'm going to serve God."

So we believe that under his strange and mischievous nature, there is a deep under-current of good, which will, if guided aright by God's grace and power, make of this wild little " pickle " a brave, strong man like his grandfather, full of zeal in God's service.

A few weeks ago one of our little school-boys died. He was twelve years old, and had been in this school three years, and had therefore a good knowledge of Bible truths.

He was ill only a few days, and his early death has made a deep impression on his school-fellows. One of them, Heh-ua-tsi, was with him the day before he died, and there, surrounded by all that was idolatrous, and among people opposed to the Gospel, the two lads prayed together. How sweet to God must have been the prayer which that little lad breathed over the dying boy !

Again and again we find how great a factor the boys' school is in the spread of the Gospel in this country. The boys come mostly from heathen homes, hear of the true God and of the love of Jesus Christ and the only way to be saved, and repeat all they learn to their parents and friends at home. Those among the relatives who can read, see the boys' books, and thus very much interest in the Truth has been aroused. In the case of one boy, Peh-ua-tsi, this has been very clearly so. He is a lad of fourteen now, and has been at school two years. From the beginning he showed great interest in the Gospel, and there was no doubt that his heart was touched by the love of Jesus, and that he put his trust in Him. In the evenings he would teach all he had learnt afresh during the day to his grandmother and his parents, who had never heard before. By degrees, they and other relatives became

interested and regular attendants at the services and classes ; and now several members of the family are either baptised Christians or Inquirers.

This is by no means the only case in which we have proved the truth of the words : " A little child shall lead them."

A while back in the Canadian woods, a fir-forest was cut down, and the next spring the ground was covered with seedling oaks, though not an oak-tree was in sight. Unnumbered years before, there must have been a struggle between the two trees, in which the firs had gained the day, but the acorns had kept safe their latent spark of life underground, and it broke out at the first chance.

If we refuse to stay our faith upon results that we can see and measure, and fasten it on God, He may be able to keep wonderful surprises wrapped away in what looks now only waste and loss.

So, no matter if *we* never see the full up-springing on earth of the Spirit-seed scattered. It is all the more likely God may trust us with a great multiplying, if our faith does not need to witness it.

God's possibilities for these germs of Spirit-life are not bound by time. All that matters is that our part should be done. We are *responsible* for sowing to the Spirit, responsible like the seed-vessel for fulfilling our ministry to the last and uttermost.

My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work.

From "Parables of the Christ-life."—I. L. TROTTER.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IN AND OUT AMONG THE PEOPLE.

“Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?”—JOHN xi. 40.

SIN-TIEN-TSI.

January, 1897.

LOOKING back over the year just gone, we can see how God has begun in many directions to fulfil the promise with which we began the year. At Wan-hsien, the most distant station from Pao-ning in this district, “greater things” have distinctly been seen.

For eight years the good seed of the Kingdom has been sown there, with apparently little result; one woman, living a long way from the city, being the only person to turn from idols to serve the true God.

This last year, however, *eight* have been baptised in Wan-hsien, and God has richly blessed the work there.

In Pa-*chéo*, a new church has been opened, and the missionaries are being much encouraged in the work.

At Kuang-*üen*, two-and-a-half days' journey to the north of us, God's blessing has been given, especially in the work amongst the men. In August, together with several others, T'ien-ta-*ie*, the gaoler,* was baptised. He is an earnest, thoughtful man, and his changed life is already influencing many.

At Pao-ning and in this place we have had cause to thank God for purifying the Church, and thus preparing the hearts of His servants for fresh manifestations of His power.

We go forward into this new year longing to know more of “the exceeding greatness of His power to usward, who believe.”

* See “T'ien: The Converted Gaoler,” by Miss F. H. Culverwell.

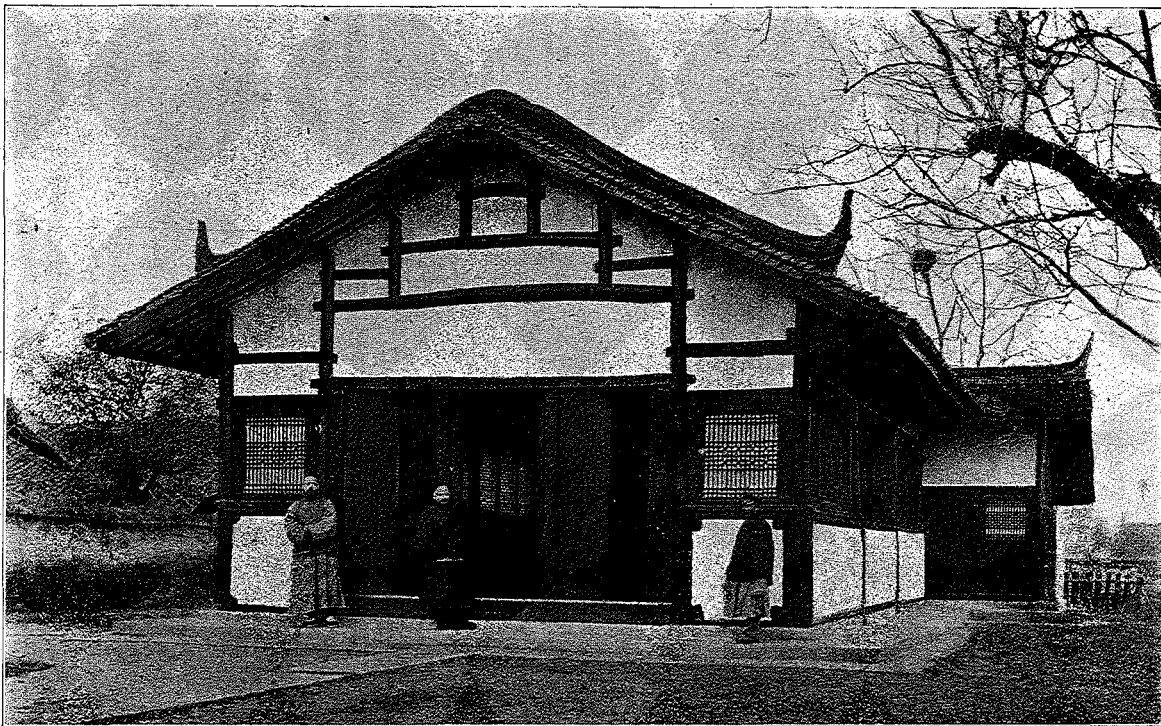
Our helper and boys' school teacher, Sie Sien-seng, has lately been to Pao-ning, where a week's special classes have been held by Bishop Cassels and Rev. C. Parsons, for all the native evangelists, helpers, and leading Christian men in the district. There was much spiritual and doctrinal teaching; God greatly blessed this effort, and we believe the results will be far-reaching.

Old Mrs. Chao, the Bible-woman, has distinctly grown in faith and love during the past year. She is such a dear old body, so faithful to her Master and loving to us, and her intense joy over every one who becomes interested in the Gospel acts as a continual stimulus to us.

A few days ago, when we were out with her, she told us about the day when first she understood how God had so loved the world that He gave His only Son to *die* for us. She was thinking about this all alone in her little house, and her heart went out to God in intense sympathy, for she thought of how her parents (dead many years now) would have felt, had they given *her* up to die, and the dear old woman added with moistened eyes and quivering voice: "My heart was sore troubled, and I cried; *I was so sorry for God.*" She told us that as she realised it all, she knelt down and poured out her love and gratitude to God, and freshly consecrated her life to Him.

She is only a poor, simple country woman, very poor and insignificant in the eyes of men, but oh, *how* precious to the heart of God is the sympathy and love of this dear, earnest, loving soul! "*Sorry for God.*" The words cling to me, in longing and reproach. How few of us have yet felt as she did the depth of God's love in God's sacrifice! And having felt it, dear old Chao-ta-niang goes forth to pour out her life, a free-will offering unto God, in bringing others to feel His love also. Her one great desire is to be found busy in His work when the Master comes; she wants to "spend and be spent" in His service.

"Measure thy life by loss instead of gain;
Not by the wine drunk, but by the wine poured forth;
For love's strength standeth in love's sacrifice;
And whoso suffers most hath most to give!"



From photo by]

[Mrs. Isabella Bishop.

PAO-NING CHURCH.

(Bishop Cassels at the central door, the late Rev. E. O. Williams to his right and native Christian to his left.



From photo by]

SOME OF THE PAO-NING CHRISTIANS.

[Mrs. Isabella Bishop.

At Christmas-time we had a very happy time with the Christians. Those who live far off spent a few days with us, and we were glad of this opportunity of learning to know them better. The day before Christmas we gave a dinner to all our friends, and M. showed them some magic lantern views about the birth and life of Jesus Christ.

On Christmas Day the room was well filled for the morning service. In the afternoon we had a Christmas-tree for the Christians and school-boys—about forty in all. They were all delighted with their gifts and were most grateful for them.

I wished that the kind friends in England, who sent so many of the things, could have been with us. They would have been more than repaid, I know, by the bright, happy faces of the people as they went away with their treasures.

In a former letter I told you about Mrs. Long, one of the Inquirers, having lost her little boy, and that it was generally feared the child had been carried off by some wild beast, and devoured. Lately, news was brought to the poor, sorrowing mother that he had been heard of at a place some seven or eight days' journey to the north of Sin-tien-tsi. The father of the boy went to look for him, even as far as Si-ngan Fu, in Shen-si, but could not find him. A boy, answering rather to the description they had given of their child, had been carried away by a party of traders, and the father followed them, hoping it might be his boy; but he was disappointed, and returned home alone. The poor distracted mother is plunged deeper in sorrow than ever, and does so need our constant prayers.

During these winter months we hold a weekly sewing-class for women. We find that there are many young women in the neighbourhood very hard to reach. They never come to the Sunday services or week-day classes; either they do not care to, or their husbands will not let them do so.

But they gladly come to the sewing-class, as they can earn a little money thereby. They work from 8·30 a.m. to 12·30 at *our* work, chiefly embroidery; and we give them each forty cash = $1\frac{1}{4}d.$, which is considered good pay! Whilst they work, Mrs. Chao sits with them and teaches

them hymns and texts, and M. or I have a short class with them sometime during the morning. Last winter we had nineteen regular comers, and some of them manifested real interest in the Gospel, and most of them now regularly attend the Sunday services. One woman has been enrolled as an Inquirer, and two have destroyed their idols.

About six weeks ago we found such a dear little hamlet, named U-kia-p'ing, away among the hills, about seven miles from here. It has only about twelve houses altogether, and the people are all named U.

They welcomed us warmly, and invited us to sit down in the centre courtyard of the largest house; and very soon a kind, friendly crowd gathered round us. When we had done justice to the basins of sweet potatoes that they brought us, they asked us to tell them the Gospel, and listened eagerly for an hour and a half, and when we suggested starting back, they pressed us to stay the night and teach them more.

Though not able to accept the invitation then, we have done so this last week.

We left home on Tuesday, taking with us Mrs. Chao and Hsüeh-lao-iao, a Christian man, to carry our bedding and to help us in speaking to the men. The first two days we walked, the road being mountainous and precipitous, with narrow, winding paths. Many times we thought of that word: "He sent them two and two before His face into every city and place, whither He Himself would come" (Luke x. 1), for everywhere we met so many hearts *prepared* to receive the truth.

We reached U-kia-p'ing about three o'clock, and it was not long before we were sitting in a good-sized room round a bright log fire, made in a hole in the centre of the mud floor. The people at once gathered round the fire with us, until the room was full. There was very little of the ordinary "small talk," which takes so much time; they seemed to come for the Gospel's sake only, and on coming in some said: "We have come to hear your books and the good doctrine."

Some children were eager to be taught a hymn, but the older people said: "No, you can teach one another the

hymn after the teachers have gone, but now let us listen to their words while they are with us."

This went on until six o'clock, when a tall, young woman invited us into her house for the evening meal. This we had in a long, low room, very dark, and full of the smoke coming from the wood fire, which, in the kindness of their hearts, they had made for our benefit quite close to the table where we sat. Our supper consisted of what we know so well in China, a bowl of *mien*, that is, dough-strips made of flour and water, and cut into long, thin strips looking like macaroni and served up, steaming hot, with vegetables in gravy.

The people were delighted to see how thoroughly we enjoyed their food, and that we ate it with chopsticks just as they do.

As soon as the meal was over, we turned to the fire; and the crowd that had been waiting patiently for us outside came in; and, forming a large circle round the burning log, there we sat until nine o'clock, telling the "tidings of great joy."

Hsüeh-lao-iao spoke for quite an hour, putting very plainly before them the wonderful plan of Redemption, and telling them his own heart's experience, and how he *knew* God was the true God. They listened eagerly, and the circle of up-turned faces, glowing in the firelight and fixed upon the speaker, showed their intense interest in all they heard.

About 9.30 we left them there, still talking, and went to the room which had been prepared for us. It was the most comfortable room in the house; and though perhaps, to critical English eyes, there were many things lacking, and many it would have been better without, we slept well, and woke up in the early morning to hear people talking in the next room about God and Jesus Christ. They had come as soon as it was light, and when we went out to them a little while after, we found them as ready to listen as they had been the evening before. Breakfast over, other groups of people came, and we were able to give medicine to some sick ones among them.

At 10.30 we had to leave this little place. The people escorted us to the brow of a hill, and then stood and watched us out of sight, calling to us "to come again soon." We went

on our way, thanking God for having led us to this little corner of His vineyard, so "white unto harvest." Will you help us, by "labouring in prayer," to reap these golden sheaves into His garner?

Let us ask "great things" of God for U-kia-p'ing. We know God is able to do far more than we ask or think, but His word is: "According to *your* faith, be it unto you." In some measure, therefore, it rests with us.

Our next stopping-place was San-ch'uan-si, a market twenty *li* further on, a place we visited last year. On our way we had opportunities of speaking to some people, and one man was specially interested in a talk he had with Hsüeh-lao-iao, and he seemed moved as he heard the story of the Cross.

We reached the prettily situated market-town about one o'clock, and some of the women and children came in at once to see us.

A man, named Uang, sat a long time listening as Hsüeh-lao-iao explained some of the Truth to him; and another man was near by, listening intently, though trying to appear indifferent.

In the evening we were again invited to the house of Meng Lao-ie for supper. You will remember we spent an evening there the last time we visited this place. They are always very friendly and kind. They know the Gospel well, but it is always with sad hearts that we come away from them, because we feel the seed has fallen into stony and thorny ground, and that there is but little hope of its bringing forth fruit. They have, I suppose, all they need in this life and think, as yet, but little of the next.

"How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God!"—(Luke xviii. 24.)

Early the following day we started for Shih-men-ch'ang, about eight miles from San-ch'uan-si. The man who the previous day had tried to look indifferent as he listened to Hsüeh-lao-iao preaching the Word, caught us up halfway to the market and asked for a tract or book to read at home, and as we all walked on together, he asked Hsüeh-lao-iao to explain some points that he had not understood the day before. When we drew near to the village, he left us.

On arrival at Shih-men-ch'ang, we found the market in full swing. A relative of Hsüeh-lao-iao's kindly invited us into his house to have some tea. He took us into a tiny room, where some people were warming themselves at the fire, and where a person was in bed with thick curtains all round! The people in the market had seen us pass through the streets, and now came crowding from every quarter to see the "foreigners." Hsüeh-lao-iao and Mrs. Chao did all they could to restrain the crowd and to keep them quiet, but all to no avail. The poor man, in whose house we were, was in a most excited state of mind, lest any of his possessions should be stolen. He shouted and screamed in vain for the people to go, and said that if any of his things were lost, he would blame them *all* and they *all* would have to make them good. In desperation, he at last called the magistrate of the place, who came at once, and, flourishing a big stick, ordered all the men out of the room. Soon after, we had forms put outside in the street, where we sat and spoke to the crowd, who gathered round us.

In the midst of all the excitement and confusion in the house, Mrs. Uen appeared. She is a dear old woman, lately interested in the Gospel. She had been marketing in the village, and hearing we were there, came at once to help us — which she did by keeping the crowd orderly, while Hsüeh-lao-iao spoke to them, and we distributed books and leaflets.

Chair-bearers from home met us here with our chairs, and early in the afternoon we came away. I was greatly relieved when we did so, and yet at the same time I was very sorry that the noisy crowd had made me feel thus, and in my thoughts ever since have run the words: "And Jesus, seeing the multitudes, was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd." I do long to be more like Christ in seeking these poor lost people for Him.

Towards evening we reached the next village. Üen-pa-tsi and the chair-bearers soon found us a comfortable room in an inn.

A number of nice little children were the first to come to us, and later they fetched their mothers also.

The people of this little village have always been rather unfriendly to "foreigners," and are inclined to set afloat all kinds of evil stories about us.

M. says that, some years ago, they spread the report that foreigners were hiring beggars to poison their wells, and taking all their treasures from their hills. Just now the prevalent story is that the foreigners are buying up all the rice to send to their land, so that all the Chinese people may die of starvation! They were not at all inclined to believe the true version of the case—that, because of the famine in south and south-east Si-ch'uan, the mandarins had been sending up silver to buy rice from the districts where it is plentiful, in order that the Chinese *may not* die of starvation in the famine-stricken districts.

Here I must give an extract from M.'s account of this journey. "A little boy of sixteen amused us very much. He said he had seen two kinds of foreigners, and that they must have come from two different countries.

"'One kind,' said he, 'are like you. They arrive at an inn and open their door, invite the people in, show us their books, and they talk to us and we talk to them; they eat our food, and in our way; their books are written in our character and contain good words. These foreigners love us, and we love them; they would never hurt us, and we would never hurt them.'

"'But the other kind of foreigners,' the boy continued, 'are different; they shut the door on reaching the inn, and will let no one see them; they eat their own food that they bring with them; their books are written in the character of their own country; they do not love us, and we do not love them. It is they who take our treasures and want to hurt us. But *they* are the foreigners from the *other* foreign country, not yours!'

"Whilst this conversation amused us much, we could not help thinking, too, how very much these people watch us, and how our daily lives among them will affect them much more than anything we say."

The following morning after breakfast, among the women who came in to see us was one over seventy years of age;

she broke down utterly as she heard of peace and rest through trusting in the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, and, with tears in her eyes, she told us of her unhappy life, full of misery and bitterness, and of the longing our words of peace and comfort had aroused in her heart. For a long time we talked to her of the love of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, and we do trust that she understood something of what she heard. We hope to see her again when we next come to Üen-pa-tsi.

We had a bitterly cold journey home that day—fourteen miles through driving mist. At a wayside inn where we had some tea, Hsüeh-lao-iao had a warm discussion on some points of doctrine with a Roman Catholic, and it was interesting to see him turn up his Bible to prove the truth of his argument. He gave the man a Gospel and some leaflets before they parted, which they did, after all, on the very best of terms.

We were warmly welcomed home again by all our dear people, and were very thankful to have had the privilege of telling of His salvation to hundreds who had never before heard of Jesus.

Behold, what manner of love.—1 JOHN iii. 1.

See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down ;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown ?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small ;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

I. WATTS.

CHAPTER XIX.

"FOUND OF HIM."

"He died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him."—1 THESS. v. 10.

April, 1897.

FOUR English miles from Sin-tien-tsi is the small market village called U-li-tsi. The market is held every third day throughout the year. The days between, the Chinese rightly call *leng-ch'ang*, that is, "cold market," and were you to visit the village then, you would find everything dreary and desolate, shops closed and streets almost deserted, the people being at work in the fields. But go again on a *reh-ch'ang*, or "hot market-day," and you will be surprised at the change of scene. For miles along the road you would meet the people hurrying to market laden with farm produce, and, gathering together from all directions in the one, narrow street of the village, they form an almost impenetrable crowd. In front of the shops, stalls are put up, on which travelling merchants and pedlars exhibit their goods, the tea-shops are crowded, and the opium dens are also full of smokers. The streets are in parts lined with rows of men and women standing by their baskets of vegetables, grain, or rice. The value of rice is the most important thing of the day, the pivot upon which the price of nearly everything else turns.

It was on just such a day, in that very place, during last summer, that a group might be seen in a corner of that busy, thronged street, gathered round our Bible-woman, Chao-taniang. I can see her now, her dear old wrinkled face all aglow with joy and earnestness, as she spoke of the Saviour she loves so well. She has known Him herself just four years, and she often says they have been the happiest years

of her life. How much she rejoiced that day, when she saw that among her listeners were two old women who drank in the Word, as those do whose hearts have been prepared by the Spirit to receive the seed of the Kingdom. One of these was Uen-ta-niang, aged seventy, and the other, her relative, Chang-ta-sao, a few years older.

That evening, Mrs. Chao came with me to an opium-suicide case, and on the way home she told me about Mrs. Uen and her relative, and it was good to see her intense desire that they might be saved.

They both came the following Sunday to learn more—and oh! the joy of speaking of Jesus to these longing, hungry souls! I wish I could tell you what an intense joy this is. Surely it is part of the “manifold more in this present time.”—(Luke xviii. 30.)

Mrs. Uen and Chang-ta-sao continued to come regularly for weeks; then the latter went to live with a nephew, who opposed her coming to us, and her visits became few and far between. She was always pleased to see us when we visited her, but on hearing that the nephew treated her cruelly after our visits, we discontinued them. Uen-ta-niang has attended the classes regularly, and every Sunday, no matter what the weather may be, she is with us. Her little house is three and a half English miles from us in a lonely but beautiful spot.

When she became a Christian, her only son and his wife and children, who had been living with her, left her and took a house further down the valley. This was a cruel thing to do, and even in the eyes of the heathen was wrong, because they lay so much stress upon filial piety.

Certainly, old Mrs. Uen had aroused her son's ire many times before he went, by always going out when he performed his idolatrous worship, and once, being able no longer to stand the smell of the incense, she carried all the idols out into the courtyard, telling him if he wished to worship them he could do it out there!

When the son and his family went away, they left the family gods in their place. Mrs. Uen then destroyed them, but in the centre room was a tablet to “Heaven and Earth,”



From photo by]

[Mrs. Isabella Bishop.

CHAO TA-NIANG,
THE BIBLE-WOMAN AT SIN-TIEN-TSI.

On being photographed, she insisted on having her hymn-book open at her favourite hymn, "I am not ashamed to own my Lord."



From photo by]

[Rev. A. T. Polhill Turner.

UEN TA-NIANG.

which she dared not touch, because it belonged partly to a nephew, who, though living at some distance from her, had, through some complicated arrangement, a share in it. Mrs. Uen longed to be rid of the tablet, but was afraid of offending this man. After the son had gone, she used the centre room as little as possible, doing everything in her own little room which served her as bedroom and kitchen in one.

Thus the winter passed by, and early this year she went away to visit a married daughter living a long way from us. How we trembled for her among all that was heathenish again. We prayed daily together that God would keep her from the evil, and we rejoiced greatly when, after two months' absence, she came back to us still bubbling over with joy as she spoke to us "of things touching the King." She had found an old unused loft where she had often gone to talk with Him, and on Sundays she had had a little meeting alone with Him there, repeating all the texts and hymns she had learnt. She told us that the magic-lantern picture of the Crucifixion, seen shortly before going away, had never left her mind, and it had taught her much of the great love of Jesus Christ for her.

It was not long after her return home that she had a striking dream. In the valley opposite she saw a figure, which she knew was that of the Lord Jesus Christ. She saw Him coming across the valley, and cried out many times: "Saviour of the people" (her own name for Him), "I am a sinner; come and save me." But though He drew near her house, it was only to look sadly in, and then He passed sorrowfully by. She tried to run out to Him, but some power restrained her.

Awaking, she felt convinced it was the presence of the idolatrous tablet that had prevented Him from entering, and she became more and more determined to get rid of it.

A few weeks later an opportunity arose of speaking to her nephew and son together about the necessity of destroying the tablet, but they would not consent to it. She then told them she must obey God rather than man, and that if they would not take it away she would burn it. Finally they left her to do as she would with it, and the following Sunday

she triumphantly brought it under her arm to the service and set fire to it with great delight, and while it burnt we sang the hymn, "I want to follow Jesus."

During the week following the burning of the tablet, she told us she wanted to have her house white-washed. Knowing how very poor she is we tried to dissuade her from incurring this expense, telling her that the burning of the idols was *necessary*, whilst the renovating of her house was not.

"But," she answered quickly, "I want my Lord Jesus to always live with me there, and it must be clean for Him; and am I not expecting Him to come back from Heaven at any moment? I would not like Him to smell *any trace of the incense*."

Of course, as this was her motive, we could say no more. Would that our Lord's return were such a momentary reality to all His children as it is to some of these dear people.

From that time Uen-ta-niang's earnestness increased daily. Much persecution and trouble from unbelieving relatives and neighbours followed the burning of the idols, but she has borne all bravely, and has found that "as the sufferings of Christ abound in us so our consolation also aboundeth in Christ." This she has experienced in realising the fulfilment of her one great desire, that her Saviour should dwell with her. She was quite hurt once when I asked if she were lonely sometimes in her little house, and answered decisively: "How can I be lonely when my Lord is always with me? I talk to Him and He speaks much to me."

Another thing that has struck us much about Mrs. Uen is her constant desire to give something to God in return for all His love to her. The first of all her crops and vegetables she brings to us. One day, hesitating to take her first basket of new peas, for she is very poor, I said: "Why *do* you give us so much?" She answered: "Have you not brought me the Gospel and told me of the love of Jesus? By giving to you I feel I am giving to God also."

Dear old woman, her face *shines* with the joy of her salvation. She reckons she only began to *live* in the ninth month of last year when she first heard the Gospel. All

her life before that was, she says, lived in vain. Thank God, she now lives in the conscious realisation of His presence, in the light of His countenance, and His presence is indeed to her "fulness of joy."

"Still, still with Thee, when purple morning breaketh,
When the bird waketh, and the shadows flee;
Fairer than morning, lovelier than daylight,
Dawns the sweet consciousness—I am with Thee.

When sinks the soul, subdued by toil, to slumber,
Its closing eye looks up to Thee in prayer;
Sweet the repose, beneath Thy wings o'ershadowing,
But sweeter still to wake and *find Thee there.*"

Every field has its crises. When the sowing time comes, the seed must be put into the furrows—it is now or never. When the harvest ripens, the sickle must be put to work immediately—again it is now or never—ripeness borders on rottenness, and the crop which is not reaped, is soon not worth reaping. So the world-field presents its crises. When the soil lies fallow, and waits for the sower, if he goes not forth with the seed, he loses his chance; and when the fields are white unto harvest, to wait is to forfeit both his chance and his crop. And in some part of the wide field it is *always* a crisis; either the sower or the reaper is in demand, and sometimes both, for sometimes God's harvests come so fast that the ploughman overtakes the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth the seed.

Rev. A. T. PIERSON, D.D., in "The Divine Enterprise of Missions."

CHAPTER XX.

SEEKERS AFTER GOD.

“White unto harvest.”

SIN-TIEN-TSI.

June, 1897.

THIS year was begun with special prayer that more souls might, by God's grace, be reached by the Gospel. An address of Bishop Cassels', connecting Genesis iv. 9, "Where is thy brother?" with John i. 41, 42, "Andrew first findeth his own brother . . . and . . . brought him to Jesus," has greatly stirred up in our dear native Christians a desire to bring their heathen relatives to a knowledge of the truth, and some have had wonderful experiences of answered prayer.

During the first weeks of the Chinese year, a man, named Ma, from a village seventy-five *li* distant, came to inquire about the Truth, having heard that we spoke of "a way to escape everlasting punishment." Old Hsüeh-ta-ie was here at the time and faithfully told the man the Gospel. He stayed the night in an inn near, and was present the following day at the Sunday gatherings. Before leaving us on Sunday afternoon, he fully decided to put away his idols and worship the living God. He took away with him a Gospel and some tracts. Do pray for this man; he lives too far away for us to see him often, but through prayer both you and we can help him.

Do you remember my telling you in my last letter of the great crush of the crowd at Shih-men-ch'ang? We have been so delighted at hearing lately that a woman in the crowd, who heard the Gospel then, has decided to become a Christian; her mother, who lives near here and is an earnest Inquirer, is so thankful to hear this good news about her daughter.

A fortnight ago, two men named Li, from a village a day's

journey from Sin-tien-tsi, came to inquire the way of salvation. They came into the room where I see the sick people every morning, and I asked them if they wanted medicine. They said no, they had not come for that, but to hear about the one true God. You can imagine with what joy we told them the glad tidings of salvation.

It appears they were first led to think about the Truth by reading 1 Tim. ii. 4, 5, 6, at the head of a tract that they somehow got into their possession. One sentence fastened itself on the men's minds: "God our Saviour, Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the Truth."

They inquired of many the meaning of the words, but no one was able to tell them how to obtain this knowledge of the Truth. They were convinced that the idols were false, and longed to know the true God.

At last they met some one who suggested they should come and ask us; and how glad we were they came!

"Ye shall seek Me and find Me when ye shall search for Me with all your heart."—(Jer. xxix. 13.)

They listened eagerly to all we said and for *hours* they remained here, talking only on the subject of salvation. They spent the night in the neighbourhood, and the following day were present at the usual monthly magic-lantern service, which they much enjoyed—the slides related largely to the life of Jesus, and we do hope the men were helped and blessed. Mrs. Chao had sat up late the night before, talking to them and teaching them. They left us that evening with Gospels and tracts to read at home. We believe they are earnest and sincere in their desire to serve God. Do please pray for them.

The congregations on Sunday are far too large for our little room, and we are continually bringing before the people the need of a separate building. Meanwhile we long that the spiritual Church should be increased and that every member of it should be "holy unto the Lord."

During the whole of the winter there was much distress and poverty in the district below Pao-ning, that is in the south and south-east of this province, through the utter

failure of last year's rice-crops. In some parts the famine was so severe that hundreds of families have been moving northward in hope of finding work in some more prosperous districts. They pass our door day by day, and we have heard most pathetic stories how whole families have started out on their way north, and how one and then another has died of starvation on the roadside, until only two or three, or even one, remains. We have done what we could to help them by having large quantities of rice boiled every morning to be given to those who come in. The little children specially touch our hearts, and how often we have longed to be able to open a home of some kind for them! Some of the Christians have taken one or two at a time into their homes and given them food.

A short time ago, Miss Littler of Wan-hsien spent a few weeks with us. She had with her a dear little Chinese girl whom she has adopted. She was found on the hills beyond Wan-hsien, having been left there to starve. Miss Littler, hearing of it, took the little mite of three years old until her friends might claim her. No one has done so, and now Miss Littler has adopted her as her own, giving her the name of "En-teh" ("Obtained by grace").

In connection with this terrible famine I must tell you that the members of the K'uei-k'i Church in Kiang-si, hearing of the sufferings of some of the Christians in this province, collected quite a large sum of money, that rice might be bought to give them. Does not this remind us of the days of the early Church?—(Acts xi. 28-30.)

One wet, windy day in April, about dusk, two lads came into our porch for shelter from the rain. Old Mrs. Li, one of our house-servants, asked us to go and see them. Her eyes were full of tears as we followed her to the doorway. The two boys were very wet and cold, and crouched together in a corner of the entry. The younger boy aged fourteen was pitifully thin, and the elder aged sixteen had what looked like cataract in one eye. They had the appearance of belonging to a good family. They said they were orphans, and that they had walked nearly eighty English miles from their home, and were going north in search of work.

We felt that food or money might help them for a little while, but in that driving rain we could not let them go on.

As we hesitated a moment, and looked up to God for guidance, it came through the words: "A stranger, and *ye took Me in.*" On receiving this word, M. knew what to do, and it was good to see how the school-boys vied with each other in their attempts to make the two lads happy. They took them to the kitchen, and while one brought fire-baskets, another got them some food, and Heh-ua-tsi put one of his garments on the younger boy.

That night we decided to keep them a few days to look after the elder boy's eye. Good food and careful attention soon made a difference in them both—and their love and gratitude won our hearts at once. They were with us a month, every day spending the morning in school and the afternoon in some manual work outside.

Meanwhile, Mr. W. Taylor kindly arranged that one of the Pao-ning Christians should go to the boys' home near Lan-p'u and make all possible inquiries concerning their family. He was unsuccessful in finding any of their relatives, and on his return the boys confessed that they had deceived us. Their parents are both living, and it was on account of ill-treatment that they had run away from home. They had agreed to say they were orphans hoping we would pity them, and afterwards they were afraid to tell us the truth, lest we should send them away. And when spoken to about the wrong of telling untruths, the younger lad said: "Before we came here we did not know it was a *sin* to tell lies, but now we know it is a *sin* against God."

The boys were taken back to their home by a reliable man, and we do trust that all they heard about Jesus may yet bring forth blessing for them and their family.

A few weeks after they left us, their father, a native doctor, came all the way here to thank us for having befriended his boys. He was most grateful for all we had done. Sie Sien-seng found him an intelligent and interested listener, as he told him the Doctrine, and he took a copy of the New Testament home with him.

This is a family we can only reach by prayer, for they live

so far away ; and, through prayer, you are as near to them as we are.

“ More things are wrought by prayer,
Than this world dreams of.”

* * * * *

In the midst of much that is bright and encouraging in the work here, one thing has saddened us very much lately. One of our church members, Cheo-uan-pih, who was an opium smoker before he became a Christian, has now taken to it again. This has caused us much sorrow. Just now, he is ill with a severe attack of influenza. We do trust that while laid aside he will realise his sin, and that, relying on the power of God, he will be enabled to again give up this terrible habit.

The medical work continues to increase ; sometimes I have had as many as thirty patients during one morning, and it is wonderful what long journeys some of them come. They seem to think nothing of ten or twelve English miles, and a few have come forty and even sixty miles, taking two days to do it. They have the greatest faith in our drugs, and it is marvellous how our simplest medicines cure some of their really serious complaints.

During the past two months there has been much sickness about. An epidemic of fever has raged in the neighbourhood ; many of the Christians suffered, but we are thankful to say they are all recovering now.

It is a cruel fever, running its course in fourteen or fifteen days, and reducing the strongest men to a state of utter helplessness and weakness. For some weeks we were very specially busy, giving out medicine here, or visiting the many sick ones in the homes around.

One afternoon, on returning from one of these visits, we saw old Hstieh-ta-ie, the farmer, sitting on a rock, overlooking his fields. He had seen us come out of a Christian man's house, and as he watched us wending our way through the valley, he had been wondering why so many of God's children should have suffered from this sickness. When we came up to him, he said : “ I seem to understand now that, when we

Christians get ill, it is just as if a man came with an awl, and bored a hole into this rock to see if it were strong and durable, and after awhile he came again, and bored a little deeper to test the durability of the rock still further; and so God allows us to suffer, to prove whether we are true and steadfast."

Another time, speaking on the same subject, he said: "We farmers dig and plough our fields in order that the crops may spring up; and *we* are God's fields, and He allows us to have trials and sickness in order to train and enable us to bring forth more fruit to His glory."

We are so often struck with wonder at the beautiful way in which the Holy Spirit teaches these simple people deep lessons, which have taken some of us years to learn.

One of the chair-bearers, Uang-lao-ta, a great strong man he was, has through this sickness become as frail as a little child. He told us that during his illness one text was constantly with him—"Whom the Lord *loveth* He chasteneth"; so that his sickness seemed to him to be a *shang-tsi*—a reward, or prize from God—an opportunity of learning something he could not learn otherwise, and his heart was therefore full of peace. He was hardly out of danger when Kuei-ua ("Precious child"), his little adopted daughter, the child of his brother, was taken ill with the same disease. She is a dear little Christian girl, aged seven, and very precious to her adopted father. One night, when the fever was at its height, and he sat with his wife by the side of the child, who, they feared, was dying, he again turned to God in his sorrow and prayed: "If, Lord Jesus, Thou art going to take her, Thy will be done, but if Thou wilt heal the child, who is so dear to us, she shall be Thine all her life. Thy will be done. We give her to Thee."

The prayer was heard and the child recovered. As soon as the little one was well enough, the parents brought her up to the Sunday service, and when it was over Uang-lao-ta rose, saying he wished, before the whole Church, to fulfil the promise he had made to God concerning the child. Some of the Christians then commended the little one to God in prayer, and we trust that her life, consecrated thus early

to God, may bring forth abundant fruit to His glory in this land.

You will be glad to hear that during the last few months a doctor and nurse have been appointed for Mrs. Bishop's hospital in Pao-ning. Early in the year Dr. Pruen reached here, and Miss Arnott, a fully trained hospital-nurse, has arrived since.

Mr. Wrigley, one of our fellow-workers in this district, died a few weeks ago of typhus fever at Shuen-k'ing.

We thought he could ill be spared, but God knows best. Much blessing to many in this district must come as a result of Mr. Wrigley's faithful work for God, and we are praying that some at home, on hearing of this gap in the ranks, may be led to offer themselves to fill his place here.

The time is short and the fields are "white unto harvest." Oh, that God would send forth more labourers—strong, earnest men, sure of His call and His enabling, and consecrated women, constrained by Christ's love and compassion for the lost—who will be "shepherds after God's own heart," to be used of Him to bring many lost ones Home!

And for us, who have the unspeakable privilege of being here for Jesus' sake, and for all the native Christians, we do pray that we may each one be filled afresh with His Spirit, made "vessels meet for the Master's use," and that, when the Lord of the harvest cometh, we may be found with Him, "bringing in the sheaves."

The seed-vessel hopes for nothing again: it seeks only the chance of shedding itself. Its purpose is fulfilled when the wind shakes forth the last seed, and the flower-stalk is beaten low by the autumn storms. It not only spends, but is "spent out" (R.V.) at last. It is through Christ's poverty that we are rich; "as poor," in their turn, "yet making many rich" is the mark of those who follow His steps.

Are we following His steps—*are* we? How the dark places of the earth are crying out for all the powers of giving and living and loving that are locked up in hearts at home! How the waste places are pleading dumbly for the treasure that lies there in abundance, stored, as it were, in the seed-vessels of God's garden, that have not been broken, not emptied for His world, not freed for His use!

Shall we not free it all gladly? It is not grudgingly or of necessity that the little caskets break up and scatter the seed, but with the cheerful giving that God loves.

From "Parables of the Cross."—By I. L. TROTTER.

CHAPTER XXI.

“FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH.”

“That they might be called . . . the planting of the Lord, that *He* might be glorified.”—ISA. lxi. 3.

SIN-TIEN-TSI.
September, 1897.

ON Sunday, August 8th, Bishop Cassels baptised five people in this station—three men and two women. You can imagine, far better than I can describe, the intense joy it gives us to see these dear people come forward for baptism. It is at times like these that we feel how fully the joys of missionary life compensate for any sacrifice made.

The two women you know well by name—Mrs. T'ang and Mrs. Uen. Mrs. T'ang is forty-four years old. Her face shone with gladness when she knew she was accepted for baptism. The way she has increased in the knowledge of God during the past year is simply marvellous. We have visited her regularly, and always found her ready to put away all work and bring her books to learn more. She reads fairly well, but is always anxious to commit to memory as much as she can of what she reads. “I can think of it as I work in the fields,” she has often said, “if I have it in my heart as well as in my book.”

I once found her grinding corn with a hymn-book on a stone near by, and, as she watched the buffalo, she was learning her hymn—“Onward go!”

Dear old Mrs. Uen! You remember how anxious she was to get rid of the *smell* of the incense, so that Jesus might dwell with her? Since then the keynote of her daily life has been “with the Lord.”

It was hard to restrain one's tears of joy and thankfulness

as this dear old soul was baptised, and she herself bubbled over with joy!

Of the three men baptised, two were chair-bearers. These need very special prayer, for they are both the first in their different families to serve God, and are sure to suffer much persecution. The third man, Li-kueh-tün, is a carpenter, and uncle to the school-boy, Peh-ua-tsü, who was the first to carry the Gospel message to his home. Now, three members of the family are baptised, and four others are candidates for baptism.

Dear Mrs. Chao, the Bible-woman, has been very ill with bronchitis. We hardly thought she would recover, and she herself longed "to be with Christ, which is very far better."

Often as we sat by her, she would say: "I want to work for Him in Heaven now." But her work on earth is not finished yet; the Master needs her still in His vineyard here. She gradually got better, and one day, meeting us at her door, she said quite sadly: "After all, I am afraid I am not going to Heaven yet. I feel so much better to-day!" We tried to encourage her to rejoice in being spared to serve God a little longer down here.

Early in the year one of the Inquirers (Cheo-nan-ü) died very suddenly. We believe he had turned from idols and was trusting in Jesus for salvation.

Our dear old house-servant, Li-ta-niang, has also died. She had gone to her home below Pao-ning for a rest, and while there became seriously ill. Realising that the end was near, she begged her relatives to get her a chair and take her to her missionary friends in Pao-ning, that she might die among those she loved and who had told her of Jesus. She passed away joyfully and peacefully a few hours after she reached them.

"Gone home! There is a sound of resting,
As weary lips pronounce the word,
For ever shielded from earth's tumult,
For ever 'present with the Lord.'"

For the past year we have felt that the time has come

to begin building a larger place of worship than we have at present, which is too small and inconvenient. We have strongly urged upon the native Christians that this undertaking must be theirs, so that they may look upon the new building as their own.

For eighteen months the native collections have been put aside for this purpose, and when Bishop Cassels was here a few Sundays ago, the people were asked after the morning service what they would "give willingly to the house of the Lord."

It was simply grand the way, one after another, sometimes two or three at once, stood up and said what they could give. A list was made of all the promises. Some promised trees; some stone; some offered ten, twenty, or thirty, amounting in all to over two hundred, days' *free* labour; some of the women, not having any money, promised rice, wheat, or vegetables.

One little school-boy stretched across me and, nudging his mother, said: "I can work, mother; I can help to carry things." The mother looked at him doubtfully, for he is a delicate lad, and the only one left to her now; but, before she could answer him, he stood up and said: "Please put me down for twenty days' free work."

Another of the boys said he would save up one hundred cash, so much to him and so much to the Master too, who looks upon the heart! It was good to see how willingly they all offered unto the Lord, and how in so many instances it was a case of the widow's mite over again.

The week following, the Bishop made contracts with carpenters and masons, and arranged with the leading Christians about the buying of timber and stone; and we hope that when the rice-harvest is gathered in, the work will be begun in earnest.

Not very long ago we visited Ch'a-tien-tsï and Huai-shu-pa, two market-towns not far distant. At the first it was market-day when we went, and the little place was full of busy people. One of our chair-bearers found us a little room opening on to the crowded street, where we were able to rest while speaking to the numbers of people who came

to see us. They were friendly, and glad to listen to what we told them, but only two seemed specially interested; and these will, I think, come up here sometimes to hear more.

At the second market-town, Huai-shu-pa, we stayed a short time in an inn where M. is well known. She used to visit this place often before her return home, and it was here that the little cripple boy lived, whose sad story was mentioned in her book, "A New Thing." We were sorry to hear that the little boy had died a few months before we came up here. We saw his father and mother, and they spoke so gratefully to M. for all she had done for their child.

Within a radius of fifteen miles of Sin-tien-tsi, there are numbers of small villages and markets where, as yet, there are no Christians, no witnesses for the Gospel.

With the daily work of the station we are not able to visit these places as often as we should like, but Chao-taniang, the Bible-woman, goes regularly to a few of them on market-days.

As our house is on the high road from Pao-ning to the North, we have many opportunities of speaking to the passers-by. The women come into the guest-hall and hear the Gospel, while Sie Sien-seng speaks to the men in the large porch, and distributes tracts and portions of Scripture. In this way we trust that the Word of God is carried to many a distant home, and that through God's blessing it may bring forth fruit unto eternal life.

During the summer months we have had several of our fellow-missionaries from other stations staying with us for rest. We are always so pleased to welcome them, their stay here brings help and blessing to us and to the work; and, I think, most of them feel refreshed and strengthened by our fresh, mountain air.

This house is beautifully situated and admirably adapted for a place of quiet rest to weary workers from the busy city stations. Close behind the house is a hill, well-wooded, and traversed by many shady paths. From the top of the hill we command a good view of the surrounding country,

and even in the hottest weather find a fresh breeze blowing there.

In the towns and cities, ladies cannot venture out without a woman accompanying them as escort. Here, in this free country-place, we can wander alone where we will, on the hills and in the valleys near. Those who know what it means to be *alone with God* in the fields and woods, will understand how refreshing this is to those who come here, after many long months of work in the busy, crowded cities.

"Come ye yourselves apart and rest awhile,
 Weary, I know it, of the press and throng!
 Wipe from your brow the sweat and dust of toil,
 And in My quiet strength again be strong.

Come, tell Me all that ye have said and done,
 Your victories and failures, hopes and fears!
 I know how hardly souls are wooed and won:
 My choicest wreaths are always wet with tears.

* * * * *

Then, fresh from converse with your Lord, return
 And work till daylight softens into even;
 The brief hours are not lost, in which ye learn
 More of your Master and His rest in heaven."

The restfulness of waiting God's hour for seed-shedding deepens as we learn to recognise the outward dealings of the Spirit as well as the inward, and watch the marked way in which He co-operates with the setting free of every seed as it ripens; how He brings across our path the soul who needs the very lesson He has just been teaching us; how the chance comes, with perfect naturalness, of reaching another over whom we have been longing. If our eyes are up and our hands are off, if we learn to "wait on our ministering" like the seeds, in utter dependence upon Him, we shall be able constantly to trace the Lord's working with us, and we shall have done with all the old restless striving to *make* opportunities. "We are labourers together with God."

It all centres round that question of *quietness*. Opportunity is given to every seed in its turn, as they lie in their layers in the capsule or side by side in the pod. Not one forces its way forward or gets in the way of another. He who packed them into the seed-vessel can be trusted surely with the arranging of our lives, that nothing be wasted, for we are "of more value" to Him than these. If our days are a constant rush and hurry, there is grave reason to doubt if it is all God-given seed that we are scattering. He will give us no more to do than can be done with our spirits kept quiet and ready and free before Him.

From "Parables of the Christ-life."—By I. L. TROTTER.

CHAPTER XXII.

THROUGH RIVERSIDE MARKETS.

"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."—Ps. cxxvi. 6.

SIN-TIEN-TSĪ.
October, 1897.

ON Monday, September 27th, M. and I left Sin-tien-tsi for a week's itineration. In order to combine rest with work, we decided to travel as much as we could by boat. We had the Christian man, Uang-lao-ta, for one of the chair-bearers, and Hsüeh-lao-iao as our coolie, and Mrs. Ts'ai, one of our house-women, also came with us. They were a great help, and witnessed faithfully for Christ.

We reached Mao-ri-t'iao, where a boat awaited us, about three o'clock on Tuesday afternoon, and after settling things on the boat, we went into the village, and I should think everybody in the place must have turned out to see us. As we walked through the street we seemed like a little Christian band come to take the village in the name of the Lord. We were soon invited to sit down in front of a house, and there were many interested listeners among the crowd that gathered round us. Among the women there were some staunch vegetarians. They confessed, however, to knowing that this way of getting rid of their sins and escaping punishment was fruitless, and were eager to understand the true God's way of salvation.

One old woman, when she heard how Jesus had died to save men from their sins, said: "Oh, do tell me how to pray to Him who is such a Saviour! What am I to say? I want *my* sins to be forgiven."

Hsüeh-lao-iao, our Christian coolie, spoke well to the

crowd, but while most of the people seemed interested, there were some who tried to distract him by ridicule and argument. He bore it well; but on our way back to the boat we noticed he looked downcast, and, supposing he was still thinking of the unkind words of the people, M. tried to cheer him up, and reminded him how Paul, and even the Lord Jesus Himself, suffered in like manner.

"Oh, it is not *that*," he said, "which grieves me! I do not mind what they say or do to *me*, but they spoke against my Lord and doubted His Word; and it is *that* which troubles my heart."

* * * * *

Soon after breakfast the following day we went on shore again, and were invited into two houses, one at either end of the village. Crowds gathered at both places, and we had the joy of telling them the Gospel for the first time.

As we returned to the boat, three women came to see us—all vegetarians. Neighbours had told them of the "Good Tidings" we had brought, and they had come to hear for themselves before the boat started. Mrs. Ts'ai spoke very plainly, proving to them the uselessness of the vegetarian vow, and pointing them to Jesus as the Saviour from sin. On hearing something of Mrs. Ts'ai's own Christian experiences, one of them exclaimed: "Well, the goddess of mercy has never done for us what Jesus has done for you!"

Soon after we left them, praying that the Holy Spirit would water the seed sown.

Wednesday was "hot market day," as the Chinese say, at Ien-k'i-k'eo, our next stopping-place. About 10 a.m. we were standing armed with Christian books and tracts, with our backs against the closed shutters of a shop, and all around us was a dense throng of people, one of the biggest crowds I have seen in China. By far the greater part had never seen a "foreigner" before, and we heard all kinds of funny remarks made about us.

It was a sight we shall never forget—that sea of upturned faces, all listening intently—as for half an hour Hsüeh-lao-iao held their attention, telling them the origin of sin, its result and remedy. Above the crowd was a gorgeous temple full



AN ITINERANT MISSIONARY'S CONGREGATION.



From photos by]
Cash.



Oil.

CHINESE WAYS OF CARRYING.



[Mrs. Isabella Bishop.
Babies.

of idols of many kinds and names ; but over the whole was the bright blue sky, speaking of Him Who reigneth among the heathen, Who sitteth on high, King for evermore.

Before we left the market we had quiet talks with several women, some of whom came back with us to the boat, and remained until we started for Shao-chan-ho. Hearing there was another small market, named T'ing-tsi-k'eo, on our way, we stopped there a short time. Hsüeh-lao-iao and Uang-lao-ta preached to the men while we had a few interested women round us, and one dear old body, seventy years old, learnt a short prayer. About 3.30 we were again on our way. We had not gone far when we heard shouting from the bank behind us, and saw five or six people hurrying along after us. Soon we could hear them say they wanted medicine. The captain was not at all inclined to put in to shore ; but Uang-lao-ta said : "To help the sick and the poor we *must* stop," and we echoed his words, but it was not until the captain saw that there were two very old women amongst the number that he gave in, veneration for old age having won the day.

When the poor old bodies of seventy and seventy-four years of age at last arrived, we found one of them had actually been carrying a present of eggs for us all along the rough, stony shore.

We were very thankful that we happened to have what they needed among our little store of medicines.

Then M. began to tell them about the one true God and Jesus Christ our Saviour ; but directly the captain heard what was said, he gave the order to start, and we heard him quietly remark to one of the men that he knew if we began *that*, we should not reach Shao-chan-ho that night.

And so we left the little group on shore—who will go and tell them more ? It was but a very tiny seed we sowed ; the growing and the fruiting we leave in the care of Him Who alone giveth the increase.

At Shao-chan-ho we had a most disheartening time. It was "cold market day" (no market), and the people seemed utterly indifferent to us and our message. Several, however, took books, and we trust that through them blessing may yet reach that place.

Our boat was small, but fairly comfortable. The captain was an agreeable, quiet man, and every evening he and his men joined our little company for Chinese prayers. Our quarters were very small,—just one room, five and a half feet square,—and therefore we *had* to live in a good deal of muddle, and make shift as best we could under the circumstances. There being no room for chairs or table, we sat on the floor in true Japanese fashion!

But we were very happy, and had a very nice journey, and much to encourage us in the many opportunities we had of delivering our message; and if only souls are saved, we care not how we rough it!

We reached Ts'ang-K'i about midday on Saturday. This place, seventy *li* (twenty-four English miles) distant, is our nearest city. We visited it last year, and found the people very willing to be taught. Liu Sien-seng, the only Christian in the city, visited us on our boat and took us up to his house, where we had a talk with his poor, sick wife.

Sie Sien-seng's home is near Ts'ang-K'i, so after breakfast on Sunday morning we started off to attend the service held there by his eldest son. It was a hard, up-hill walk of five English miles along a wet, muddy road; but we were so glad we went, for on our arrival we found about forty or fifty people gathered together for the service. I did so thoroughly enjoy that little gathering. There was such a *true, real* ring about it all, and the quiet, reverent attitude of the people, with their hearty singing, impressed us very much.

It is encouraging to think of that little Christian band meeting there every Sunday morning, far removed on that mountain-side from any missionaries, and to know they are living consistent, Christian lives, and seeking, by life and word, to win other precious souls for the Kingdom of God. This was the first time a missionary had been present at their little Sunday service. We stayed with them some time, returning to our boat before dark.

Monday afternoon we returned home, and received a most loving welcome from all our household, some of whom had come out to meet us.

One thing touched us very much on our return. When we paid the young Christian man, Hsüeh-lao-iao, his money for carrying our load for six days, he went away, added more to it, and brought it back for the chapel fund; and, in addition, he gave us the money he would have given to the collection made the Sunday we were away. Things like these touch us deeply. To those who understand the Chinese people a little, this is much to be thankful for, and they will realise, as we do, that it is all of God's grace.

We only wish we could go oftener to these "regions beyond," but with all the regular, daily routine that centres round a station in the full swing of work, and all the unexpected little things that turn up day by day to be attended to, it is not possible to leave home often.

But we do long to be free to spend more time in these places where Christ is not named, where thousands lie in darkness and the shadow of death.

We thank God and take courage, as we remember the words which came to us afresh as a special message of promise, before setting out on this journey: "They shall see to whom no tidings of Him came: and they that have not heard shall understand."—(Rom. xv. 21 R.V.).

Now—the sowing and the weeping,
Working hard and waiting long;
Afterward—the golden reaping,
Harvest-home, and grateful song.

Now—the long and toilsome duty,
Stone by stone to carve and bring;
Afterward—the perfect beauty
Of the palace of the King.

Now—the tuning and the tension,
Wailing minors, discords strong;
Afterward—the grand ascension
Of the Alleluia song.

F. R. H

CHAPTER XXIII.

SHADOWS AND SUNSHINE.

"Most blessed for ever . . . exceeding glad with Thy countenance."—
Ps. xxi. 6.

SIN-TIEN-TSI.

November 11th, 1897.

OUR dear old Mrs. Hsüeh is now "for ever with the Lord." For months she had been very weak and suffering "until the day-dawn" of November 1st, when the end of all the pain came, and she quietly passed away from us, and the dear old blind eyes were opened to "see the King in His beauty."

M. and I visited her often, and each time she seemed sweeter and her light brighter than before. Often she would take our hands in hers, and, bending her head, there and then pray to God to make our ministry in this place a fruitful one.

For a long time she has been quietly waiting for the Lord to come for her, and she loved to think that when her eyes received their sight, the first they would see would be her Lord Himself. Her death is a very great loss to her family and to the whole Church; for though she was seldom well enough to be with us here, we all felt the power of her constant remembrance of each Christian in prayer. Poor old Hsüeh-ta-ie, her husband, is heart-broken, but the God of all comfort will fill up the void with His peace and consolation.

There was some difficulty at first about the funeral. The old man and his three Christian sons were desirous that her wishes for a Christian burial should be carried out, but her own family people objected. In the end, however,

they yielded, Hsüeh-ta-ie promising to supply them with their mourning, which meant a good quantity of white material.

Mr. Knipe, of the Church Missionary Society, who, with his wife and children, was staying with us at the time, kindly conducted the funeral, and spoke to the people gathered together about life and death. It was a solemn address, and many seemed impressed.

Now all is over, old Hsüeh-ta-ie feels his loss more than ever. M. invited him up here for a week or two, thinking that being engaged in a little work for the Master would comfort him. He sits in the guest-hall, and speaks of the love of Christ to the men who come in for a rest as they pass by on the high road.

He was glad to come, for everything in his own house reminded him of his loss. He said to us about it: "All is good, for it was God's will that she should go first, and it is His will that I should serve Him here yet a little while."

"Praise God, the Shepherd is so sweet!
Praise God, the country is so fair!
We would not hold them from His feet;
We can but haste to meet them there."

B. M.

* * * * *

"Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness."—Ps. lxx. 11.

SIN-TIEN-TSI.

December 29th, 1897.

Again we have come to the close of another year, and as we look back, we see that the work has been deepening rather than increasing. There has been much poverty and sickness among the Christians, but we are sure that through these, God has been strengthening their faith and deepening their true, inner lives.

Many of them, too, have been stirred up to fresh zeal by having the blessed hope of the Lord's coming brought before them more frequently; and some of the heathen, hearing the Christians talking about it, have come up to ask about the way of salvation.

Six people have been baptised during the year—one man

on January 4th, and three men and two women on August 8th. We have now twenty-nine baptised Christians—seventeen men and twelve women. One of these men had to be suspended owing to opium smoking. As yet he has shown no signs of real repentance, nor any willingness to put aside this curse.

While we sorrow over this Christian man giving way to sin and long for more souls to be won, still there is much to encourage us, and as we look forward our hearts leap for joy, for “there is a sound of abundance of rain.”

One of the Christians said to M. lately: “Thank God, we know He is with us, so our Sin-tien-tsi Church must grow and flourish!”

During the summer Bishop Cassels held a very helpful conference for native Christians at Pao-ning. It was a time of much blessing to many. Five men were baptised, and idols destroyed. Among the latter were some belonging to a well-known scholar in the city. On Christmas Day seven or eight more were baptised in Pao-ning, among them being one of the school-boys, son of the school-teacher.

From nearly every station in the district we have had encouraging reports of many true and earnest Inquirers being under instruction—and though it has not been a year of much *visible* result or many baptisms, we know it has been a year of blessing in the sowing of the seed. Therefore we will not be discouraged. “The seed may be taking root downwards before bearing fruit upwards.”

During the last month the preparations for building our new chapel have begun in earnest. One hundred and twenty trees have been bought; and it is no light work to carry them fifteen *li* over rough, mountain paths. In many parts, before beginning to move them the workmen had to repair the road, or even make a new road altogether. Most of the tree-carrying has been voluntarily done. The foundation stones are being prepared, and the ground cleared. The people look upon the building as their matter, and are managing it largely themselves, under the guidance of the three leading Church-members.

Some of the contributions made lately to the building fund

have been most touching. One poor woman brought two basins of rice, another a few basins of peas.

Dear old Mrs. Uen had nearly all her winter store of grain stolen by thieves, but the next day she brought us *most* of what remained, saying she was so glad they had not taken all, she still had something left to give to God, Who had given so much to her. Dear old soul! her constant thought is, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?"

One of the Christian men, while cutting down the trees, said to the owner of the plantation: "We are engaged in doing a good work, building a place where the people can worship the true God; would you not like to have a share in it?" The man forthwith told him to cut down an extra tree, indicating a very fine one, as his contribution to the building.

Uang-lao-ta, one of the leading Christian men, has been in charge of the work of tree-carrying. Realising the great danger which attends this work, he has been constantly in prayer that God would save the men from injury. Last Sunday he told us an instance of how God was answering his prayer.

One day he had been to market to buy rice for the men's dinner, and, as he returned to them, he saw about a dozen men labouring up a steep path with a great, heavy tree. Just as he reached them, one man's foothold gave way, and they were all in danger of falling and being crushed by the timber. Uang-lao-ta was just in time to rush forward and take the place of the man who had slipped, and thus, through God's goodness, a serious accident was averted. He spoke most gratefully of God's love in letting him return to the men just at that critical moment.

The tree-carriers arranged between themselves to bring in the first tree on Christmas morning, and the stone-masons, hearing of this, determined not to be out-done, and prepared a large, long foundation stone to bring in the same day, and neither carriers nor masons would receive any wages for that day's work. Christmas morning was bright and sunny, and with about fifty of the people we went out to meet the tree

and stone. Both were brought in triumphantly, each needing twelve men to carry it. You can imagine the joy with which we welcomed them!

There were about one hundred and fifty people present at the service that morning; and in the afternoon, when M. showed the magic-lantern, the room was crowded.

But what gladdened us most that day, was that a man came up to M. in the afternoon and said that he was going to destroy his idols, and henceforth he wished to follow Jesus Christ. He is one of the workmen, and has been hearing the Gospel from a fellow-workman, who is a Christian. We are so thankful about this, for we have specially prayed that the heathen men who are busily building up this little church may themselves be built into the Temple not made with hands.

One of our school-boys, Peh-ua-tsi, has lately been married. It was a happy Christian wedding, conducted by Sie Sien-seng, the evangelist.

We had been to visit the family a few days before the event, and M. had taken some material to give them—sufficient to make the boy an outer garment for the wedding. On giving this to the mother, we were surprised to see her eyes and those of the boy's grandmother fill with tears. On inquiring the cause, we heard that the week before they had decided that, as the rice-harvest had been poor, they could not afford to give the boy a new garment for his wedding, but would buy a little material and patch up the old one. To do this, the father set out one morning and walked to a market thirty *li* away, sold some of their precious rice, and bought a little material. With the stuff under his arm he started home, but he was scarcely out of the market when it was suddenly pulled away, and, ere he looked round, the thief was out of sight.

Such occurrences are only too common out here, and the poor man knew it was of no use to say or do anything towards recovering the stuff. Very sad and disappointed he went on his homeward way, but *four* times he stopped and prayed to God about it; and then on reaching home, with a quiet heart he told his wife and boy.

We asked them why they had not told us of their trouble before, for we had seen them since it occurred. They answered: "We told God, and was not that enough? We knew He would give us what was needful, and has He not sent us now much more than we lost?"

Oh, it *is* good to see how God strengthens the faith and answers the prayers of these dear simple people who put their trust in Him!

Amongst my patients lately I have had a poor little baby of four months old. It had fallen into a fire on the floor, and its little head was terribly burnt. The first time the mother brought it to me, she said indifferently: "It is only a *girl*, had I not better drown her?"

I thought her heart must be made of stone, to speak thus of the dear, little suffering one, whose pathetic little face, so full of pain, was turned upon her as she spoke. I did what I could for the child, and day by day the mother brought it to have the terrible wounds dressed. We gave it a pretty little garment and a pair of socks, for the woman is very poor; the child's garments had been burnt, and it was just bundled up in a dress of hers.

About ten days after its first visit the child died—whether from the effects of the burns, or from cold, we do not know.

I am so glad the little one is safe Home now. Jesus loved her too much to leave her here to the life of suffering which hers must have been had she lived.

Since her baby's death the mother seems softened, and she has begun to attend the Sunday services. Her life is a miserable one, poor girl—both her husband and father-in-law are inveterate opium smokers, and do not treat her kindly. We do long that she may know the peace and joy of believing in Jesus Christ!

"There are lonely hearts to cherish
While the days are going by.
There are weary souls who perish
While the days are going by."

* * * * *

On Tuesday morning, December 14th, I started off with

old Mrs. Chao for a five days' itineration in the same direction as the one we took in September.

It was snowing heavily when I left, but cleared off before we reached Shao-chan-ho, our resting-place that night.

On arriving, I went on the street to show the people I had come, and Mrs. Chao invited them to come to the inn to hear the Gospel. Many came and went until very late that night, but though they *listened*, it was quite without interest, and they were ever ready with the general questions about my age, name, family connections and genealogies, dress, our country, food, etc. Shao-chan-ho is a small market-place of which it might be written, "Wholly given to idolatry." Everywhere there were traces of it—in the mountains and rocks, which overhang the little place like huge giants, were shrines of all kinds, a gaily coloured temple towering down over the whole, from the peak of the highest mountain near. The streets and houses abound in idols; and more than all in the hearts of the people idolatry has taken deep, deep root.

Last September we felt the deadness of this place, and again this time I was burdened by the stone-like coldness and apathy of the people.

But Bunyan says: "Were a man in a mountain of ice, yet if the Sun of Righteousness will arise upon him, his frozen heart shall feel a thaw." And so we trust it may yet be with the Shao-chan-ho people. The seed of the Kingdom has again been sown there, and we pray that there may soon be "joy in the presence of the angels of God" over souls saved in this place.

Ien-k'i-k'eo, my next stopping-place, is a larger and more important market than Shao-chan-ho. I was shown to a *very* small, dark, dirty room of an inn, and told there was not another in the place. I knew that I should not be able to invite women into this small room to hear the message I had come to give them, and said so to the line of people who had followed me, and now filled up the dark, narrow passage leading to the room. At once, a woman said she would find a room for me. Thanking her, I followed her (and so did the long string of people!) to her house,

and soon found myself in very fair quarters. All the afternoon Mrs. Chao and I were kept busy, talking to the numbers of people that kept crowding in, among whom were many earnest listeners.

Not being able to sleep much that night (partly owing to the close proximity in the room under me of opium smokers, and partly because of a large, suspicious-looking opening in the floor under my bed), I was up early next morning, and, in spite of drizzling rain, the chairmen were willing to start for the next market, Mao-ri-t'iao. Just as we were leaving Ien-k'i-k'eo a little lad came running after us with a request from some scholars for more books; they had seemed interested the day before when the Bible-woman and chair-bearers had spoken to them.

It was a bitterly cold day, and we had a long and intensely cold and muddy trudge up, and down, and over great high mountains covered with snow, and then through deep valleys, where we lost our way and had to cross ploughed fields. For quite half the way I walked, as it was not safe in the chair, and we were all wet through when we reached Mao-ri-t'iao about dusk. The people pressed in too quickly to allow me time to dry myself; but I was very glad of some hot tea and of a basket foot-warmer Mrs. Chao brought me, and then we had a busy evening with the people, who stayed with us until late. They were very keen to *understand* what they heard, and were grateful for more books—some of the scholars of the place having read those which we left here in September, and pronouncing them “very good words.” The following morning a woman invited me to her house. Crowds followed me, even inside, but the woman was very kind about it, and the people were quiet and orderly as I told them again about the one true God and the only true way of Salvation.

Compared with the deadly coldness and indifference of the Shao-chan-ho people, these of Mao-ri-t'iao struck me as being very earnest in their desire to learn as much as ever I was able to teach them in the short time I could stay. They put aside their work to come and listen; and it was with thankfulness and rejoicing that I left them, knowing that

some at least now know that Jesus Christ is their Saviour and Redeemer.

That night I slept at Üin-lin-p'u, and reached U-li-tsi the following day about twelve o'clock. Here M. met me, and we had a busy time in the room we have hired there for preaching on market-days, with the many women who gathered round us.

It was very nice to get home again, for travelling and inn-life is anything but pleasant in inland China. It is the message that we carry from the King of kings to dying souls which wings our feet, and fills our hearts with joy and peace, and keeps us "far above" all surrounding circumstances. Once more the Gospel has been preached to some "afar off" in those riverside markets. What they need is *regular* teaching. If only there were more of us here, we would go oftener; indeed, we might rent a room in one or two markets and stay among the people a few weeks at a time; then, I think, by God's grace, we should see more definite results from regular systematic teaching.

To the West Coast, missionaries had come, and the natives had led in to see them an aged, heathen African chief. His skin was like parchment, and his nails half-an-inch long; he was stone blind, and almost deaf. When his favourite slave shouted in his ear: "The white men salute you!" the queer old figure moved, his hands began to grope about, and, seizing the hands of the missionary, he said: "White man, I don't know the day when I have not heard about your power and your learning. Why did you not come here sooner? You have come now, and these eyes are too blind to see you, these ears too deaf to hear you. *If you have any message, take it to the young men; you are too late for me.*"

"If you have any message . . ." And have we not a message? "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son to die for the sins of the whole world."

While we are living for time and self, ignoring the great command of our Master, shall eight hundred million heathen hearts in our own generation, sin-stained for lack of that message, hopeless for want of that Love, lie down amid the awful shadows of a Christless death with on their dying lips the unspoken accusation: "*If you have any message, you are too late for us.*"

CHAPTER XXIV.

DAY BY DAY.

"I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me."—JOHN xii. 32.

SIN-TIEN-TSI.
June, 1898.

JANUARY 23rd was the Chinese New Year's Day—the day of days in China—a *shua-t'ien*, or play-day, for everybody. It is the one, great, yearly holiday, when all work stops for several days, and great rejoicings are held. For weeks beforehand the women are busy making new clothes and shoes for the whole family, and for some days previous a tremendous cleaning goes on everywhere. As it is only once a year that the Chinese do really set to work to have a regular turn out and cleaning up of everything, we take advantage, as you may imagine, of their unusual zeal, and greatly encourage their efforts.

On the last day of the year a new idol takes the place of the old kitchen-god. This latter is dispatched, through burning, to the spirit-world to report on the family affairs and doings of the past year. The day itself is much given up to idolatry and ancestral worship, an important part of the latter being the burning of miniature houses, sedan-chairs, etc.—cut in paper; also endless strings of silver paper money, and even food,—all for the use of deceased relatives in the other world!

On New Year's Day, all put on their best and gayest clothes, and, after burning incense and worshipping the ancestral tablets, the fathers and sons set out to visit their relatives and friends, and are everywhere treated to tea, cakes, and sweetmeats. The ladies and girls, in all the

splendour of their new clothes, come out on the second or third day of the New Year.

New Year's Day is every one's birthday in China! All reckon to have added a year to their age on that day; for instance, a baby only a few weeks old, who is reckoned one year old when born, is two years old on the first New Year's Day that follows its birth!

We always try to make New Year's Day a specially happy one for the native Christians, because it is a day of great temptation to them in the homes of their heathen relatives. We began the day with a meeting, at which over two hundred were present. M. said a few words on the motto we have chosen for the year: "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?"—(John xi. 40.)

Several of the Christians spoke of God's faithfulness to them during the past year, and urged the unbelievers to turn from idols to serve the true God.

It was an evident proof of the readiness of the people to hear the truth that such a large number gathered here that morning, instead of going to the heathen temple near by, as is the custom on New Year's Day.

We had a large number of presents given us,—all eatables, of course,—such as eggs, chickens, flour, cakes, dough-strips, sweetmeats, dried yellow lilies and other vegetables, pork, fish, oranges, etc. One little girl came running up to us with a small leg of pork in each hand, one for each of us!

Of course we had to return to each donor a present, equal in value, though not the same in kind, to that given to us—this being the correct thing to do according to Chinese etiquette!

One touching scene occurred of which I must tell you. You will remember my writing to you (Chap. xiii.) of Hsüeh-ta-ie, the first man to turn to God in this place, who, in 1892, when he was convinced that the idols were false, called his sons around him and told them that the idols must be destroyed, and that henceforth *he* would serve the Lord. This last New Year's Day Hsüeh-ta-ie with his sons and their wives and many grandchildren came up to

M. and me as we talked to the people in the courtyard, and after the whole family had given us (all at the same instant) a low Chinese bow, the dear old man thanked us most touchingly for having come "forty thousand *li* over wide rivers and deep seas from the far western country, to bring them the Gospel," and for all the teaching of the past year. Then, turning to his large family, he said in the spirit of Joshua: "As for me and my house, *we* will serve the Lord." This little incident touched us deeply, and we thanked God for the way in which His Spirit has worked in that family.

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In the afternoon we saw a splendid eclipse of the sun. We first became aware of it by hearing the sound of the beating of gongs and piercing shrieks and screams rising from the valleys around us. Running out to inquire the cause, we were told the heathen people were screaming to the gods "to save the sun, which was being eaten up by a heavenly dog!"

We had a very clear view of the eclipse, and as the sky was rather cloudy at the time, we could watch the whole without difficulty. We tried to explain the true cause of the eclipse to some of our people. One old woman was very much amused at our explanation, and laughing heartily, said: "Well, to be sure; because it was New Year's Day, the sun and the moon thought they would like to go along together!" And old Hsüeh-ta-ie remarked that he thought the moon (a woman, according to Chinese ideas) had manifested a *proud* spirit in getting in front of the sun (a man)!

This unusual phenomenon, occurring on New Year's Day, caused much anxiety and terror throughout the land. We heard that the Emperor was greatly alarmed, and ordered "that all the ceremonies and respects, usually paid to him that day in the throne-room, were to be performed this year in the Penitential Hall, lest there should be no royal house at the end of the year!" He thought that perhaps *his* errors had caused the eclipse, and consequently resigned himself to a day of humiliation.

On the 15th of the first moon, there was a general

gathering at a temple near us, to offer incense to the idols, and thereby to obtain exemption from sickness during the year.

A man died when in the act of offering incense and prostrating himself before the idols. This fact has impressed many, and has, we believe, shaken the faith of some in the false gods.

Several of the native Christians remained here all day, helping us to tell the Gospel to the three or four hundred people that came in on their way to or from the temple.

On February 8th our boys' school re-opened. Several of the old boys have left, but eight new ones have come. Four of the elder boys are members of the "Children's Scripture Union."

Ien-lin, the younger of the two lads who came begging here last year, is now living with us. In return for his food, he does all kinds of odd jobs about the house, helping everybody, and is a general favourite. We are very glad to have him, and we trust he will grow up a true disciple of Jesus Christ!

Our naughty little "pickle," Hai-p'ing-tsi, has also returned. While he was away the teacher said that peace reigned in the schoolroom, but now that he has returned, it is unknown there!

We are much interested in the boys' school. There are several who, we believe, are earnest little Christians. One of the elder lads will, we hope, be baptised soon with his parents.

Last Tuesday, when visiting one of the boy's homes, the mother told us that her boy had come home one day, and said he was trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour, and wished to worship and serve Him all his life. His parents are not Christians, but they told us they would not hinder their boy from being one.

Dear old Mrs. Uen! Her love to the Saviour spends itself in giving. In March she went away to spend a month with a married daughter who lives a long day's journey from her house. She came in here on her way to say good-bye and to bring her collection-money, as she will miss the next

collection Sunday. She really loves "to give to God," as she puts it, and is always on the look-out for opportunities of doing something for Him, who did so much for her. She is very, very poor, and lives on the barest necessities, and her offerings are very small, just the widow's mite; but how infinitely precious they are to Him who is still, as it were, standing over against the treasury!

If only the Church of Christ, as a whole, had more of the spirit of this dear Chinese Christian, how the evangelisation of the world might be hastened!

At Christmas-time we gave Uen-ta-niang a new lock for her door, to replace the one which the thieves had stolen. Soon after, she went out to her fields, having put the new lock on her door. On her return home she found it very hard to open, and spent much time and strength over it, until, she said, the perspiration rolled down her face with her exertions! Suddenly it occurred to her she had never *prayed* about it. There and then, outside her door, she knelt down and said: "Lord Jesus, Thou didst put it into Thy servants' hearts to give me this lock; wilt Thou now help me to open it?" On trying the lock once more, it opened easily. This has greatly strengthened her faith in prayer, and when her heathen relatives ridicule her for trusting in an invisible God, she silences them by relating the story of the lock.

Mrs. Chao, the Bible-woman, is growing in spiritual power and zeal through the much persecution she continues to suffer at the hands of her heathen relatives.

Again this last New Year time she was offered a holiday, but she refused, saying: "The time is short. I want to work for my Lord as long as I can. I should like to be witnessing for Him when He comes." For the same reason she only takes half-day on Saturdays now, instead of the whole day as formerly.

I had an amusing conversation with her one day when out visiting. We had climbed up a long, steep hill together, and were resting on a stone near the top, when she suddenly asked me if she might come with M. and me to England, when we returned home. I laughed, and told her of the

difficulties of the way. She was nothing daunted, however, by my description of rapids and wrecks, steamers, strange people, and language. When I spoke of the enormous expense of the journey, though taken aback, she said at once: "I have thought of that; and think I could save up one *teo* (= 1 bushel) of rice or perhaps two for the three months' journey" (equivalent to four shillings in English money!). Then I dilated largely on the dangers of the sea and the possibility of her dying in England away from her home, (a dreadful fate to an ordinary Chinese person,) still she was unmoved, saying: "Wherever I go, and whatever dangers I meet, my Heavenly Father will protect me; and it does not matter where I die, He will take my soul to Heaven." I then asked her *why* she was so anxious to go to England?

"There are three reasons," she replied: "First, because I think your country must be so near to Heaven; secondly, I should like to see Miss Williams' mother; and thirdly, I want to see your agriculture!"

We have been very troubled lately over two of the Christian men. One I have mentioned in earlier letters as having been led astray through opium smoking; and the other is a man, named Chang, who allows his heathen wife to carry on his business on Sundays when he comes to the services. We would be so grateful for your prayers for these men, that God would give them courage to renounce all sin, and stablish and settle them in the faith!

* * * * *

Monday, March 7th, was a great day here, for it was the day on which the framework of our new chapel was erected. Bishop and Mrs. Cassels kindly came up for the occasion. Early in the day we assembled together for a short service, and the Bishop spoke on:

- (1) Building for eternity.
- (2) The necessity of counting the cost.—(Luke xiv. 28-30.)
- (3) Building on the right foundation.—(Matt. vii. 24-25.)

The Chinese way of building is very different from our English one. The pillars, beams, and cross-pieces were all fitted together on the ground first, and ropes attached; then,

by the combined efforts of seventy-five men, the whole framework was raised up into position on the foundation stones. Twenty-five of the men were workmen, *all* the rest were voluntary helpers, more or less known to us.

When raising the framework of ordinary houses, the Chinese have a custom of attaching to the topmost beam a paper on which are written characters referring to the idols, or some lucky proverb. To the centre beam of our new chapel we attached a large sheet of red paper, on which were these words in Chinese: "I will fill this house with My glory, saith the Lord of Hosts."—(Hag. ii. 7.) This is what we long and pray for, that the Lord's name may be glorified in the salvation of many souls in this place.

Two of the carpenters are Christians. One of them, the head-workman, has acted splendidly all through the work, and we trust his influence may tell for good among the other men. Lately, all his money was stolen from his house. His heathen relatives tried to urge him to burn incense to a certain idol, able, they said, to reveal who the thieves were. This he refused to do, saying: "No, God has some good purpose in allowing this trial to come to me, and I will trust Him still, whether I get the money back or not!"

The people have contributed liberally to the chapel-building; and it is beautiful to witness their love already for the building, and their pride in it as *theirs*.

On March 24th, a man, named Hsü, arrived here from Shao-chan-ho, a market forty-five *li* distant, to learn the Way of Truth. He had been two years in a Buddhist temple, having gone there hoping to ensure the favour and protection of the gods, and hereafter a happy eternity. Being young and poor, the priests treated him cruelly, and gave him all the hard work to do. He zealously offered incense, burnt candles, etc., and implored the idols to protect him from the cruelty of the priests, but all to no avail. Gradually he became aware of the utter inability of the idols to protect him, and by degrees began to hate them and recognised they were false and useless. He realised also in some small measure the error, deceit, and superstition that lay behind idol-worship.

Things reached a climax towards the end of last year, when he was putting a few finishing touches to an idol which his own hands had made. A priest, standing by, ordered him to make it more attractive by painting it with brighter colours. It was these words that made him decide to leave the temple: "For what sort of a god is this," he thought, "that *my* hands must make attractive? How can it save and help me now, or give me happiness hereafter?"

Accordingly he left, and returned to his home at Shao-chan-ho, determined never again to worship idols, and with a keen desire to find the Way of Truth.

After a short time at home, he heard that last year we had visited Shao-chan-ho, and had spoken good words about a living God and a true way to everlasting happiness.

A few days later he arrived here and spent three days in the neighbourhood, coming every day to learn more by conversation with us or the native Christians, or by attending the various classes, or reading Christian books in the guest-hall.

In the evening he was taught more by Mrs. Chao, the Bible-woman, and her son, who live next door to the inn where he stayed.

He returned home fully persuaded, we believe, of the Truth, and anxious to assure his brothers and relatives of it also.

Will you sometimes remember this man in prayer, that he may increase in the knowledge of God and believe in Jesus Christ as his own Saviour?

* * * * *

One of the Christian men, T'ang, the tailor (see "A New Thing," p. 389), has lately been used of God to lead four people to believe in Jesus Christ. Three of these are his own relatives, living at Liu-k'i-pa, a place we have often visited, about seven English miles distant. They are now fairly regular in attending the services and classes, in spite of distance and bad roads. The fourth person is a man, named Li-uen-fuh, who at a recent Sunday afternoon meeting rose and said, that henceforth he wanted to serve the true God. By degrees we found that formerly he had had a firm belief in sorcery; but as a result of a long

talk with T'ang-si-fu, on their way one day to market, this belief had been shaken, and Li-uen-fuh determined to cast aside his idols and his erroneous belief in sorcery, and to seek "the better way" of which the tailor spoke.

During the week after he had expressed his desire to serve God we visited his home. Going there, we missed the right path, and making our way across the valley we came to huge rocks and projecting boulders, among or over which we had to scramble as best we could. Half way there we crossed a big bog, and old Mrs. Chao was very disappointed we would not let her carry us across! We found some lovely ferns and flowers—orchids and big scarlet lilies among them. The man and his daughter (his wife is dead) welcomed us gladly, and presently, as we talked, he said, pointing to a big rock down the hillside: "Below that rock is a pile of ashes—all that remains of my idols!"

As we wended our way homeward, our hearts rose to God in thanksgiving, and we thought of the day when every idol shall be utterly abolished and the Lord alone shall be exalted in this land.—(Isa. ii. 17-21).

Towards the end of May, M. and I with Mrs. Chao took another few days' itineration to the riverside markets, visiting four villages and finding many interested hearers. In describing our visit to one of the markets, M. writes: "At Ien-k'i-k'eo eight or nine school-boys came running into the inn where we were speaking to the women; and one of them said, 'We have only got a very little time, but will you read to us; we *do* want to listen to your books?' They sat perfectly quiet for about twenty minutes, listening to the Gospel, and then left, taking some tracts and booklets with them. In the afternoon their school-teacher came, saying the boys had told him what they had heard in the morning, and that he wanted to see for himself the books that contained the good news. For about an hour he listened and asked questions about the Truth. He owned he had no faith in idols, and that he was an opium smoker. His own words about it were, 'The habit is *binding me down*; I have tried again and again to break it off, but it is of no use.' Do let us pray that the Gospel he took away may, through the

Holy Spirit's power, reveal to him the Saviour who is able and willing to set the captives free !”

Dear old Mrs. Li, eighty-three years of age, has lately had a severe attack of influenza ! When very weak and in burning fever, unable to sleep, she would say : “No matter, no matter, my heart is full of peace, for Jesus is with me all the time.” We visit her often ; though she cannot see us, for she is almost totally blind now, she likes to *feel* us near, and to be taught some fresh verse of a hymn or a text. With wonderful quickness, soon after her baptism in 1896, she learnt to repeat the Communion hymn beginning :

“According to Thy gracious Word” ;

and now as she lies in bed, she loves to say it, repeating again and again the last line of every verse :

“I will remember Thee.”

The whole country is just now in a state of much unrest. We hear that the tax, levied upon the people in order to pay off the war indemnity given to Japan, has greatly helped to make them more than usually unfriendly towards foreigners.

In this part of Si-ch'uan during the last month two riots have taken place, and others, which were threatened, have been averted.

At Shuen-k'ing the mission-house was entirely destroyed, and the Rev. A. Evans and Mr. Jennings were obliged to escape to the Mandarin's official residence.

At Ing-shan, a station only recently opened, very little damage was done to mission property, owing to the vigilance of the Mandarin, who also received Miss Gower into his house for three days.

At Pao-ning the people certainly intended mischief, but God signally worked for His servants, and restrained the wrath of the enemy.

On Sunday, July 3rd, our morning service was just over, when we were surprised by the arrival of a military Mandarin from Ts'ang-K'i with sixteen soldiers. He had been sent by order of the Pao-ning officials to inquire if all was quiet,

and with orders to leave the soldiers if necessary. However, there was nothing to be feared from the people in this neighbourhood, and the Mandarin and his retinue left in about half an hour's time.

God is with us, and we are safe in His keeping. While "under His shadow we dwell among the heathen," we are learning :

"The secret of enduring strength,
And peace too deep for speech,
Peace, that no pressure from without,
No strife within can reach."

At midnight, there came the voice of one
Who had crept to Heaven's gate through the blinding snow,
And who moaned at the gate, as one undone
Might moan at the sight of the last dread woe.

A woman's voice, and it rose and fell,
On the muffled wind of the snowy night,
With a trembling knocking which seemed to tell
Of one who was chilled and spent outright.

"I wove the crown for the brow Divine,
I pierced the hand that was stretched to save;
I dare not pray that the moon may shine
To show me the prints of the nails I drove;

"I beat this night on my sinful breast;
I dare not pray Him to succour me." . . .
But the Watchman opened the gate of rest,—
'I am willing, with all My heart,' said He.

B. M.

CHAPTER XXV.

“MADE NIGH.”

“Whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved.”—ACTS ii. 21.

SIN-TIEN-TSÍ.

July, 1898.

ONE evening in May, on our way home, after visiting U-kia-p'ing, Chao-ta-niang took us to see an old woman, named U. She was over seventy years old, was totally blind, and lived all alone in a small, half-burnt-down hovel. We were horrified at the pitiably neglected state of the poor old body. She was sick, emaciated, and dirty, had been bedridden for months, and was dying of slow starvation!

Poor, poor old woman! Our hearts ached for her, and she did not see the tears that we could not restrain, as she told us some of the details of her miserable life—it was one of darkness, and had no love in it—too unspeakably sad to relate. She had had one son, at one time her joy and pride, but alas! the curse of opium took hold of him, and ten years ago he left his old mother and young wife, and they have never seen him since. M. spoke to her of Jesus, Who knew all her sorrows and was able to comfort and help her; and, before leaving, we promised to come again the following day.

We learnt from others later that, soon after her son had gone, she sold her daughter-in-law to another man, and thus it was she had no one to care for her in her sickness and poverty. Being ill and unable to move, and blind, she was absolutely dependent upon her neighbours for everything. They did very little for her, saying she “*kai-sí*,” (“ought to die”), because in her younger days she had been notorious for wickedness, and that therefore it was right she should die in that state. Occasionally a woman, more kind than

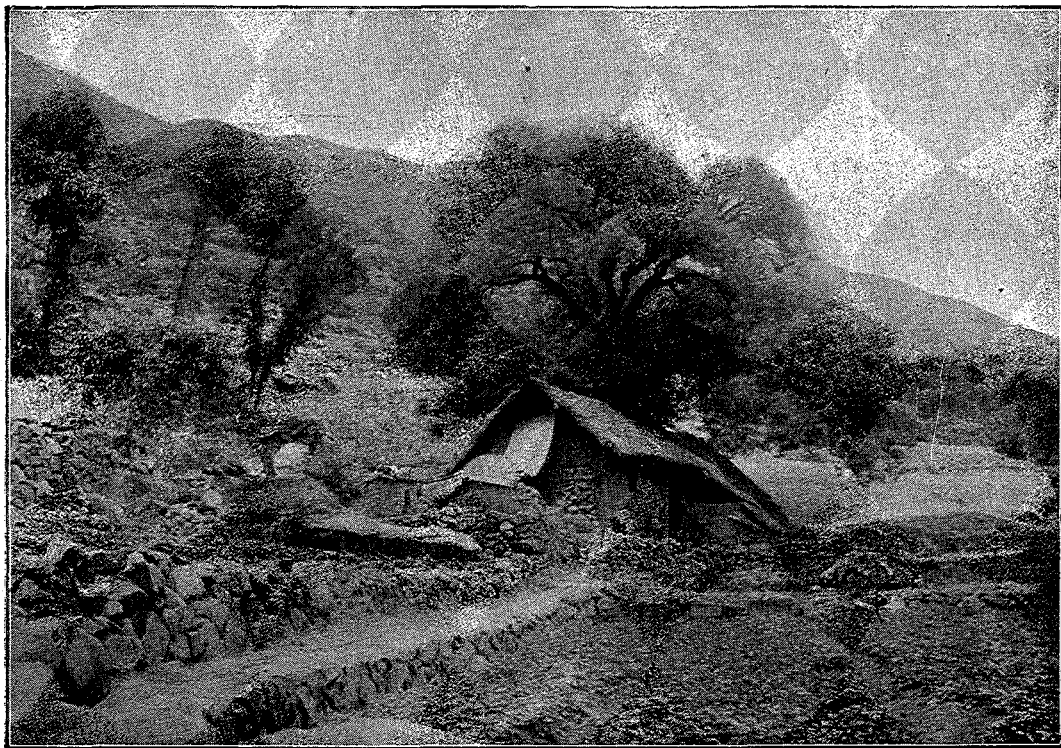
the rest, would take her a basin of food, on an average, one in three days! Oh! that they knew the love of our God; a God ready to pardon, Who, while we were yet *dead in sin*, spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all!

The following day we went again to her with cooked food, and fresh straw and a mat for her bed. In the bright light of a sunny day, the awful and indescribable condition of the hovel was more palpable than it had been the evening before; and it would have been hard to enter, were it not that the words "For Jesus' sake" were ringing in our hearts all the time. She told us she had not slept for the joy of the promise we had given her—that we would come again. Ien-lin, the boy we befriended last year, was with us, and soon lit a fire and warmed up the rice; and it was good to see her so thoroughly enjoy it. Miss F. Culverwell, who was then staying at Sin-tien-tsi, had come with us that afternoon, and was much touched at the sight of the poor old woman. We found she was under the impression we were living idols (and that she had been praying to us as such), and when we disputed this point, she said we must then be fairies or good spirits sent from above to help her!

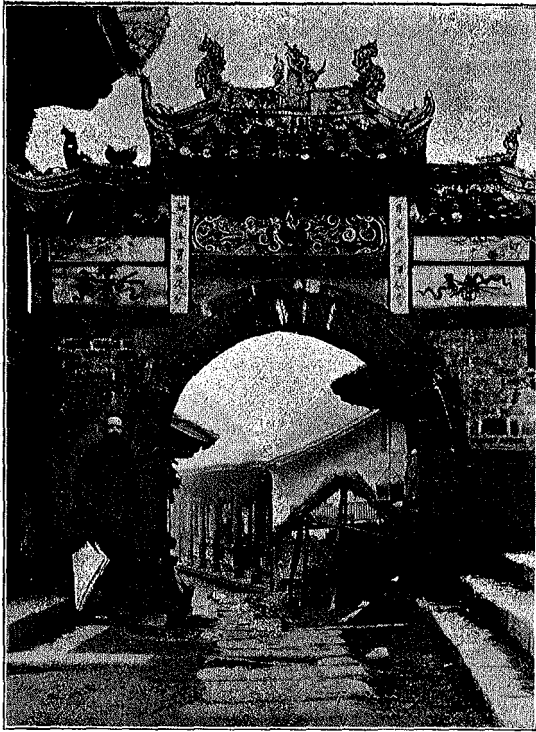
F. told her it was the one, true God who had led us to her, to tell her of Jesus Christ, Who loved her, and had died to save her from her sins.

Dear old woman! that first day she seemed too excited by our visit and the food to grasp much of what we said; but we taught her just to say the Name that is above every name, the precious Name of Jesus. It was weeks before she understood anything. We visited her often, and took or sent her food regularly. She listened eagerly to the Gospel, and would repeat aloud nearly all we said. By degrees she learnt the prayer: "Lord Jesus, forgive my sins."

One afternoon, at the time of wheat-harvest, we were surprised, on drawing near her hut, to see her stretched on a heap of straw outside! Inquiring the cause, we heard that a neighbour (we know not why, unless he was anxious to accumulate merit!) had brought in a few armsful of wheat, and, evidently thinking the corn was of more value than the poor old woman, had piled it up on the bed, turning



A LONELY COTTAGE, SI-CH'UAN.



From photo by]

[Mrs. Isabella Bishop.

U-LI-TSĪ, A VILLAGE 12 LI FROM SIN-TIEN-TSĪ.



From photo by]

[Miss F. M. Williams.

IEN-LIN, SAWING WOOD FOR FUEL.

her off on to the floor of the hut, whence she had crawled outside.

With Chao-ta-niang's help we gradually arranged things so as to enable her to get back again to bed. There she lay, in the midst of plenty, and yet dying of starvation; for of what use was the wheat to her, when in her weakness she could not thresh and prepare it?

I went there again soon afterwards with the Bible-woman, and as we approached the hut, we heard her speaking to some one. Wondering who could be with her, we drew near and listened, and found she was talking to God, and every now and again we could catch the words of her prayer, rising repeatedly to Heaven, "Lord Jesus, forgive my sins."

It was perhaps the last time that any one saw her, for soon afterwards she was found *dead* by some chance visitor to the hut.

And is that the *end*? No, thank God, it is but the *beginning*! We believe that soul, a few weeks ago so "far off" in sin and wickedness, was "made nigh" by the blood of Christ, and that, still breathing her prayer, she passed into the presence of her Saviour; and we believe that there, among the multitude which no man can number, we shall meet her again with "the beauty of the Lord our God" upon her.

"Thus day and night they are pressing nigh
 With tears and sighs to the heavenly gate,
 Where the Watchman stands in His majesty,
 With a patience which never has said 'Too late.'

Let the sorrowful children of want and sin
 Draw near to the gate whence none depart.
 Let the nations arise and enter in,
 For the Lord is willing with all His heart."

B. M.

Now, my God, let, I beseech Thee, Thine eyes be open, and let Thine ears be attent unto the prayer that is made in this place. Now therefore arise, O Lord God, into Thy resting place, Thou, and the ark of Thy strength: let Thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let Thy saints rejoice in goodness.—2 CHRON. vi. 40, 41.

And the Lord said unto him, Now Mine eyes shall be open, and Mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place. For now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that My Name may be there for ever: and Mine eyes and Mine heart shall be there perpetually.—2 CHRON. vii. 12, 15, 16.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE OPENING OF THE CHAPEL.

“I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts.”—HAG. ii. 7.

SIN-TIEN-TSI.
August 27th, 1898.

ON Sunday morning, August 21st, I woke up with this promise in my mind, together with the words: “Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest *believe*, thou shouldst see the glory of God?” It was a bright, sunshiny day, and everything seemed to show that God was smiling upon the opening of our new church.

We feel it is a matter for great rejoicing and deep thankfulness to God that here, in this isolated country-place, it has been found necessary to build a place of worship sufficiently large to accommodate two hundred people. The new building is simple, bright, and lofty, and well-built as to sound. No accident has occurred during the eight months of building, and the workmen have done their work thoroughly and happily, and have been under the sound of the Gospel all the time. It has been a time of much extra strain and work for M., upon whom the responsibility of the whole rested; but God’s presence has been with us, and His grace and help sufficient day by day. The church has been built at a cost of about £68, and to this sum the native Christians in this and the other stations of the district have contributed *well*. Kind gifts of money have also reached us from our fellow-workers and from several friends in England.

For the four days of special meetings, in connection with the opening of the church, we had invited sixteen leading Christians, representatives of all the Churches that had

contributed to the building. Many of the missionaries of the district were also present.

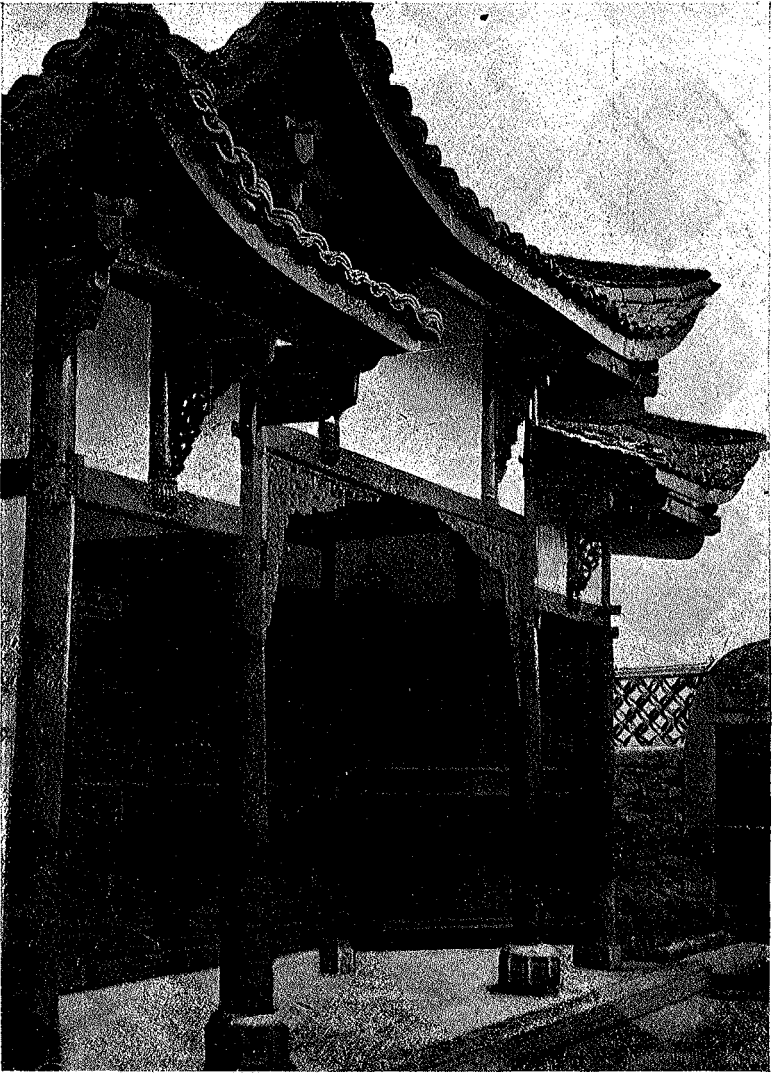
The opening service took place on Sunday, August 21st, when Bishop Cassels dedicated the church to the service of God, much in the same way as Solomon of old consecrated the Temple, many of the petitions of Solomon's prayer forming the keynote of our prayers that day. The building was crowded, even to the porch. The service was followed by an evangelistic meeting, held by some of the native Christians, for the heathen who were present.

At the Communion service we specially realised the presence of Christ, and our hearts were stirred as we met with such a large gathering of native Christians to remember His death.

At the eleven o'clock meeting on Monday, seven people were baptised. Among these were T'ao-kuang-kin and his wife, whose house was burnt down two winters ago. It was through this trouble we first knew them and told them the Gospel. From the beginning we felt their hearts were prepared to receive the Light, and they have gone steadily forward, being full of simple faith in God. Then there were Li-kueh-cheo, his wife, and son (Peh-na-tsi). This last is the boy who first heard the Gospel at school four years ago, and took the good news home to his parents. He is now fourteen years old, and is an earnest, consistent Christian. The other two baptised were Sie-ü-seng, son of the teacher, aged twenty, and Long-ta-sao, the woman who lost her boy two years ago. Through sorrow she grew in grace and the knowledge of God.

May God keep them each one "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

The following morning eleven people were received as Inquirers, six men, one woman, three school-boys, and one girl. For some time these have attended the services and have destroyed their idols, and we have reason to believe they are true in their desire to serve God. Each one was brought forward at the service by a native Christian, who undertook, with God's help, to hold himself responsible for that one during the time he is an Inquirer, and to do all in his power to help him forward.



From photo by]

[Rev. A. T. Pollhill Turner.

PORCH OF THE NEW CHURCH, SIN-TIEN-TSI.



From photo by]

GROUP OF NATIVE CHRISTIANS AND SCHOOL-BOYS, SIN-TIEN-TSI.

[Rev. A. T. Polhill Turner.

At the Wednesday meeting the two oldest members of the Church spoke about the new chapel.

Old Hsüeh-ta-ie's words were full of gratitude to God for the new building; and he closed by saying: "This building does not belong to the foreign teachers, nor does it belong to us,—the Church members,—but it belongs to *God*. He gave it to us and He will constantly manifest His glory to us in this place."

In the afternoon a magic-lantern service was held by Ku-ho-lin, a young Christian man, from Pao-ning, formerly one of M.'s school-boys there. His choice and explanation of the slides revealed to us his clear apprehension of spiritual truths. His subject was, "The Forgiveness of Sins," as illustrated in the stories of the Flood, the Brazen Serpent, and the Crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Of one result of that afternoon's service we have already heard. A young man who was present, an utter stranger, who had come to me for medicine, told me a few days later that as he saw the picture of the Crucifixion and listened to Ku-ho-lin's words about it he had felt convinced that Jesus Christ was the true and only Saviour of the world. We do trust that this young man may be among the firstfruits of these meetings!

That was the closing meeting of our four quiet days. Will you join us in praying that the spiritual Church in this place may be built up, "a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish?"

Missionary history abounds in marvels of *preservation*. God does not promise, even to the most faithful of His servants, absolute immunity from disease and death. It may be best that witness should be sealed in blood, as well as seasoned with suffering. The servant is not above his Master, and the first martyr may have done more to save souls by his death than Paul did by his life; but God has often stayed the hand of man, and many an imperilled witness to Christ has heard the same voice that Paul heard at Corinth: "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee."

REV. A. T. PRERSON, in "The New Acts of the Apostles."

CHAPTER XXVII.

UNDER HIS SHADOW.

“Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel ; and in nothing terrified by your adversaries.”—PHIL. i. 27, 28.

SIN-TIEN-TSI.
December, 1898.

DURING the last few months we have been proving God's love and faithfulness through new and strange experiences.

In September M. was seriously ill with an epidemic which was prevalent in the neighbourhood, and, at one time, we thought she could not possibly recover. But God remembered us in our sorrow, and answered the prayer of His servants, and restored her to health again. The love and sympathy of the natives at that time were most touching. The messenger sent to Pao-ning walked one hundred and twenty *li* one night to fetch the doctor. The school-boys were very quiet, and one morning one of them sang hymns very softly outside M.'s room, thinking they might comfort her. Numbers of people came every day to inquire how she was, and to bring their little offerings of eggs, bread, vegetables, or honey wherewith to tempt her appetite.

Early in October, when she was better, Bishop Cassels kindly arranged that she should go to Kuang-tien (two and half days' journey to the north) for a change, and that I should accompany her ; but our preparations for going were suddenly stopped by the arrival of twenty soldiers, headed by a military official. They had been sent by the Mandarin of Ts'ang-K'i to protect us against a band of lawless men who were in the neighbourhood, preparing for an attack upon Sin-tien-tsi. They were supposed to be followers of the rebel-chief Ü-man-tsi, who was then in his fortress

near Ta-chu, in the south of the province, doing his utmost by wicked proclamations and emissaries, scattered throughout the province, to excite the people to an anti-Christian rebellion. He has already destroyed a good deal of Roman Catholic property, and for months has held captive a Romish priest, for whom he asks a large ransom.

The day following our first intimation of the trouble, we had serious news from Pao-ning, that Chung-k'ing, Ho-cheo, and other places, were in an unsettled state, expecting an invasion from Ü-man-tsī and his rebels. Bishop Cassels urged us to take all possible precautions, as he had heard from three independent sources that a band of men were on their way to attack Sin-tien-tsī.

A couple of days later, the local magistrates arrived at our house to discuss the question of forming a band of volunteers for our protection. They had previously informed every family in the neighbourhood to send a representative to meet them here. You cannot imagine what a motley gathering assembled. We were amused, and touched also, by the appearance of such a bodyguard! There were old, white-haired men mixed up with young men and lads, and even little children of eleven or twelve years old, all carrying horrid, rusty weapons of various shapes and sizes, or old, ragged flags. Most of our Christian men were there, ready to do anything on our behalf! They told us they had come to meet the Mandarin who was "to review the guards." Though amused at the ludicrous appearance they presented, we *knew* they meant to do all they could to protect us.

Amongst them was dear old Hsüeh-ta-ie with his strong sons. Some of you will remember how, in 1895, when riots took place in many stations in this province, he said that if any evil men came in at our door to harm God's servants, they would have to pass over his dead body first! We feel that the same spirit still animates our Christian men. Throughout the whole of this anxious time their love and devotion have been manifested greatly.

Every night, for about a fortnight or three weeks, men were appointed by the Mandarin to keep watch, some in the

house, and some outside, where a straw hut had been put up for the purpose.

And every night, also, a band of Christian men came up of their own accord, to guard the house and to help us, should any trouble arise. Among themselves they arranged that three chair-bearers should come up every night, so that if we were obliged to escape, M. (who was still very weak) might be carried away in a chair. In things like this the love and kindness of the people were poured upon us at this time.

About a week after the first alarm, four men belonging to the rebel band were caught at a place forty-two *li* distant, and taken to Ts'ang-k'i; the rest of the band escaped to the north.

During this time of trouble and anxiety, the Christians have suffered a good deal of persecution from their heathen relatives, who are urging them to return to idolatry, lest they should suffer with us. Not in a single case, however, have we found their faith faltering; and day by day they are realising, as we do, that God's grace and strength are sufficient for all our need. He keeps our hearts at rest, and enables us to go on with the work.

We have had many opportunities of showing the Mandarin and soldiers that our trust is in the living God, "Who is able to deliver" His servants from all danger.

They much wished us to leave for Pao-ning, but Bishop Cassels encouraged us in our resolve not to forsake our Christian people, but to stand by them to the end.

We long to glorify our Master, be the issue what it may. We are as safe here *in the hand of God* as we could be anywhere; and with the eye of faith we see, as Elisha did, the invisible hosts of God surrounding us. Our trust is in God, "Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will," according to His eternal purpose in Christ Jesus concerning us.

Our last news from Chung-k'ing is more hopeful, and we trust that the rebellion will soon be quelled.

Our small faith feared lest so much threatened trouble and persecution for the Christians might hinder the work, and

that whilst causing some to stumble, it might also prevent others from following at all.

On the contrary, however, their faith has been strengthened, not one has gone astray, for the Good Shepherd, Who is "able to keep," has guarded His flock day by day, and kept their hearts in peace, and, we believe, this little Church will be purer and stronger for these months of trial!

The last few weeks have been the brightest we have known for some time, in that the deepest of all joys has been granted us, that of seeing earnest souls seeking for salvation and finding Jesus Christ their Saviour.

Amongst them is a woman, over fifty years of age, named "Lo," who lives at Lo-han-si, a place fifty-one *li*, or seventeen English miles, from here.

The first time she came, a few weeks ago, was for medicine for a little nephew. She had been part of two days on the way, having walked eighty *li* from her sister's house. She had never seen "foreigners" before, and had never heard the Gospel.

Having attended to the child, I told her of the true God and of Jesus Christ. She listened intently, and with tears heard the story of His love. She told us that she had for years been seeking after the Truth, having long been convinced of the uselessness of the idols and of the vegetarian vow. In many ways she had sought to accumulate merit, by which to escape punishment in the future world, but knew her efforts had all been in vain. "Now," she added, "I have found the Way of Truth." When at last obliged to start on her long journey home, we told her of the Sunday gatherings, but expressed a fear that she would find the way very long. She answered quickly: "Now that I have heard of the True Way, I *must* come and learn more about my Saviour."

In order to be sure of arriving in time for the Sunday morning service, she determined to go part of the journey on Saturday. Her household duties, however, prevented her leaving before dusk, and her relatives tried to dissuade her from starting at that time, saying she would surely meet leopards and other wild animals by the way; but she assured

them she would not fear, for the Almighty God, Whom she came to worship, would protect her.

During that long, lonely, dark walk, startled often by weird sights and sounds around her, and afraid of the wild animals, which infest the mountains in that region, she kept lifting up her heart to the God she had just learnt to trust, and thus she reached here in safety early in the morning.

It gave us real joy to show her the Way of Salvation, for she was full of longing desire to know how to obtain forgiveness of sins, and drank in as a thirsty soul the good news of a living Saviour.

She spent the whole Sunday with us, Chao-ta-niang entertaining her to dinner; and when she left us in the evening we felt she had drunk deeply of the Water of Life, and had been found of Him Who "satisfieth the longing soul and filleth the hungry soul with goodness."

Nearly every Sunday since she has appeared again, always so bright and happy; and has made an arrangement with the Bible-woman, by which she spends every Saturday evening with her.

We are astonished at the rapidity with which she grasps deep, spiritual truths and sees for herself the inner teaching of the miracles and parables of our Lord. She is indeed taught by the Holy Spirit, and it gives us intense joy to talk to her of the things of God.

Mrs. Lo and her husband are wealthy, and have everything to make them comfortable in *this* life, but for years, it seems, she has been trying in various way to prepare for the next world. How good of God to lead her at last to know Him, and so fully to satisfy her with His love!

One Sunday her husband came with her. He is a scholar and a thoughtful man; and though as yet he has made no profession, he reads the New Testament diligently.

Another joy was given to us about the same time as Mrs. Lo first came, when our hearts were failing us for fear, lest the work should suffer because of the rebellion.

A woman, wife of Hsüeh-ta-ie's second son, asked to be enrolled as a candidate for baptism. It seems that God

spoke to her through a dream, in which she was reproached by her *deceased heathen* relatives for not having followed her husband and father-in-law on their road to Heaven. When the woman awoke she felt God had spoken to her, and she dare not disregard His voice. Since then she has been taught regularly, and we believe she is now trusting truly in Jesus Christ as her Saviour.

The Buddhist priest, Hsü, who came to us last spring to inquire about the truth, has returned again. We were very thankful to find he has been serving God in his own home.

He was delayed from coming back sooner through the illness and death of his second brother. When he returned home last spring, he burnt the idols, in which he had a share, in his brother's house. This brought down upon him the wrath of the family and much persecution, but he remains firm in his desire to serve the true God.

At present he lives forty *li* away, and for the last month has regularly attended the Sunday services. He is trying to find a lodging nearer here, and to earn his living by selling thread and other small wares at the surrounding markets. The native Christians have given him three hundred "cash" (10*d.*) wherewith to buy cotton-wool to spin into thread.

Our opium smoking landlord has been going from bad to worse, and has reduced himself through opium smoking to absolute beggary. He steals everything he can lay hands on, even to his own children's food and clothes, to exchange for opium. We have given him warm clothing, rice, and food; but all goes in the same way, and he shows his gratitude by stealing all he can find. Quite lately he has stolen two locks off the chapel doors and a meat hatchet from our kitchen, and sold them for opium! This will show you how morally ruined these poor opium smokers become. He gets desperate when the desire for opium comes on; he is, as it were, soaked in opium, utterly wrecked by it! Nothing but the power of God can deliver him from this curse! Over and over again we have proved that good resolutions and outward reformation, *without a change of heart*, have been in vain. Sooner or later the love and awful craving for the opium will get the mastery. But "our God is able to deliver."

Let us, then, often remember this poor man in prayer, and hundreds of others, who, like him, are slaves to opium, "upon whom the craving has so fastened itself that they will literally sell themselves, soul and body, for the drug."

M. lately thought of another way of helping the landlord. She has taken his youngest child, a dear little boy, five years old, and has put him to board in a Christian family, where he will have a mother's care and love, and other children to play with. Up to this time he has followed his wicked parents about like a little beggar, but now he is bright and happy, and properly clothed and fed. He is a loving little chap and every one likes him.

His elder brother, Tong-ua-tsī, has lived with us three years, and is an earnest Christian lad of fifteen years of age. We hope that little U-ua-tsī will also grow up to love and serve Jesus.

You will remember the two beggar-lads, Ien-lin and Hsi-lin, whom we befriended for a few weeks while seeking their parents. Ien-lin is now here, working for us, in return for food and clothing; and Hsi-lin, the elder boy, is at one of the mission houses in Pao-ning; thus, they are both under Christian influence, and are, we trust, seeking to serve God.

One of the Pao-ning missionaries lately paid a visit to their home. He wrote of his visit thus: "I visited Mr. Chao's home when I was itinerating lately. The mother prays to God. They have no idols in the house, but plenty of tracts pasted up by the boys." We are most thankful to God for this news, and earnestly pray that soon all the family may become Christians.

Dear old Mrs. Uen is away, staying with her married daughter again. I miss her very much at the classes. She is a most interesting listener, and so practical in her application of all she learns. One Sunday the subject of the sermon and of the women's class afterwards was 1 Thess. v. 16-18. The commands to "rejoice always," and "in everything give thanks," be our circumstances what they may, very much struck her.

The week following she told us the words had helped her much in a great trouble that had come upon her. She has only one large rice-field, situated beneath a rocky bank.

One morning, after a night of terrific storm, her neighbours came to tell her that her rice was nearly all spoiled by the high bank of rock having fallen during the night. Running out to see, she found their words only too true. It was a *very* great loss to the poor old woman—the rice would soon have been ready to gather, and it was what she depended upon for her winter's food; now, nearly all was gone!

Her first feeling was one of bitter disappointment, but then came the words: "Rejoice evermore; . . . in everything give thanks." She kept repeating them, until she felt at rest about the loss, knowing that in some way or other God would provide for her.

When she returned to her house, the neighbours were surprised at her calm face. *They* would have screamed and cried for half a day over such a loss, but she was so quiet and peaceful; they could not understand her. She told them: "The true God knows about it; and His Book says that those who serve Him must 'Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing; and in everything give thanks.'"

Another Sunday the subject at the class had been the necessity of regular daily prayer, and I had told the women how the Lord Jesus often rose very early in the morning for communion with God. The following week Mrs. Uen told me she was trying to do what Jesus did, and got up before it was light to pray, and she said she found "it was good to do so."

About the same time she put to practical daily use another lesson on prayer, which M. had given, speaking about Daniel's custom of praying morning, noon, and night. Previous to this lesson she had had her regular seasons of prayer morning and evening, but since then, no matter where she is, at home or away in the fields, her noonday time of communion with God is as sacredly kept as that of the morning or evening.

During the year just passed we have not been able to visit the surrounding markets as much as usual, the chapel-building, M.'s illness, and the Ü-man-tsi rebellion, having prevented us.

In the early summer we spent a few days at the riverside

markets, visited last year. At one of the markets the chair-bearers had some difficulty in finding us a suitable room where we could sleep that night. The only one to be found was a small loft-room, about eight feet by eleven, with a sloping, thatched roof; the only opening for light and air was a hole in the wall, about six inches by seven, and this opened into one of the rooms of the next house. Knowing that at night we should have to shut the door, and that there would be three of us to occupy the room (Mrs. Chao was with us), we hesitated to engage it. But when the landlord discovered it was *air* we wanted, he very soon solved the difficulty. Seizing a meat-chopper, he went up the ladder to the loft, saying: "I'll make you a window in a very little time." And when we went up a short while after, we found that he had cut another hole in the mud wall—sixteen inches by seven.

We had a very encouraging time there that afternoon, and also the next day at T'ing-tsi-k'eo and Shao-chan-ho.

Another time we visited San-ch'uan-si and U-kia-p'ing, and were again warmly received by our friends at both these places. M. had taken her magic-lantern with her. The people had never seen lantern-pictures before, and were intensely interested as they saw one after another of the Bible stories illustrated on the sheet.

What a solemn thing it is, and what a great responsibility is laid upon us when we meet these dark souls who have never heard of God, and for whom this may be the only chance of hearing of Jesus and His love! May God help us to "redeem the time," "to buy up the opportunity" as He sends it.

To every one of the world's one thousand million souls, Jesus has sent us by the great commission, "*Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.*" Few lands are closed against His message, though many are as yet unentered by witnesses for Christ. For while the needs are so vast, the supply which the Church has sent out hitherto is so small that there are fewer ordained missionaries at work in heathendom than Mr. Whiteley has employés in his single West London shop.

"*Is it not wheat-harvest to-day?*" And in this time of harvest ought not we to be up and doing? Every little counts. Even a child can help most effectually by its little efforts—telling the need, interesting others, collecting mites here and there. Each of us can do something, something which will not seem small in the sight of Him Who says of all such efforts: "Ye did it unto Me."

From "Regions Beyond," 1893.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE LITTLE RUNAWAY.

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, . . . or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.”—ROM. viii. 35, 37.

SIN-TIEN-TSI.
April, 1899.

THESE words were chosen whilst the Ü-man-tsi rebellion still continued as the Church motto for the year, and we thank God that through much threatened persecution and trouble the native Christians have been drawing nearer to Christ and learning more about His great love.

Early in the year we were all much looking forward to a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Hudson Taylor, but have been disappointed. They had intended visiting the China Inland Mission stations in this province after the Chung-k'ing Missionary Conference, held in January, but were obliged to relinquish this intention, owing to the dangerous state of the country through which they would have to pass. Had Mr. Taylor been able to come, our Christian chair-bearers would have met him at Pao-ning and brought him up here free of cost, as a little token of gratitude for all that they realise he has done for them.

We have heard that Ü-man-tsi, the rebel-chief, has been defeated by Chinese troops, and a number of his adherents put to death and the Romish priest released; Ü-man-tsi himself has fled, it is thought, out of Sī-ch'uan. We hope now that the whole province will soon be quiet and peaceful again.

At the Chinese New Year time, Mr. and Mrs. Lo and their little six-year-old grandchild spent three or four days with

our old Bible-woman. We were, therefore, able to teach them regularly, and were increasingly surprised at their quick, spiritual apprehension of the truth. Mr. Lo is of a reserved, silent turn of mind, but evidently a deep thinker, and has been exceedingly interested in reading the New Testament. Mrs. Lo says there is no doubt he is also a believer, and that at home he reads the Testament to them by the hour, and is most anxious that the little grandchild, Lo-ming-chen, should learn Christian books.

Mrs. Lo herself is *full* of joy, and loves to tell every one about the Saviour. She used to come into the guest-hall every morning and speak to the patients ; and only seemed happy when she was either hearing the old, old Story herself or telling others of Jesus and His love.

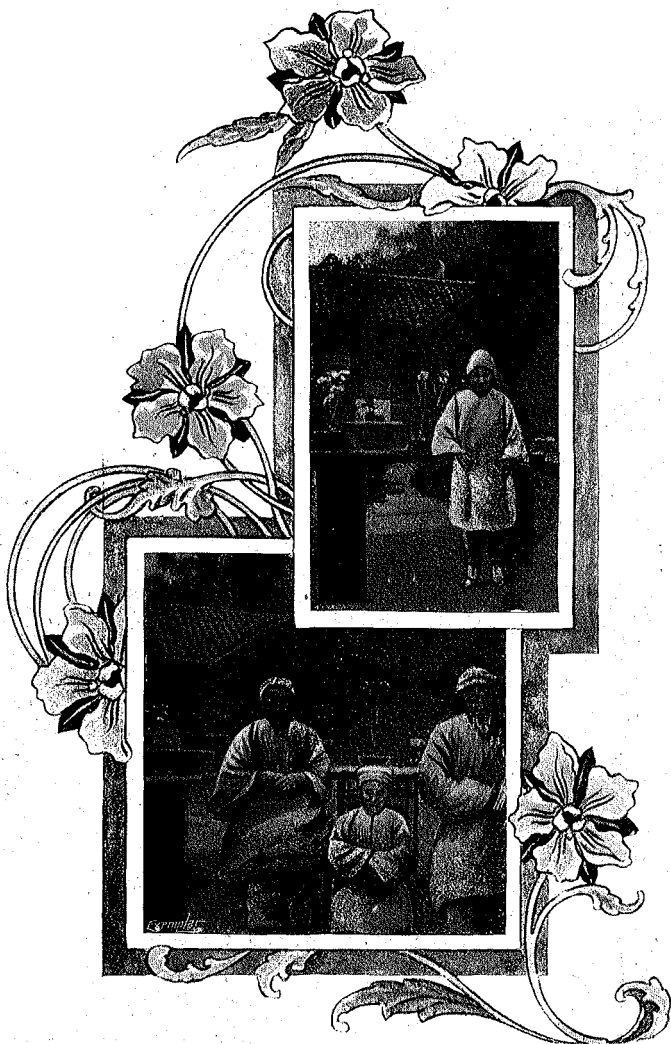
There is a little girl, nearly twelve years of age, who has, in one way and another, occupied our time and thoughts lately. She is called Chang-nü-tsi (which is about equivalent to calling a child in England by her surname, thus : Smith-girl, or Jones-girl !).

When quite a child she was bought by an old couple, Mr. and Mrs. T'ao, as a future wife for their son, who is six years older than the girl. As usual, in these heathen homes, the child became the slave of the household, and her many misdemeanours brought down upon her often the unrestrained wrath of her future parents-in-law.

The old couple being infirm, and their eyesight failing, and the boy asthmatical and consumptive, and all being poor, the child's surroundings and prospects were by no means bright.

About two years ago Mr. and Mrs. T'ao heard the Gospel for the first time, and gradually, through the working of the Holy Spirit, they became new creatures in Christ Jesus.

Since then, we believe, they have done their best by the wild, unkempt little gipsy-child whom they had brought into their home. But the years of unhappiness that went before have left their mark on the girl, and have made her sullen and disagreeable to the old man and woman. She does as little work as possible, and, whenever she can, runs away, hiding for days on the hills or in the rocks, eating whatever



From photos by]

[Miss F. M. Williams.

1. CHANG NÜ-TSÏ, THE LITTLE RUNAWAY.
2. MR. AND MRS. LO AND THEIR GRANDSON,



From photo by]

MISS WHEELER'S GIRLS' SCHOOL, PAO-NING.

[Rev. A. T. Polhill Turner.

she finds in the fields. Often the old people have gone to great trouble and expense seeking her and bringing her back.

One bitterly cold evening in January, I found her crouching under a tree near our house. I called her, and, after giving her some food, sent her to her home with one of our servants.

The following evening as M. and I were having our tea, we heard a low moaning on the hill at the back of the house. Lanterns were lit, and we went out ; it was not long before we found this poor child shivering and crying under a hedge. It was a bitterly cold night, and we brought her quickly into our warm kitchen. Thinking that perhaps kindness might touch her, we decided to let her stay a few days with us, and sent a message to the old people to let them know she was with us. After her supper we made her a bed of straw.

Most of the next day she spent in washing—herself and her clothes! During the four days she was here we kept her much with us, teaching her and finding her work to do, and she became very attached to us. I began teaching her to read, and found her an apt pupil, with a most vivid imagination, excited, probably, by the many weird sights she must have seen during the long nights she had passed out on the hills and in the rocks.

One day I was speaking to her of Heaven, when suddenly she exclaimed : “ Oh, I know all about Heaven, for I have seen it ! ” Then she explained how, the first night she was with us, she dreamt she was in Heaven, having gone up by means of a ladder placed on the top of our hill. Her description was : “ It was just like the new church, so clean and bright and light, and Jesus Himself was teaching the people there.”

Another day she told me she had seen the devil ! I asked, “ Where ? ” She answered : “ He lives in the temple, but I saw him one night in a field belonging to the Ho family, and he was spoiling their crops ! ”

After a stay of four days we took her home, and she promised to try and be good to the old people.

Alas ! she only kept her promise for six weeks ; then she disappeared again for twenty days, at the end of which time

her own father found her at a market, and brought her back to Mr. and Mrs. T'ao. Poor little child, we do long for her to trust the Lord Jesus to change her wild, wayward heart !

For some weeks after that, we kept her at home through promising her little rewards, such as a warm garment, or two or three days' stay here ; and then we asked Miss Wheeler, who has a girls' school in Pao-ning, if she would kindly receive our little "gipsy-child" into her school. She willingly assented, and now Chang-nü-tsi is there.

Words fail to describe the scrubblings and washings that went on for two or three days before she left us !

We do hope she will be influenced for good and return to her parents with the desire to serve God.

For a short time a little while ago we were without a servant in the kitchen, the cook being away in Shuen-K'ing ; so we had to do nearly everything ourselves with the help of one of the school-boys. It made us specially busy, but I think we managed very well altogether. English people, accustomed to their spotlessly clean, tiled kitchens, with all kinds of stove conveniences, have no idea what it means to cook in a Chinese kitchen, especially in a place where no coal is to be had. For a stove we have an excellent arrangement. Two paraffin-oil tins (those exported by Devoes Oil Company) are placed above each other lengthwise in an earthen enclosure, with a small grating at the bottom of each ; the door is movable and is the lid of the tin. We heat the tins by putting red-hot charcoal on the top and on the grating beneath, and then the "ovens" are ready for chicken, bread, cake, or anything we like, provided it is not too large.

Our butter-making would amuse you too, I think. As we get only about one pint or one pint and a half of milk from our cow every morning and evening, there is not much cream to be had, but what there is we beat up in a bowl with a fork until it turns, and in this way we try to keep ourselves supplied with fresh butter.

We are now enjoying the full beauty of a lovely Si-ch'uan spring, which I do not think can be surpassed anywhere. The woods, hills, and valleys are lovely, and wild-flowers

of every hue and kind abound everywhere. The hedges are in some places just a mass of beautiful red and white roses such as we treasure in our gardens at home ; while in the woods we find red, golden, or pure white lilies, and every now and again a rare orchid. The birds, too, are magnificent with bright, gay plumage and sweet, beautiful songs.

In some of the valleys there are fields and fields full of the bright poppy flowers. They are so beautiful, and yet our hearts ache when we see them, for they speak volumes now to us of the awful ruin which the opium has wrought ! They always bring to our minds some poor slave to opium, utterly demoralised and ruined by the deadly drug. In some places the pods are already ripe, and the black poison is being gathered in, and therefore, alas ! the time of opium suicides has already begun.

We thank God that none of the native Christians *plant* opium ; they cease to do so *naturally* when they come to believe and serve God. They could not recognise the growing of opium, even for sale only, as a thing "well-pleasing to God," and in a country where so much evil has been, and is still being, wrought by it, opium cannot but be repugnant to God's children.

Already this season I have had several cases of attempted opium suicides. All have recovered except one man, for whom they asked medicine too late. He was one "for whom Christ died," but he died *without knowing it*. Oh ! for more workers, that these souls might be reached before it is too late.

"Go and tell," Jesus said, and we, who are out here, are learning more and more that "the King's business requireth haste."

*Yea, so have I strived to preach
the Gospel, not where CHRIST was
named, lest I should build upon
another man's foundation: but, as it
is written—*

**“They shall see, to whom no tidings
of Him came,
and they who have not heard
shall understand.”**

Rom. xv. 20-21 (A. & R. V.).

CHAPTER XXIX.

“WHITE UNTO HARVEST.”

“They came to Him from every quarter.”—MARK i. 45.

SIN-TIEN-TSŪ.

June 12th, 1899.

IN the last two journals I have mentioned a woman, Mrs. Lo, who is very true and earnest, and who comes fifty *li* (seventeen English miles) to the Sunday services. She first came to us last November for medicine for a small grandchild, and it was then she heard of Jesus Christ. Since then she and her husband have attended the services and classes regularly, and have grown in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

They have often asked us to go to their home at Lo-han-si, but we found no opportunity of doing so until last week, when Miss Digby (one of the Church Missionary Society workers from Shih-ts'üen, who has been staying with us for a few weeks) and I went there together for a night.

We started on Thursday morning, having one chair between us, carried by two Christian chair-bearers. Our old Bible-woman and her son, who is also a Christian, came with us.

We very much enjoyed the journey, though the road was rough, and the chair, in consequence, of little use. The country was grand, and the scenery varied. At times we found ourselves in deep gorges between high, precipitous rocks. In the gorges and valleys we found beautiful ferns and flowers nestling along the banks of little mountain torrents. It was a burning hot day, and we felt the heat much, especially when, about the middle of the day, we were climbing up a bare, steep mountain, having left the cool gorge far beneath us.

Before we reached the top, we were both suffering very much from thirst—such burning thirst as one seldom knows. Once we moistened our lips with water from a little pool at the corner of a rice-field, but we dared not drink the water, so we plodded on, humming as we went :

“We are feeding on the Living Bread,
 We are drinking at the Fountain Head,
 And ‘he that drinketh,’ Jesus said,
 ‘Shall never, never thirst again.’
 ‘What! never thirst again?’
 ‘No, never thirst again;’
 For ‘he that drinketh,’ Jesus said,
 ‘Shall never, never thirst again.’”

We reached Mrs. Lo’s house about 3.30 p.m., and had a marvellous time of blessing there. We felt that God was answering some one’s prayers for us that day, and blessing us.

The first thing we did was to drink no end of tea to quench our thirst, and when we had had a little food (bread and sweetmeats) we found that people were already coming, and we began at once to tell them about Jesus Christ.

From that time, until eleven o’clock that night, we had a most interested stream of people around us. They were not the usual inquisitive set, who ask about everything but the Gospel. No; one after another would come up to us with earnest face, asking about Jesus and the way of salvation; and many who came first stayed to the end.

An old, white-haired man of seventy odd years, named Chu, was most eager to learn, and kept drawing near to whichever of us was speaking, to drink in the precious Word of Life. Before we left we had no doubt but that this old man had received the Word to the saving of his soul.

Surely there is no greater joy than this, the seeing that the Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth!

There was an old woman, too, of eighty-four years of age, to whom every one thought it was useless to tell the Gospel, thinking she was too stupid to understand; but she brightened up at once when I went and sat by her side for

a while and told her simply that she was very precious to Jesus, that He loved her, and died for her.

Dear old woman! I took her hand in mine, and as I stroked it, a smile came on that sad, wrinkled face. Gradually she learned a little prayer. It was very short, just this, "Lord Jesus, forgive my sins"; but to learn it meant much to her, and her joy was great when at last she found she remembered it, after I had repeated it many, many times.

Some years ago, Mr. Hudson Taylor told me how a dear old Chinese woman had been won for Christ through a touch of the hand as a missionary spoke to her. They had, I think, never met before, and at first the woman was cold and hard, and heeded not the words spoken. Presently, the missionary, constrained by the love of Christ, took one of the woman's thin hands in hers and gently stroked it. Gradually the hard, closed heart opened, and the love of Jesus poured in, as again the missionary told her of His death on the Cross for her.

As we come in contact with the women of China, we realise constantly how we need more of Christ's love in ourselves so that these dark, unloved hearts around us may feel its power and receive Him into their lives.

"My God, my Father, let me rest
 In the calm sun-glow of Thy face,
 Until Thy love in me expressed
 Draws others to Thy throne of grace.

O Jesus, Master, let me hold
 Such secret fellowship with Thee,
 That others, careless once and cold,
 Won to my Lord and theirs may be!"

Soon after a troop of school-boys came rushing in. Miss Digby was surrounded by a group of women and girls, having a good time with them, and the Christian chair-bearers were talking earnestly to Lo-ta-ie and other men; so I turned from the dear old woman and talked to the boys about Dr. Wilson's picture of the Prodigal Son.

One of the boys is Mrs. Lo's grandchild, seven years old. He lives with her, and is a bright little Christian, with a firm

belief in prayer, asking God for everything and obtaining beautiful answers.

As we sat there, telling again and again the sweet Story of old, and watching the sun setting in splendour behind the hills opposite the house, we could see groups of men and women hastening to us down the mountain paths. In the twilight others came, and when it was dark we could trace more and more coming through the darkness, with flaming torches waving in the air. They listened as those listen who have never heard before, and whose hearts have been prepared by God. It was a solemn time. Precious seed of the Kingdom was sown on all sides, by weak instruments indeed ; but the seed was the Word, and we believe that in God's own time He will give the increase.

* * * * *

I would like to tell you of some interesting individual cases, but am afraid of tiring you with too long a letter. There is one woman, however, of whom I must write. She came bustling in, followed by three grandsons, and began by saying : " I want to hear about Jesus ; tell me slowly and plainly, for I am very stupid." She went on to tell us that, as her memory was very bad, she had brought her three grandsons (thereupon a sharp tap on each boy's head with her long-nailed finger) and they were to listen to all we said and repeat it to her at home.

We were very much amused at her, for whenever we ceased speaking to take breath, she seized the opportunity to call loudly upon the boys to listen and " to think of nothing else ! " (One of them was a little fellow only five years old.)

Then if we put down on the table any tract or book from which we had been teaching her, she would at once lay hold of it and, flinging it in front of the eldest boy, a nice lad of thirteen, say : " Read that." At first he obeyed, but when his grandmother repeated the performance, he refused, whereupon she said he must take them home and read them to her there ! But with all her peculiarities she listened well, and when she reappeared next morning, we found she had understood fairly well, and remembered a good deal.

It was such a joy to tell the Story that we sat on until

eleven o'clock, telling the people more and more about Jesus ! They would have remained longer, and I hardly knew if I were doing right in suggesting it was time we scattered and went to rest. But seeing we were tired, they began to go away. We stood a few moments watching them wend their way across the rice-fields, away to the valleys and hills beyond, by the light of their flaming torches ; then, after a few words with Mrs. Lo, we went to rest.

She had turned out of her room and made it beautifully clean for us. One thing she regretted, and so did we that hot summer night, that there was no window, nor any opening of any kind for air ! But she told us it was her intention to fit up a room nicely for us with plenty of light and air, and with a bed, table, and chairs, by the time we came again, and it was to be used only by us. We were reminded of the Shunammite woman of old, though I do not think at that time Mrs. Lo had heard of her. Until nearly 1 a.m. we could hear the chair-bearers talking of the things of God with Mr. Lo and others ; and about six next morning the people began to gather again from the houses near.

We were up early, and had a little time of prayer with the family and our chair-bearers before the outsiders came in.

Mr. Lo joined us both then and the previous evening. For this we were most thankful, because, up to that time, he had refused to join his wife and little grandson at morning and evening prayers, for, until we went, he did not understand about prayer ; now, thank God, he is clearer about this. Mrs. Lo told us on Sunday that since our visit he has joined them regularly at daily prayers. It was one of the Christian chair-bearers who specially helped Mr. Lo on this subject. I saw him often talking very earnestly to him. I am sure the little grandson will be glad to have his grandfather one with them in this matter of prayer, for Mrs. Lo told us that when she is away from home, the child goes on with the prayer-meeting alone, singing a hymn and praying as if others were there too.

On one occasion when Mr. and Mrs. Lo and their grandson were present at Chinese evening prayers in our house it was very touching as we knelt in prayer to

hear the little fellow lift up his voice in prayer to God ; the words were very simple, but came straight from a full heart, and must have been acceptable to his Father in Heaven.

The boy has taught his grandmother to repeat many hymns and passages of Scripture while she is busy with her needlework.

For some time before Mrs. Lo first came to us, her husband had been suffering from very painful eyes, and had been advised to take a little opium every day. This had eased the pain considerably, and he continued it for some time. But when his wife came under the influence of the Gospel, and understood the power of *prayer*, she persuaded him to put away the opium, and trust instead in the true and living God. We are thankful to say that since then his eyes have been so far healed that he is able to read his Bible without pain. When first he obtained a complete copy of the Scriptures, his delight knew no bounds, and Mrs. Lo says he spends hours poring over the Word.

By his neighbours he is looked upon as a learned man, and has a considerable amount of influence. We hope that, as he grows in grace and the knowledge of God, his influence may be used for God's glory, and that though a man of few words, the love of Christ may constrain him to preach the Gospel faithfully in this neighbourhood, and that many may be saved.

All Friday morning Miss Digby and I were fully occupied ; new friends arrived, besides those of the night before. They came in, saying : "Tell us again about Jesus," or "Tell us more and more," and one woman said : "I want to know what it is that has so changed Mrs. Lo and made her so happy."

Several sick people came too, and, with my little stock of medicines, I did what I could to help them, telling them at the same time about the Great Physician.

The old man of seventy and the old woman of eighty-four years of age were there, pathetically repeating again and again the little prayer : "Lord Jesus, forgive my sins" ; and the grandmother of the three boys sat by, in a quieter frame

of mind, telling us all she remembered of what we had said the previous night. We were both busy all the time, Miss Digby on one side and I on the other ; and so were the Bible-woman and Christian men.

About twelve o'clock we felt we must begin our long journey home again. It was *very* hard to leave them, and I would gladly have stayed with them several days, had it been possible to leave one's ordinary work for so long. The people came a little way with us, and watched us away over the valley and nearest hill, calling out to us to come again soon and teach them more. The old man of seventy was among them, and the last I heard him say was, "Lord Jesus, forgive my sins!" Then, with thankful hearts, we left him.

We came away commending them all to God and thanking Him that so many had heard the Gospel message. Do pray that the harvest reaped may be an abundant one! The message was God's Word which cannot return void, but must accomplish His purpose and bring forth fruit unto Life everlasting. It often helps us to remember that so many in the homeland are "helpers together" with us by prayer for this work, as we are with them for their work. "Helpers together" by prayer now, will mean "Reapers together" when the Lord of the Harvest comes.

"There is always a blessing in believing prayer,
When our Saviour's Name to the Throne we bear,
For a Father's love will receive us there,
There is always a blessing, a blessing in prayer."

"Lovest thou Me?"

"Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee."

Jesus saith unto him, "Feed My sheep."

"What is love?" asked a questioner of a little street arab.

"It's going errands," came the reply, childlike in its simplicity, startling in its truth.

If ye love Me, keep My commandments.

Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.

CHAPTER XXX.

GATHERED HOME.

“He sitteth on high, King for evermore.”

SIN-TIEN-TSI.
October 30th, 1899.

IT is now nearly four months since last I wrote, and the summer has come and gone. It was an exceptionally hot one this year, and for nearly ten weeks no rain fell! This severe drought occurred just when the rice-shoots should have been transplanted, but there was almost no water in the rice-fields.

The heathen people had recourse to many idolatrous practices, hoping thereby to frighten the “evil spirit of drought” and arouse the “god of rain.” For some time we heard they were doing what they could to conciliate the “god of rain” by performing all kinds of strange, heathen rites and holding dragon processions and festivities. Then, exasperated at receiving no response, they took the idol, known as the “god of rain,” from the temple, and set it in the burning sun to see how it enjoyed the heat that they were suffering from!

One Sunday morning we heard that a band of nearly one hundred people were on their way to attack us and the native Christians for, as they said, restraining the rain, through not taking part in their idolatrous practices. About 9.30 they arrived, a band of wild, rough men and lads, headed by one dressed in red, all yelling and shouting, and letting off crackers as they drew nearer. M. and I, with two friends belonging to the Church Missionary Society, who were staying with us, remained inside and continued our usual Sunday morning prayer-meeting; while our servants

and those of the Christians who had already arrived for the service, stationed themselves outside the front door, and talked to the crowd in a friendly way.

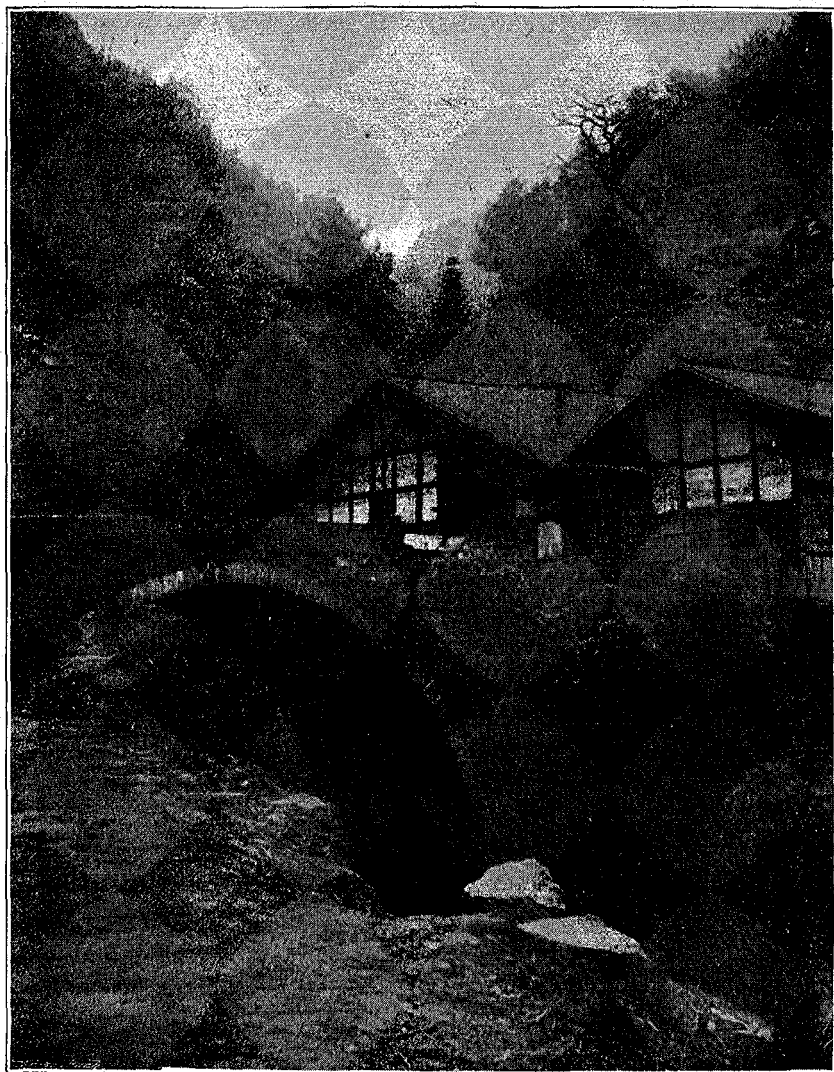
Again God proved Himself strong on behalf of His children, for very soon, without attempting to enter the house, the wild crowd passed on towards the river, thirty *li* away, to wreak their vengeance on the river-god!

We had been having special times of prayer for rain for some time, and that morning it was again very specially remembered. In God's own time, He answered prayer, but not before many of the idolaters had acknowledged their devices useless, and had implored the Christians to call upon their God in mercy to send the rain.

It came—an abundance of rain—and we praised Him with glad hearts. The faith of the Christians was much strengthened, and we know of one heathen woman whose belief in idols was shaken at that time, and who said she would no longer trust in them, but in the true and living God.

During last spring we began a fortnightly Sunday meeting in the house of one of the Inquirers, at Liu-k'i-pa, a hamlet twenty-one *li* from here. At a meeting of the leading Church-members, M. asked them to choose one of their number to conduct this little service. Unanimously they selected Hsüeh-lao-iao. On hearing this he was much moved, and while speaking very humbly about his inefficiency, he accepted the work gladly, as being, he said, a second answer to a prayer he had made to God a few weeks before. At the beginning of the year he had definitely prayed for some work to do for God on Sundays. Very soon afterwards, M., not knowing of his prayer, asked him to teach a class of boys every Sunday morning; and then there came this fresh call to work. He took it as God's appointment, and has done it joyfully and earnestly, going there in all weathers and witnessing faithfully for his Lord.

The Inquirers at Liu-k'i-pa are relatives of one of the Christian men, the tailor, named T'ang, of whom, and of his wife, I have written to you many times. The family consists of a widow and her two grown-up sons. Some months ago,



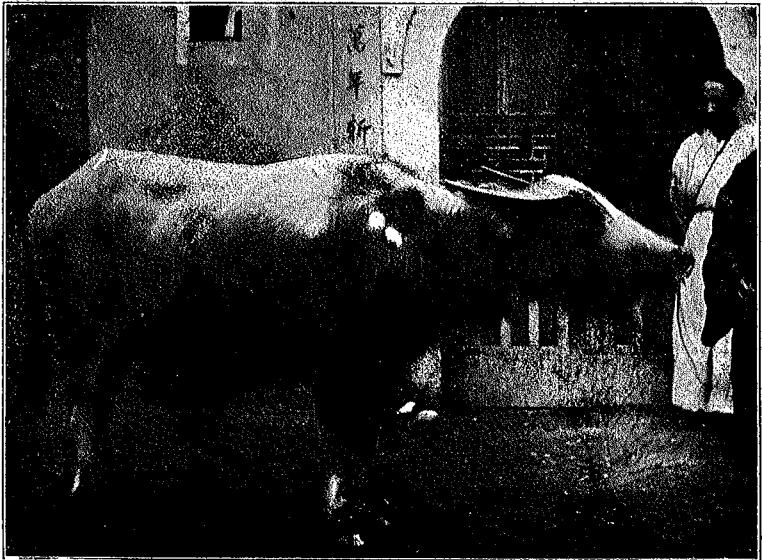
From photo by]

[Mrs. Isabella Bishop.

SCENE ON A SI-CH'UAN ROAD.



ROPE BRIDGE NEAR TA-TSIEN-LU.



From photo by]

WATER-BUFFALO.

[Mrs. Isabella Bishop.

when convinced of the truth of the Gospel, they burnt the family idols, and are now, we believe, seeking to serve the true God.

Mrs. T'ang was very pleased to let her house be used for the fortnightly service, and we hope that it will become a centre of blessing in that valley. Already Hsüeh-lao-iao's ministry there is bearing fruit, and we have heard of some who are becoming interested in the Truth through the preaching of the Word. We are hoping that, as the members of this little Church become more established in the faith, more rooted and grounded in the Word of God, that we shall be able to begin work in many of the markets and hamlets around, in the same way as has been done this year at Liu-k'i-pa.

* * * * *

During the months of May and June we had a dear little sick child staying with us—a little boy named Teh-shuen, Sie Sien-seng's grandson; he was ten years old, but seemed like six or seven. For more than a year he had been ill with severe malaria, and was reduced to a mere skeleton. Miss Arnott, of Pao-ning, had seen him, and had prescribed the right treatment for him. He was a dear little child, gentle and sweet. His father is an earnest Christian, and had taught the boy to love Jesus and to pray to Him. He got a little better while with us, but we had but small hope that he would recover. In the beginning of July he went home for a few weeks, as he had been homesick and wanted his father. There he grew weaker and weaker, until he passed away. They say he was at perfect peace, and did not fear to die, knowing he was going to Jesus.

About the same time, I believe the very same day, as little Teh-shuen went to the Good Shepherd's fold, Mr. and Mrs. Beauchamp lost their dear little baby, Victor, after only a few hours' illness. And so the little Chinese lad and the sweet little English baby went together through the gates into the City—"bright gems for His crown."

"The little weary lambs
He gently beareth;
And on His breast their love
He proudly weareth."

During the summer Liu Sien-seng, one of our Church-members, died. He was an old man, living at Ts'ang-k'i, seventy *li* distant, and so was not able to come often to the services and classes. But his last Sunday on earth was spent with us, and we noticed how heartily he sang the hymns and enjoyed the meetings that day. On Monday he became seriously ill, was taken home, and died on Thursday. Many in Ts'ang-k'i, where he was the only witness for Christ, have heard the Gospel through him.

* * * * *

Early in September Bishop Cassels arranged that M. and I should have a few weeks' rest and change. Mrs. E. O. Williams and Miss F. Culverwell very kindly kept on the work here meanwhile. We visited four of the stations of the Church Missionary Society—Wei-ch'eng, Mien-cheo, An-hsien, and Shih-ts'üen—the nearest of them being five days' journey from us. It was a very great pleasure to meet the missionaries at these stations, and to thank God with them for the wonderful blessing that He has poured upon their work for Him.

We were delighted with the scenery between K'ü-h-shan and Shih-ts'üen. It is magnificent. We had heard much about it, but the descriptions had fallen far short of its actual grandeur. The mountains are gigantic and precipitous. Before reaching Shih-ts'üen, we passed through a series of long, narrow gorges, far grander, we thought, than those of the Yang-tsi valley. The high road is very dangerous, being a narrow path cut out of the precipitous mountain-side at a great height up the cliff; so that above us towered the rugged peaks of the huge mountain summits, and beneath was the steep and dangerous precipice reaching down and down to the roaring river below. In many parts the only means of crossing these rivers is by the dangerous bamboo-ropes bridges.

We returned in October much rested and refreshed, and greatly helped by seeing other people's work, and with fresh energy for our own. We received a very hearty welcome from our dear people, many of whom came some miles to

meet us. It is good to be back again in this little corner of God's vineyard among the people we love so well.

Our hearts were stirred, as we journeyed about, at the numberless cities and towns, villages and hamlets in this part of Si-ch'uan where, as yet, there is no messenger of the Gospel, where the Truth is not known.

"How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?"—
(Rom. x. 14).

"The heathen perish: day by day
Thousands on thousands pass away!
O Christians, to their rescue fly,
Preach Jesus to them ere they die.

Wealth, labour, talents, freely give,
Yea, life itself, that they may live:
What hath your Saviour done for you?
And what for Him will ye not do?

Thou Spirit of the Lord, go forth,
Call in the South, wake up the North;
Of every clime, from sun to sun,
Gather God's children into one."

A Hindu gentleman, after listening to an able address from a native pastor, made the following comment: "Once a forest was told that a load of axe-heads had come to cut it down. 'It does not matter in the least,' said the forest, 'they will never succeed.' When, however, it heard that some of its own branches had become handles to the axe-heads, it said, 'Now we have no longer any chance.'"

"So," said this gentleman, "as long as we only had foreigners to deal with, we were safe, but now that everywhere our own countrymen are enlisted on that side, certainly our faiths are doomed."

This utterance is significant as showing the impression made upon Hindus when the Gospel is preached to them by converted natives. The same is true of the Chinese.

From "A New Thing."—By MISS F. M. WILLIAMS.

CHAPTER XXXI.

GOD MEANT IT FOR GOOD.

“We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.”—
ROM. viii. 28.

SIN-TIEN-TSI.

December, 1899.

LOOKING back over the past year, notwithstanding our many failures and shortcomings, there is very much for which we have to thank God. There have been more strange leadings and dangerous experiences for us than in any former year, and we wondered sometimes why our Heavenly Father allowed them, but now we see how all things have been working together for good.

At the end of last year and the beginning of this, there was the Ü-man-tsi rebellion, when Sin-tien-tsi was threatened for some time and the lives and property of the native Christians were endangered, but God was with us, as a wall of fire round about His people. The great enemy of the Gospel has again outwitted himself. He thought to hinder the work by this rebellion, but God has been working out His own purpose through it. A great number of people, first hearing of us and our teaching through this trouble, have come to see us and to hear the Gospel. Numbers more have become friendly neighbours, through having formed part of the volunteer force called out for our defence.

It was at the time of this trouble and danger, that Mr. and Mrs. Lo first heard the Gospel and believed in Jesus Christ. They are now Inquirers and earnestly witnessing in their own valley to the power of God, and their consistent

lives have led several people in their neighbourhood to inquire into the Way of truth.

The old man of seventy years of age, named Chu, who listened so well when we visited Lo-han-si last summer, is now a regular attendant at the services, and is rejoicing in the joy of his salvation.

Another trial occurred when, on Easter Sunday, all the ingots of silver and copper "cash" we had in the house were stolen. It was a large amount—one hundred and fifty taels, equal to about £30. This included not only our own personal money, but funds for Bible-woman, school, etc. By a chain of circumstances, in which we clearly saw God's hand, the thief was discovered, and before daylight the following morning the bulk of the money was restored to us.

The poor thief's trial and sentence of three months' imprisonment weighed heavily upon us both, and told more upon our health and spirits than all the anxious time of the U-man-tsi rebellion.

But again, as the weeks went by, we saw that even this was to result in blessing. The brothers of the thief, their wives and relatives began to attend the services, and though at first this was done simply out of gratitude to us, for leniency shown to the thief, still we believe that there is now a true spirit of inquiry among them, and that some are being influenced by the Holy Spirit to believe in Jesus Christ. The family idols have been publicly burnt, and this fact has a special interest attached to it. For the poor young thief and his brothers are the sons of that old man whose house M. and I suddenly came upon in 1896, when out visiting; we found the old man dying, but, to our intense joy, though to us a comparative stranger, he was dying with the hope of Eternal Life. He had heard the Gospel here, when he came for medicine, and had attended some of the meetings. When he lay dying, he called his sons round him, told them he was dying a believer in Jesus Christ, and exhorted them to destroy the idols and turn to the true God. The sons, however, did not fulfil their father's wishes, and it was not until last spring that the idols which the old man had rejected were burnt before us all.

But now two of the man's relatives are Inquirers, and his sons and their wives come regularly to hear the Gospel. Truly

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

After three months' imprisonment, Uang-ing-ruh returned here, and the first night came to thank us for sparing his life; and then, in a broken voice, assured us we need never be afraid of his doing the same thing again, and that he wanted henceforth to lead a new life.

During the months that have intervened since then, he does seem to have been different, and to be trying to work honestly for his living. He attends the services and classes regularly, and is really grateful to us for what we were able to do for him.

Will you join us in prayer that he may become a true Christian? All his lands were given over to us as part-compensation for the missing money, but we hope, if he goes on steadily, to be allowed to return them to him next year.

* * * * *

Among our present Inquirers are a man, named Li-k'uen, and his wife. We first became acquainted with them and told them the Gospel this last summer, when the wife twice tried to poison herself with opium, being prompted to do this when suffering from intense internal pains and rheumatism. We sent her medicine, and spoke to her of the sin of trying to take her own life, and told her how ready God was both to save and heal her. From that time she began to come up for teaching, and learnt to pray. God graciously healed her, and she recognised it as His doing, and believed. So did her husband also, who, it appears, had said to her when first she came that if she got well in answer to prayer to this unknown God, then he would believe Him to be the true and living God and worship Him also.

It was not long after that that they came to the Sunday morning service with the family gods in their arms, and

burnt them after the service outside the church. They have gone on brightly since, learning "more and more about Jesus," and growing in grace. They were received as Inquirers, or candidates for baptism, last Sunday.

We are specially thankful for these two, as being directly the result of a case of attempted opium suicide; for we have so very many of these cases, and though we always send medicine, and, if possible, follow up the case by visiting, still, we have rarely seen any become even interested in the Gospel through this means, as they are generally only too sorry to come back to their dark, sad lives.

Amongst others received as Inquirers last Sunday was Ien-lin, fifteen years old, the younger of the two lads who came begging to our door one cold winter's day in 1897. Through the two boys' witness for Christ at home, both their parents have put away idols, and are serving God. Their uncle, a man named Chang, has lately been baptised at Pao-ning; we feel so thankful now that God inclined us to receive the two poor shivering lads into our home. His word to us at the time was: "A stranger, and ye took *Me* in,"—and truly He has proved it so.

Amongst the ten Inquirers received, there was another child, a little boy of seven, Mr. and Mrs. Lo's grandchild. When his grandparents were accepted as candidates for baptism last autumn and he was not, the child was most troubled, saying he was afraid they were leaving him behind, and that he loved the Lord Jesus too, and wanted to walk the Heavenly road with them; and one day he said with tears in his eyes: "If I did not love and trust Jesus, whom should I trust? You will both die and go to Heaven, then I will only have Jesus to love."

Last Sunday, when his grandfather, Chu-ta-ie, came forward at the service to reply to the questions necessary to be answered before being received as an Inquirer, little Lo-ming-chen hurriedly left his seat, and stood by the side of the white-haired old man; and there was something very touching in the contrast between the little childish voice answering up so quickly, and the quivering voice of the old man.

He is such an earnest little fellow, so quick with his books, and has already such a grasp of Scripture truths, that we look forward to a life of much fruitful service for God from him. Will you sometimes pray for him, and for many another little child, whom God is calling out from among the heathen, to be His little messengers to their own people?

During November and December we had a visit from a native Christian, Liu-ta-ie, of Shuen-k'ing. He cannot read, but is a man "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," and his bright, happy face testifies to the joy and peace within. He uses Dr. Wilson's series of Scripture pictures, preaching from them in the guest-halls or in the crowded markets, and thus attracts great numbers to hear the Gospel.

While here he visited many of the surrounding markets, and one week went with Hsüeh-lao-iao to Lo-han-si to see Mr. and Mrs. Lo, and on from there to Uang-kia-pa and other places. After commending them to God, we watched them start on their journey laden with books and tracts, and full of thankful joy at being "allowed of God" to preach the glad news of Salvation to their own people.

They returned, radiant with the joy of the Lord, thanking and praising Him, as they told us what He had done among the people through them. Many villages and markets had been visited, and many people interested in the Truth.

Hsüeh-lao-iao has been much encouraged in the work at Liu-k'i-pa, where, you remember, he holds a fortnightly Sunday meeting. A few weeks ago a man, named Ch'en, and his wife, who first heard the Gospel from him, burnt their idols here, and last Sunday, to Hsüeh-lao-iao's great joy, they were received as Inquirers.

For years Hsüeh-lao-iao has been praying for his wife's conversion, and he has often asked us and the native Christians to do so also. During this last year he has had the joy of seeing these prayers answered; for the Holy Spirit has been working in her heart, and now she is trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ as her Saviour and is seeking to serve God faithfully. Her *face* is so changed since she believed. It used to be so stolid and indifferent, now it is bright and happy.

Lately, there have been a good many thieves in the neighbourhood. Among others who have suffered at their hands is our dear old Mrs. Uen ; she was away at the time, but returned to her house to find nearly everything gone. It is wonderful that her faith does not waver through her many afflictions. She trusts God's love through everything. She was very pitiably poor before, but now she has *nothing*.

We went to see her when we heard of the theft, and found the dear old woman trying to be bright and to "rejoice evermore" in the thought that God knew all about it. "They have taken away all my things," she said to us, "*but they can never take away my God*; He never leaves me, and never, never will. I have always got Him with me."

She lives alone, and her cottage is very isolated ; we asked her if she could not live with one of her married daughters. She said they would all be willing to receive her, but as they were not Christians she did not care to live with them, because in their heathen homes she could not have the quiet and freedom for prayer that she had in her own house ; and she added, "I cannot now live without it." She told us too, how sometimes she gets such a thirst and longing for God that she has to leave her work and shut herself in her house, alone with God, until, with the sweetness of His presence, He satisfieth her longing soul.

"I have seen the face of Jesus—tell me not of aught beside ;
 I have heard the voice of Jesus—all my soul is satisfied.
 In the radiance of the glory first I saw His blessed face,
 And for ever shall that glory be my *home*, my *dwelling-place*."

* * * * *

One of our Christian women, Mrs. Li, has lately died. She was eighty-three years old, and was baptised three and a half years ago. She passed away on December 19th, very peacefully and happily. For a long time she had been ill ; we visited her very often ; there was little we could do for her, but our being with her seemed to comfort her. We always found her happy and trusting in Jesus Christ, and we rejoiced when we heard she had entered into the rest and calm of His presence.

She had a quiet Christian burial, and though it was a cold, snowy day, there were a large number of people present and most of the native Christians among them—some of sixty and seventy years of age. Old Hsüeh-ta-ie spoke a few words about the death of a Christian and the Life eternal beyond, and we quietly prayed that some one present, then dead in sin, might that day find Life everlasting through faith in Christ.

How thankful we felt as we stood there in the snow, watching the grave being dug, that dear old Mrs. Li was safely gathered Home! A few days before she died she told us she hoped it would not be long before we joined her up in Heaven; and she said she would be waiting and watching for us, ready to welcome us there!

“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.”

This year two of our Church-members have died—Mrs. Li, and Liu Sien-seng, who passed away last spring.

As we look around, and see the awful temptations, trials, and persecutions that surround the native Christians, we cannot sorrow when they leave us for the Fold above.

It has been said that the true statistics of missions are the records of those who *die* believing in the Lord; and truly we feel it to be so too, and we rejoice with joy unspeakable, as we think of the little band of redeemed souls from Sin-tien-tsi now “for ever with the Lord.”

As another year closes, and we think of all God has wrought in this district, we praise Him with glad hearts.

Another station, Sui-ting Fu, has been opened. It is a busy, populous city to the south-east of this province. The Rev. and Mrs. A. T. Polhill-Turner, Miss Drake, and two gentlemen have begun work there, and are much encouraged by the friendliness of the people in that city. In November a man burnt his idols there, and seven people were received as Inquirers.

At Shuen-k'ing, where for years there has been much opposition shown to the foreigner and his teaching, Rev. and Mrs. A. E. Evans have been cheered by *ten* people being

baptised on Christmas Day. These are the firstfruits of Shuen-k'ing. But while we thank God for the triumphs of the Cross, we realise the work has only *begun*.

There are many, many more cities, villages, and markets, and large country districts yet untouched, where work *might* be begun if only there were more workers. But we are such a little band and the people are so many. The Good Shepherd sought the one lost sheep "until He found it." There are *millions* of poor lost sheep around us here. How can *we* reach them all?

Our ranks have been thinned during this last year. The Home-call of the Rev. E. O. Williams, of Pa-cheo, on June 30th, has caused a great blank in this district. To our small human sight, one such as he could be ill spared from the work, and specially now at this time of crisis in China.

Rev. and Mrs. Williams had just returned from furlough, had been two months in Pa-cheo, and were looking forward, if it were God's will, to a busy, happy time of service there, when suddenly his earthly career ended and Heavenly service began.

His last words had been the keynote of his life and work, "Glory be to God." For him, it is "very far better," but we sorrow with the widow and six fatherless boys, and we sorrow, too, with the bereaved Church at Pa-cheo—"a flock without a shepherd." There is an empty place in the ranks, and who will fill it?

"When He saw the multitudes, Jesus was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, *as sheep having no shepherd*. Then saith He to His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest."—(Matt. ix. 36-38.)

During the month of July our hearts were again saddened by hearing of the death of Miss Acheson of the Church Missionary Society at Mien-cheo. She had been out only three years, but had put the work of six into that time, and her young life was literally "spent out" for the women and children at Mien-cheo, who were dearer to her than life itself. It was heart-

rending when at Mien-cheo last September, to hear boys and girls and women, with tears in their eyes, say: "Our Miss Acheson is gone; what shall we do?"

As one and another leave us to be "for ever with the Lord," we realise how short is our time of service here. Oh, let us give ourselves more whole-heartedly to reach the people who know not God, let us "work while it is called to-day," and let us pray earnestly for more workers to fill the places of those who have gone!

We do thank God for the fresh missionaries who, we hear, are on their way to this district; we know their coming will mean more blessing to Si-ch'uan, and we trust that parts yet unreached may soon be evangelised.

You are all *praying*, doing your part faithfully, are you not? Do hold the ropes tightly; we depend upon your constant prayers for this land, and for all God's servants here. We know not what lies ahead for any one of us in the new year that is opening, but we want to be ready and willing for all God has in store for us. He knows we are His—all we *have* and all we *are*—for this work to which He has called us, and we trust Him to use us for blessing to all we can reach.

It is such *happy* work, surely there is no happier lot anywhere than to be "with the King for His work." This verse has been a great help to me since coming to this quiet country place, where it has literally been—"among plants and hedges, there they dwelt with the King for His work." It is true indeed that "the lines are fallen unto me in *the best place*" (S.V.). God's presence with us is very real and His care of us and the native Christians is constant and tender; and then there is the joy unspeakable of seeing souls won for our Master, and the deeper joy still—a joy too deep for words—the joy of being allowed sometimes to suffer something "for Jesus' sake." Day by day He gives us strength, and joy, and peace—yea, Himself!

"Thou, O Christ, art all I want,
More than all in Thee I find!"

The spirit-seed has been shed, and a strange waiting-time comes, in which nothing happens—a silence on God's part, in which death has to be allowed to *reign* before it is swallowed up in victory.

But all is on the very verge of a flood-tide of life, for the seed-vessel has reached its highest ministry now. The last wrappings are torn, and from every rent and breach the bare grain is shed forth and brought into direct contact with the soil; and suddenly, as if by miracle, the quickening comes, and the emerald shoot is to be seen. Can we read the lesson?

Here, in service, the same goal is reached as in the soul's inner history. Both end in absolute simplicity, in Christ alone. For the highest aim of ministry is to bring His immediate presence into contact with others—so to bring Him and them face to face that He can act on them directly, while we stand aside, like John the Baptist, rejoicing greatly.

Our inner life is not separate from our service: they merge into One—Christ—the same Christ, whether folded to our hearts in His secret temple, like the seed in its husk, or set free in contact with those around to carry on His quickening work—all and only Christ.

Christ, the beginning, and the end is Christ. Christ fills all the horizon—everything in us; everything to us; everything through us—"To live is Christ."

From "Parables of the Christ-life."—BY I. L. TROTTER.

CHAPTER XXXII.

SIGNS OF BLESSING.

“Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit.”—JAS. v. 7.

SIN-TIEN-TSĪ.

April, 1900.

NEARLY four months of the New Year have already past—such busy, happy months they have been, for never before have we had such *joy* in the work. There is such a spirit of inquiry among the people, and many, hitherto unknown to us, have come from various directions, and some from great distances, to know the Way of Salvation. The Lord is working marvellously by His Spirit in the hearts of men and women around us, convincing them of sin and leading them to Jesus Christ. Within a few months' time, eight sets of idols have been burned, and those who have burnt them seem earnest in their desire to serve God. But how small is our faith! Even though our eyes have seen the wonderful works of God, we still think and speak of them with trembling.

One special feature we have noticed is that God has, as it were, *put us aside* altogether, and either used the lives and witness of the native Christians, or has Himself directly been carrying out this work of blessing. We have just had to “stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.”

“Mine but to be still,
Thine the glorious power,
Thine the mighty will.

Towards the end of March, an old man, T'ao-kuang-ts'üen, and his wife, both over seventy years old, began attending the services. After the second Sunday we went in search

of their house. We found it after a long walk through a beautiful valley, and the dear old people gave us a warm welcome. The man told us that *God Himself* had led them to come and hear the Gospel by a dream, in which his wife had seen a crowd of people going up from Sin-tien-tsi to Heaven, and he and his wife were not among them! They took the dream as a warning from the God we served, and that night determined to learn to worship Him. As we spoke to them of Jesus, the old man said: "Yesterday, at the meeting" (M.'s Sunday class for men), "I decided to trust Him as my Saviour." When we noticed that the idols were gone, he said: "When I came home yesterday, I stripped the house of them, and mean to burn them next Sunday, that all may know that I will serve the devil no longer."

The following Sunday was a bright, sunny day; the chapel was well filled, many people standing about the door and in the porch. Some of those present came from long distances, but seemed to think little of the long, weary road, for the joy they have in coming to hear more makes the distance seem less.

Amongst those present was the dear, old white-haired man, T'ao-kuang-ts'üen. He had brought up the idols, some of wood and some of paper, and, as the service closed with the singing of a hymn, he burnt them in the courtyard of the chapel. I shall never forget him as I saw him that day gathering sticks to make the fire burn up the false gods more quickly. They were the family gods of many generations, the false gods that he had religiously believed were true, and had diligently worshipped for seventy long years. As we watched them crackling away, I asked him why he burnt them. Looking at me across the smoke and shaking his head, he answered: "They are *false, false*, and now I know the God that is *living and true*; henceforth, I serve Him only." Truly "at evening time it shall be light!"

Dear old man! I could have cried for joy that morning as I stood with him there. Oh! the joy there must be in the presence of the angels of God over "these from the land of Sinim" who are being brought Home to God through the love of Jesus Christ.

On Thursday, April 12th, I left Sin-tien-tsi with Chao-ta-niang, two Christian chair-bearers, and Hsueh-lao-iao for Lo-han-si, to visit Mr. and Mrs. Lo. I described last year the lovely country through which we pass to reach Lo-han-si, but now in the spring everything was far more beautiful than then. The hedges were one mass of wild lilac and laurustinus, and in parts the bushes of red and white roses made long, lovely avenues, while the paths were hedged on either side by banks of violets, buttercups, and the sweet little blue speedwell.

We had a bright, hearty welcome from Mr. and Mrs. Lo and their family, and from the crowd of people that gathered from all directions when they heard I had come. All the shyness of last year had gone, and they welcomed me quite as an old friend, and when the village school closed, the boys came running in, apparently as glad to see me as I was to see them again.

I was thankful to find that much of what was taught last year was remembered, and that the Word of Life was doing its work in the hearts and lives of some. They were all eager to learn more, and with a short break for our evening meal (dough-strips and fried eggs), they remained listening to the Word spoken till nearly midnight. Hsüeh-lao-iao preached clearly and earnestly to them for a long time, and, I trust that, through God's blessing, some heard that night, to the saving of their souls.

I was so glad to see the old woman of eighty years old again. She sat very close to me and listened eagerly, though she kept on saying: "But I am nobody, I am of no importance—a stupid old body."

I felt irresistibly drawn to the poor old woman, so lonely, unloved, and despised. If I addressed any remark specially to her as I spoke to the people, a number of voices would drown mine at once, saying it was no use talking to her, she was too dull and stupid to understand anything.

At one time, however, seeing her sitting alone on a low form, I went and sat by her. As I told her of Jesus and His love, she would say: "Is it for *me*? I am only a stupid woman with no sense."

My heart yearned over her, but, oh, how infinitely more must the heart of the Good Shepherd long after this precious soul!

Again and again I told her that to Jesus she was very precious, that He loved *her* and had died for *her*. I thought she grasped something of this blessed truth, for the old wrinkled face brightened as she tried again to learn the prayer: "Lord Jesus, forgive my sins." I taught it to her last year, but the only word she remembered was the dear name of Jesus. How sweet it sounded as we spoke of its meaning there!

"It tells me of a Saviour's love,
Who died to set me free;
It tells me of His precious blood,
The sinner's perfect plea."

Before the people left they asked us to sing to them. It was close upon midnight as a song of praise rose to God from the little Christian band among the crowd, and I felt that our Lord was very near as the wild rocks and valley resounded with His Name.

Next morning, after breakfast, we started for Lai-ts'eng-pa, a market sixty-five *li*, or nearly twenty-two miles, from Sin-tien-tsü.

Unfortunately, however, it was raining, and had rained heavily during the night, so that the paths were very muddy; and after plodding along through rain and mud till nearly midday, we missed the path, and got hopelessly lost in a thick wood; at last we were obliged to relinquish the idea of going, and returned to Lo-han-sü. I was very disappointed, because this place, Lai-ts'eng-pa, has been much on my heart, and I have long desired to preach the Gospel there. I do trust another opportunity of going may come soon.

Mr. and Mrs. Lo and their friends were very pleased to see us back again. It was too wet that evening for many from the houses around to venture out, so we had a very happy little Christian gathering round God's Word. The following morning, after breakfast (rice, fat pork, and dried yellow lilies), we started home again. Before leaving I saw the

dear old woman again, and left her with the name of Jesus on her lips !

On our way home we stayed awhile at U-li-tsī, a busy market four miles from here, where a small crowd gathered round us and listened as we told them the Gospel. I had about half an hour also in the house of the most influential man of the market, and was received quite enthusiastically by the ladies of the house ; but their questions on dress and the customs of our land were so many that I had hardly any opportunity of delivering the message of Salvation.

Mr. and Mrs. Lo need our constant prayers. They are enduring the most bitter persecution from unbelieving relatives, some of whom have cut down their best trees, threatened to take their cow and other things, and even to turn them out of the valley altogether. We thank God that they are bearing this persecution in the Spirit of Christ. Do pray that their faith in God may not waver, and that they may prove Him to be " a very present help in time of trouble ! "

A few days ago we went to see a woman, named Li, who has attended the classes a month or more. We had a very interesting visit, when, at last, we reached her house. It is situated in a distant valley in a well-wooded spot. We lost our way among some large boulders, and suddenly came across a little temple built right under an overhanging precipice. Being dedicated to the Goddess of Mercy, there was a spring of water there, and, much to our delight, it was surrounded by beautiful tufts of maiden-hair ferns. The Chinese reckon all ferns and wild-flowers in the general term *ts'ao*, or grass, and Chao-ta-niang was amused at our excitement over the beautiful sprays of maiden-hair fern which we gathered.

Li-ta-sao, whom we went to visit, lately burnt her idols, and is coming regularly to the services and classes. She is very bright, and will, we hope, soon be received as an Inquirer.

Another woman, named T'ao, who used to live a long way from here, and found that the distance was too great to allow her to attend the meetings and classes as often as she wished, has lately had her old house pulled down,

and is building another one nearer to us (and next door to a Christian family), so that she may more easily come to be taught.

At the beginning of the year, before the people began to be busy in the fields, M. held what, I think, in other parts of China, are known as "station classes"; that is, we invited some of the distant Inquirers to stay in our house for ten days or a fortnight, for special daily teaching. First, Mr. and Mrs. Lo and their grandchild came. We greatly enjoyed their visit, and continually thanked God for their bright, Christian lives, and their anxiety to lead others to believe in Christ also. Mrs. Lo told us she was asking God that this year's harvest might be so good that she should reap one bushel of rice *extra*, and this she said she would put aside, to give to people who would come to her house to hear the Gospel on the alternate Sundays, when she was at home and her husband came to the service here.

We asked her if she did not find the fifty-one *li*, or seventeen English miles, very long. She replied that when she came to *market*, which is four miles nearer to her, she always got tired and thought the distance great, but when she came to the Mission House to hear more about Jesus the way never seemed long.

After Mr. and Mrs. Lo left us, four men, all Inquirers, came for ten days' teaching. Every morning M. held special classes for them, and in the afternoons they were taught by one of the Christian men.

Among those who attended these classes was Chu-ta-ie—the old man I met at Lo-han-si.

When the men left us, three women came for ten days. We find this plan answers *very* well. Not only is the regular, consecutive teaching just what they need, but we also value greatly the opportunity of learning to know them more intimately.

Every Saturday afternoon I have a class for girls. I have found it difficult to get many together for this class, because the little country girls are always busy.

To quote from a paper, printed July, 1896: "Probably



From photo by]

OUTER COURTYARD, SIN-TIEN-TSI.

[Rev. A. T. Polhill Turner.



Exemplar

From photo. by

[Rev. A. T. Polhill Turner]

LITTLE COUNTRY GIRLS, SIN-TIEN-TSI.

in no country in the world do children work so hard as in China. . . . The special occupation of those in the country is the collecting of fuel and manure.

“Among these industrious and poverty-stricken people nothing is wasted—not a stalk, or twig, or leaf.

“Coal is not much worked, and transportation difficult, so the people depend upon such fuel as may be picked up in their own particular place, and this forms an occupation only second in importance to the gathering in of the crops.

“The habit of constantly drinking hot water makes a great demand upon the supply of fuel, and with the poor the question of fuel depends upon what the children can scratch together.

“In this dismal struggle for a basketful of leaves and weeds, the children of China expend annually incomputable millenniums of work.”

Yes, though the little country girls are more natural and free than the town children, and are not so oiled, and dressed, and small-footed as they are, still they have their sorrows and troubles too; and the endless toil of gathering fuel, cutting grass for the pigs and cows, minding the buffaloes and babies, and many other things keep them always busy.

In the country, children are betrothed even earlier, I think, than in the cities. Consequently, the little girl grows up, bearing always the epithet “*Ren-kia-tih ua-ua*” (“Another person’s child”) and this becomes the excuse of the parents for all the ill-treatment or neglect the little one receives.

In spite of the many difficulties, the number of girls generally at the Saturday class is twelve. Amongst them is Chang-nü-tsi, the little “gipsy-girl,” as we still call her, who has returned from Miss Wheeler’s school at Pao-ning. She has lately learnt to make her own shoes, and is very proud of her first production.

We hear she is to be married next year, but we hope to persuade Mr. and Mrs. T’ao to put off the marriage for at least two or three years, as the boy is asthmatical and consumptive. He is a Christian lad, and, though very slow as to knowledge, he is sincere and true in his desire to serve God.

A few days ago I went to see Mr. and Mrs. T'ao. It was not a very satisfactory visit, for Mrs. T'ao would talk of nothing else but the girl's misdeeds! She certainly is naughty and troublesome, but there are, nevertheless, some good traits in her strange, wild character; and she is very amenable to love and kindness, but does not receive much of either in her home.

Her special misdemeanour that day was that, when on the hill looking after the buffalo and cutting grass, she had cut off a good deal of her front hair with the little grass sickle! This was a specially mischievous thing to do, because a girl's front hair must be nicely grown before she is married. (Up to the age of ten or eleven, the front part of the head is shaved, leaving only the pigtail.) I expect Chang-nü-tsi had a hope that in doing this she might delay, for a while, at least, the restraints of Chinese married life!

One Sunday morning after I had finished the women's class, a little girl, almost a stranger to me then, came up shyly and whispered: "I *love* to hear words about Jesus."

Dear little girl! she came here often after that, and, I think, learnt to love Jesus Christ as her Saviour. Then there came a day when she had to leave her home to be married into a heathen family, living far from here. I missed her very much, but we trust God will use her, as He did the little Hebrew maid in the house of Naaman the leper, to bring the knowledge of the true God to those who know Him not.

Little Kuei-ua, the Christian chair-bearer's child, is another of the Saturday class girls. She reads well, and has a good knowledge of Bible history. She amused us very much one day, when asked if a little strange girl, whom she had brought to the class, was her friend. "No," she replied, rather hurt at the question, "only those who love Jesus are my friends!"

Kin-ua-tsi, another of the girls, is a fatherless bairn, and her mother's only child. Their love for each other is beautiful, and grows deeper as the great cloud of separation, which has loomed before them all the girl's life, comes nearer and nearer.

It *must* break upon them next year, for Kin-ua-tsi must then leave her mother and go away to the family into which

she was sold when a baby, and to one of the sons of which she is betrothed. We dread the separation for them; they cannot speak of it without tears; but we are glad they both know what it means to draw near to the God of all comfort.

There are twenty boys in the school this year. Among the older lads, two are candidates for baptism, and of former school-boys, one was baptised last year, while another will, we hope, be baptised in May.

There are several men and women, now believers in Jesus Christ, who were first led to inquire into the Truth by the changed lives and faithful witness of the boys who have been to school.

One day lately a big leopard was seen on the hill behind our house. Great excitement at once prevailed among the boys, and several of them rushed out, armed with sticks and spades, to see what they could of the leopard. I followed, wondering what would happen. They wandered cautiously through the wood regaling me meanwhile with thrilling stories of what leopards had done. However, we saw nothing of the leopard, but found a poor dog's mutilated body, and over it great hungry hawks were hovering. Since then, we have had a good deal of the brushwood on the hill cut down, to prevent wild beasts from taking up their abode there.

Defend, O Lord, these Thy children with Thy Heavenly grace, that they may continue Thine for ever; and daily increase in Thy Holy Spirit more and more, until they come unto Thine everlasting Kingdom. Amen.

Thine for ever : Saviour keep
These, Thy frail and trembling sheep,
Safe alone beneath Thy care,
Let us all Thy goodness share.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

MORE BAPTISMS.

“They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels.”—MAL. iii. 17.

SIN-TIEN-TSŪ.

July, 1900.

JUNE 10TH was, to us, a very happy day, for there were fourteen persons baptised here by Bishop Cassels, and in some little measure we entered into “the joy in the presence of the angels of God” as we saw them come forward one by one to confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. Most of them had been Inquirers, under regular instruction for some time, and we had no doubt of their sincerity and earnestness.

Among them were Mr. and Mrs. Lo and the old man, Chu-ta-ie, who listened so eagerly when Miss Digby and I were at Lo-han-sī last year. Hsüeh-lao-iao’s young wife was also among the number, and it was good to see his delight when she was baptised.

There were also two other married couples, Li-k’uen and his wife (who, you will remember, first heard the Gospel when we were called to save her from opium poisoning), and Mr. and Mrs. Uang, relatives of one of the Christian chair-bearers.

From Liu-k’i-pa, the place where the fortnightly service is held, there were three baptised—Mrs. T’ang and her two grown-up sons. The other three were Sie-kin-seng, the teacher’s second son, a widow-woman, named Uang, and the consumptive lad of whom I have written. His answers to the Bishop’s questions were very touching, showing how he is looking for the land, that for him seems not very far away, where there shall be no more pain.

How very much these fourteen need our prayers now, that they may be kept by the power of God from all the evil around them, and that "they may walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God!"

Towards the beginning of the month we had a few days' visit from Chao Sien-seng, the "people's evangelist." He is a native of Wan-hsien, and has been this year appointed visiting-evangelist for the whole diocese of East Si-ch'uan, both the Church Missionary Society and the China Inland Mission stations, and is entirely supported, I believe, by the native Churches. He is a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and with great gifts, consecrated now to God's service. He told the people about his wonderful conversion, and that testimony, together with his stirring words of exhortation, will, I am sure, not be forgotten by them.

Whilst the Bishop was here he had a very sad thing to do. You remember my telling you of Cheo-uau-pih, one of the Christian men, who had taken again to opium smoking? This last year he has been employed as keeper of an opium-den. On this account he has now been excluded from Church-membership. We are so grieved about it, but we trust this step may lead to his repentance!

In the early spring two fresh missionaries—Miss Tucker and Miss Carver—lately arrived from England, came up here for a few months' study. Sie Sien-seng helps them with this, and his son is meanwhile carrying on the boys' school. They are getting on well with the language, and are very interested in the native work. They come out visiting with us, and are already able to take a little children's class on Sundays.

Some of you will be interested to know that Uang-ing-ruh, the man who stole our money, is now at Sui-t'ing-Fu, trying to do an honest trade, and attending the Mission services on Sundays. Rev. A. T. Polhill-Turner, is very kindly keeping an eye upon him there.

Amongst the Inquirers are two very earnest men. One is a lame man, named Cheo-uau-li—there is such a true ring about this man; and, we believe, that if he is spared, he will yet be one of God's brightest lights in this place.

On visiting him a few days ago, we were shown into the guest-room, where there were idols belonging to the elder brother. When Cheo-nan-li came in from the fields and found us sitting there his distress was great. He had learnt to hate the idols, and always tried to avoid entering the guest-room. On this occasion he placed forms outside in the courtyard, where we sat teaching him more about the true God. At present his mother and brothers are bitter opponents to the Gospel, but we trust they may be won through this man's testimony, who himself became interested in the Truth through the simple words of a Christian relative.

"A faithful messenger . . . refresheth the soul of his Master."

The other is a *blind* man, named Chang-hua-ch'en, who has been coming now for some months to be taught. His brother's wife is also an Inquirer, and lives in the same courtyard, but she is not able to come regularly to the classes. We visited the house lately and found it was situated in a far-away valley right at the bottom of a very steep hill. We asked the blind man how he was able to find his way alone up that rough and rocky path? He told us that very soon after he first heard the Gospel, he was coming to the service one wet and windy Sunday when he lost his way, and after wandering about feeling in vain for the path, he stood still and prayed to God to lead him into the right path and bring him in time for the service. God answered his prayer; and he added that since that day he has needed no other guide but God.

We hope soon to arrange for this blind man to go to Pao-ning, where a native Christian will be able to teach him to read books for the blind (Mr. Murray's system).

T'ao-kuang-ts'üen, the dear old man who burnt his idols in the spring, came up to us this morning with a present of a basketful of sweet potatoes. He insisted on our accepting them, and when we hesitated to do so, saying he must not give us presents, he shook his old head, and said: "Do not talk of what I give you; what is it to what you have done for me?" meaning our having brought him the news of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

More than once he has gratefully spoken to us of what he feels it must have cost us to leave home and loved ones for the Gospel's sake; and at such times we love to tell of the infinitely greater cost borne by Him who "humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," for our sakes.

We might tell him, too, of the "manifold more" that keeps our cup ever running over, and our hearts full of thankfulness and joy, that we were called of God to this work.

M. and I lately went with Mrs. Chao to Liu-k'i-pa to visit a Christian woman living there. We walked, and took with us some food which we ate by the way, in a shady little nook overhung with white roses. On arriving at Mrs. T'ang's house we found we were expected, though we had given them no word of our coming. But Mrs. T'ang had dreamt the previous night that we would visit her the following day!

They insisted on preparing food for us, though we implored them not to do so, as we had eaten on the road. It was of no use, however; for, alas! we *had* to put a cheerful courage on and sit down to a bowl of dough-strips swimming in the (to us) most unpalatable vegetable oil, with capsicum sprinkled freely in it.

We generally get on splendidly with most Chinese dishes, but being prepared with this kind of oil renders them most distasteful to us. However, we passed the greater part of our portions on to Mrs. Chao—which was a most Chinese proceeding! She was quite pleased to help us out of our difficulty, though surprised and distressed that we had no appetite for the food. She certainly is a most convenient person to have with us on such occasions!

* * * * *

On the high road, a few days ago, Chao-ta-niang and I met an old woman, named Üen, hurrying along on her way home. She stopped and spoke to us, and it was not long before we recognised in her one of those longing souls, seeking for light and salvation.

Though she had never heard the Gospel before, she seemed to understand so quickly what we told her, and when she had listened to the story of Jesus' love for sinners she said

she would love and trust Him too. We taught her a short prayer; and then, as the sun was sinking, she had to hurry on her way. Coming to a bend of the road, the old woman turned, and called out the prayer to know if she were still repeating the words aright, then she disappeared.

She lives two days' journey from here. Shall we, or any of God's servants, ever meet her again? We cannot tell, but "God will be mindful of His own."

"I often wonder as, with trembling hand,
I cast the seed along the furrowed ground
If ripened fruit for God will there be found;
But I can trust."

Dear old Chao-ta-niang, the Bible-woman, has been suffering a good deal of persecution from her heathen relatives, but through it all she goes from strength to strength, from glory unto glory, and I am learning many a deep lesson from her poured-out life, and earnest, untiring witness for the Master.

She told us the other day that one of her relatives has lately been disputing her right to part of her land, and she concluded by saying: "They can take away all these earthly things, but they cannot touch my treasure which is in Heaven."

One Saturday evening, after a very wet day, it cleared up sufficiently in the evening for us to go along the road a little way. Much to our surprise, we saw Mrs. Chao coming from the direction of some rocks away on the hillside, and on asking her where she had been, she said it was so noisy in her own house, that she had brought her St. John's Gospel and hymn-book out of doors, and had chosen a quiet place among the rocks, "To hear," as she expressed it, "what God would say to me."

The fourteenth chapter of John is specially dear to her, and she loves to repeat it, finding in it comfort, and peace, and hope. Dear Chao-ta-niang! day by day I take knowledge of her that she has been with Jesus.

Uen-ta-niang is delighted because she has found a way by which she too can spread the news of salvation. It used to trouble her that she could not express herself clearly

enough when telling others of the Way of Truth, and she is too old to learn to read the Scriptures to them. However, lately I showed some of Dr. Wilson's pictures to my class of women, and amongst them was a series illustrating how a man, with a heavy burden of sin on his back, got rid of it through faith in the blood of Jesus Christ which cleanseth us from all sin. Uen-ta-niang asked me for a copy, and has pasted it on her mud wall, and now, when her relatives and neighbours come into her house and ask about the picture, she explains to them the Way of Salvation.

T'ang-ta-so, the tailor's wife, is another, always eager to lead others to Christ. She often says, when speaking of those who know not the Gospel: "If one would tell ten, then ten would tell one hundred, and one hundred would tell a thousand of Christ, and thus, soon *all would have heard of Him!*"

So true! and yet there are millions still unreached who know not the Name of Jesus—and still the Lord of the harvest waits to receive the precious fruit—"long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish."

"God speed the day when those of every nation
 'Glory to God,' triumphantly shall sing:
 Ransomed, redeemed, rejoicing in salvation,
 Shout, 'Hallelujah, for the Lord is King!'"

There have been several sad cases of attempted opium suicides again this spring and summer. Once we had two or three in one day. As the houses are so far scattered, it is not often that we can go to these cases, but we send the medicines, and when possible visit the house as soon afterwards as we can.

One morning I went to see a young woman, who had taken the drug to end her miserable life, because her husband treats her very unkindly, and had that day beaten her cruelly across the eyes. Poor girl! for some time she resisted all attempts to save her life, and it was a long while before the medicine did her any good. I was most thankful when I saw she was out of danger, but, I think, *she* would have been thankful had I left her alone to die.

Now we know her, we hope that, through the Gospel, we shall be able to bring hope and comfort into her sad life. Poor women and girls of China, they have so little love and joy in their lives, and *no hope* for this life or the life to come!

I have been very much cheered in the medical work lately. So many of those who have come for medicine have been interested in the Gospel, and some have begun to come regularly to the classes. Others, who have come from far distant places, twenty, thirty, or even forty English miles away, have taken home books and portions of Scripture, and in this way the Word is having free course, reaching many places where perhaps we shall never go, and it will in God's time bear fruit to His glory.

While Miss Digby (Church Missionary Society) was staying with us this summer, she came with me to visit a lady, who, we heard, was ill with a severe attack of influenza.

On arrival at the house, a beautifully-situated old home-stead, we found, to our surprise, a native doctor there! From his emaciated frame we knew he was an opium smoker. At first he glared at us, but gradually became more friendly when he found he understood our words as we spoke to the sick lady's husband. Presently he asked us some questions about our "foreign" medicines; and, a little later, when we were sitting with the sick woman, he came in, and with a low bow and flattering words about the superiority of our medicines, he deigned to hand over the case to us, saying he would humbly retire. We hastened to assure him we had not come with the intention of undertaking the case, but rather to comfort the woman. Much relieved, and after more bowings and compliments, he hurried off to gather his weeds and roots together and compound his medicine.

The whole situation was awkward, but we got out of the difficulty without offending any one, and parted on the most amicable terms. A few days later, the lady sent to us for medicine, the doctor's skill evidently having failed. She is well again now, and very grateful to us for our help!

She was the woman whose faith in idols was shaken when

God so signally answered the prayer for rain last year. Her husband, too, has shown some interest in the Truth, through one of his little grandsons attending our boys' school.

During the last three months we have had a good number of our fellow-missionaries staying with us for rest. It is always such a pleasure to see them again, and they always do us good. This year several stations have been represented here in this little out-of-the-way corner, for our missionary friends have come from Ts'in-cheo, Shih-ts'üen, An-hsien, Kuang-üen, Pa-cheo, Pao-ning, Üin-shan, K'ü-hsien, and Sui-ting.

On Sunday evenings in the summer, after the five o'clock service is over, we all generally spend an hour together on the hill-top ("the hill of the Lord," as Chao-ta-ning loves to call it) watching the people as they wend their ways homeward across the fields and valleys, and softly we sing hymns and choruses until the sun sets.

To many of us, some of the quiet, shady nooks under the fir-trees have become "holy ground," where we have met with God, and He has granted unto us "the rest and the refreshing" we always need.

About halfway up the hill there is a pretty little terrace, well shut in by tall fir-trees, and a thick undergrowth of flowering bushes and shrubs—a quiet little spot—God's acre. In it is one grave, that of Philip Hannington Williams, the dear little child of the Rev. and Mrs. E. O. Williams, who died in 1894, at the age of seven. Old Hsüeh-ta-ie, standing by the grave a day or two after the child was buried, said to the parents: "You have come many thousands of miles to bring us the Gospel, and now this sorrow has come to you. I am an old man, but as long as I live, I will take care of this little grave, and when I am gone, my sons and grandsons will take care of it" ("A New Thing," p. 403).

I had thought and hoped that I might remain at work here at least another year, but Bishop Cassels thinks that both M. and I ought to take our furlough soon, and it is settled, so far as we know now, that we are to start (D.V.) from here towards the end of October.

God only knows what it will cost us to leave these dear

people, as much, and indeed more, than it did to leave all at home nearly seven years ago. But they will be safe in God's Almighty keeping, and we expect other missionaries will be appointed to carry on the work. There are now only three months before we have to leave! Oh, that we may each be filled afresh with His Spirit, that we may be used mightily of Him in this little time, and that "showers of blessing" may fall in this place! I want to thank you all for your constant and faithful help in this work by prayer. God knows how much the blessing He has graciously granted to the work is in answer to your prayers.

"O ye who cannot come, yet 'help by prayer'
 To send full life to this far-distant land,
 Remember, ye one day the spoil shall share,
 Ye, too, shall have the crown from His piercèd hand!

One 'goeth forth,'—perchance 'to sow in tears';
One tarries yet at home—to wait and pray;
 'Together' they shall joy through endless years
 And praise the Lord of Harvest in that day."

B. P.

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.—
RMV. ii. 10.

There is singing in the Homeland, canst thou hear it o'er the strife
The welcome of the martyrs into rest and into life.
There is glory in the Homeland, canst thou see it through thy tears?
For lives laid down, the victor's crown of Life through endless years.

EX. iii. 7.

There is weeping in the Earthland, dost Thou hear it, Saviour dear?
'Mid triumph songs, can Earth's deep wrongs now reach Thy listening
ear?
Or the gladness of the ransomed, shall it hide Thy children's grief?
"Ah, nay! I know their sorrows, I am come for their relief."

PHIL. iii. 10.

He hath suffered with His people, for His saints and He are one,
Oh, blessed fellowship with Christ, the Father's suffering Son!
By the golden link of holy pain He draws His chosen nigh
To holy fellowship with God, Who gave His own to die.

EX. iii. 9.

Never, never shall the notes of praise, that ring through endless years,
Shut out His people's prayers and cries from Jesu's listening ears.
Though their music strangely blendeth with the cry of them that fall,
Yet in the heart and love of God, He findeth room for all.

F. BROOK.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

TROUBLE IN THE NORTH.

"In the hand of God."—ECCLES. ix. 1.

NATIVE BOAT, BETWEEN PAO-NING AND CHUNG-K'ING

August 13th, 1900.

How surprised you will be to see the above heading, and yet perhaps you have heard already that we have been ordered to the coast. For some weeks we have been hearing alarming reports of the troubles in Peking and the North, occasioned by the Boxers; and how, from all directions, missionaries, obliged to leave their stations, were hastening to the coast. In our district, however, all was quiet, and we very much hoped we should be able to remain at our posts.

Towards the end of July Bishop Cassels received a telegram from Mr. Stevenson (Deputy Director of the China Inland Mission in Shang-hai) saying the Viceroy of the province had agreed to protect all foreigners at Chung-k'ing, Sui-fu, or Ch'en-tu, and he advised our escaping to one of these places, if local circumstances so required. But everything being quiet around us, there was no necessity to take this step.

On Sunday, August 5th, we had a very happy day among our dear people at Sin-tien-tsi; the church was quite *full*, and we realised God's presence in our midst. As we stood up at the end of the service and sang: "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," a presentiment came over me that it might be for the last time, and at the women's class, I felt that God helped me to speak as if it would be my last opportunity for a long, long time. Before the people

left, M. and I told them that probably we should be leaving them in October for furlough. They were dreadfully distressed at the news, and we tried to console them by the thought that others would come to carry on the work. We little knew how soon we should have to leave them!

On Monday morning we received letters from Bishop Cassels, telling us that news had come from the Consul at Chung-k'ing, enclosing a copy of Lord Salisbury's telegram asking if West China were clear of British subjects, and saying he and the other foreigners at Chung-k'ing were leaving for the coast.

Bishop Cassels had also received a letter from Dr. Parry, Superintendent of the China Inland Mission in the western part of Si-ch'uan, giving details of the Peking troubles, and strongly urging the Bishop to send away the ladies and children, as local rebellions might occur, and the Yang-tsi be closed, making it impossible to escape later.

The Pao-ning Mandarin has also shown Bishop Cassels an edict from the Empress Dowager, saying that war had been declared with China by the allies, and commanding all foreigners out of the country at once. The Chinese officials at Pao-ning have been calling constantly at the Mission-house, advising the missionaries to leave, saying that should trouble break out they would not be able to protect them. In face of all this pressure, Bishop Cassels dared not delay longer.

He therefore urged us to prepare to leave, as soon as possible, for Pao-ning, *en route* for Shang-hai.

At that time, seven of our fellow-missionaries were staying with us, but they left within the next two days for Pao-ning.

Our house at Sin-tien-tsi is a big place, and we were very busy those two and a half days not only attending to our own personal things, but packing away all the furniture of the house. We managed, however, to get all done by Wednesday midday, when the Ts'ang-k'i Mandarin arrived with some forty or more followers to take an inventory of all that was left behind, and to seal up the rooms in the inner courtyard where we had stored our things.

M. had also to arrange for the carrying on of the work,

the protection of the house, making up the accounts, and many other things.

The guest-rooms and bedrooms in the outer courtyard are all left open so that the work can go on as usual there. Sie Sien-seng, the evangelist, Li-uan-nien, an old Christian man who has been our cook for the last few months, and our two boys, Ien-lin and Tong-ua-tsi, will live in the house and look after things. The Ts'ang-k'i Mandarin also told us that he would appoint four men at his own expense to protect the chapel and our house and goods.

Those two days the Christian people hardly left us at all, and we had to be much with them, comforting and cheering them. On Wednesday morning we gathered in the chapel for a little farewell service, when we commended them all to the God in Whom they believe, and Who, we know, is able to keep them "until that day." There was hardly a dry eye amongst us. But with all the sorrow there was deep joy too, as we heard one and another say, that, by God's grace, they would be faithful even unto death. Their hope, too, was that when we returned we should find the number of Christians doubled! God grant that it may be so!

All Wednesday, dear old Chao-ta-niang kept close to us, and could not control her tears! When it was dark, and she had to leave for home, she put her arms around us and kissed us, sobbing as if her heart would break, and in between her sobs, she commended us to God. Before leaving she said: "To-morrow when you start, I shall be here, and though my heart will be very sad, I will not cry; my whole face shall be full of smiles, because I do not want to make *you* sad." And, dear old body, she was true to her word!

Late on Wednesday night Mr. and Mrs. Lo and their little grandson arrived! They had only heard about 4 p.m. that we were leaving, and had *run* most of the fifty *li*, or seventeen English miles, so as to see us once more.

We were so thankful to see them again, and in prayer to commit them into God's safe keeping. They, like many others, said that when we were away, they would, with

God's help, serve Him more zealously than when we had been with them, and Mrs. Lo added: "We live before *God*, and not before men."

At early dawn on Thursday morning, the people began coming to say good-bye, and before we started at five o'clock, the courtyard was full. Oh, it was *so* hard to leave them, our dear, dear people whom we love so much! God knows how gladly, had a choice been given us, we would have remained with them, and, if need be, laid down our lives for them and our Master there—but the choice was not left to us. Much pressure from those in authority had been put upon us, and we were obliged to leave.

We left the house about 5 a.m.; the people ran along by our chairs for some way, and dear old Mrs. Uen arrived just in time from her far-away home to say a last good-bye to us. The sight of her sorrowful face quite broke me down again, but I was able to give her a last word of love and comfort.

By degrees the chairs got ahead of the people, and they could keep up no longer, though the school-boys held on for some distance further.

At last they left us, and now we are every moment getting further and further away from the place and the people we love so well. If we see them not again on earth, we shall meet them "at the brightness of His coming." We leave them with Him, Who is able to keep them, and "to present them faultless before the throne of God with exceeding joy." "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels." "No man is able to pluck them out of My hand."

He will be mindful of His own, and will shepherd the flock, and lead them on to lean closer and closer upon His arm alone.

"As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, *so* the Lord is round about His people, from this time forth even for evermore."

In many ways, as we look over God's leadings of the last few months, we see how He has been quietly preparing the native Churches and ourselves for this sudden separation.

In every station and in our own, there has been so much teaching lately on the subject of persecution and trouble.

The faith and missionary zeal of the native Christians has deepened, and so many have undertaken work for the Lord in neighbouring markets and towns.

In the spring, Bishop Cassels set apart ten of the leading Christians of the different Churches as evangelists, catechists, or lay readers; and now they will naturally be considered the leaders among the native Christians of their own districts.

In our station at Sin-tien-tsi, we had just laid in a large stock of Bibles, Testaments, tracts, and portions of Scripture. These Sie Sien-seng and Chao-ta-niang will be able to distribute.

There was money in our station sufficient for us to provide for the special funds,—schools, Bible-woman, evangelist, and others,—thus enabling the work to be carried on for some months.

We know that God is above all this trouble, and are sure He has a wonderful purpose of blessing to work out through it for China and His Church. “What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.”

Before coming away, arrangements were made that Sie Sien-seng, the evangelist, should carry on the work, with God’s help, taking the services and meetings on Sundays, and continuing the boys’ school daily; and Mrs. Chao, the Bible-woman, will be at the Mission-house every day to see any women guests who may come, and will visit and teach the people in the afternoons.

Do pray for the native Christians that, through the teaching of the Holy Spirit, they may increase in the knowledge of God, and seek to extend His Kingdom in spite of all opposition and persecution! Our constant prayer for them is Col. i. 9–12.

“That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

“Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness.”

We reached Pao-ning, Thursday evening, August 9th, and started with the Pao-ning missionaries on Saturday, August 11th, for Chung-k'ing. We are a large party of eighteen missionaries and two children, and come from the stations of Pao-ning, Shuen-k'ing, K'ü-hsien, and Sin-tien-tsi. Those from all the remaining stations of the province have either already started, or are following us to Shang-hai. Bishop and Mrs. Cassels, Miss Carver, and Miss Page have stopped at Pao-ning over Sunday, in the hope that they may yet be able to remain permanently.

We have four small boats, all crowded. On this one there are two divisions, each nine feet by six feet, for three of us, and the thermometer stands at about 98° or 100° throughout the day.

Yesterday we had a narrow escape from wreck. Our boat stuck on the rocks in a thunder-squall, which arose as we were passing through a rapid. Our position seemed desperate, but God delivered us and brought us safely out of danger.

Four lines of a chorus keep running in my head these days :

“He hideth my soul in the cleft of the Rock,
That covers a dry, thirsty land;
He hideth my life in the depths of His Love,
And covers me there with His hand.”

NATIVE BOAT. YANG-TSI RIVER.

August 21st.

We reached Chung-k'ing, August 17th ; there we changed into three big boats for the whole party, and started on August 18th for Shang-hai. We heard terrible rumours from below—heartrending and sad ; we trust they may not be true. We heard also of threatened danger and trouble probably ahead for us, but, should anything happen, we know God's grace and strength will be sufficient for our need, and He will help us to glorify Him. We are safe in His keeping, come what will.

“Children whom the Father leadeth,
Ask not where they go.”

The last two weeks have abounded for us in proofs of God's faithfulness ; and the “Eternal Refuge,” “the Everlasting

Arms," "the shadow of His wings," and "the peace which passeth all understanding," have become *realities* to us as never before.

"What is it, Lord, Thou sayest unto me?"
 'Fear not, My servant, I will be with thee.'
 'Dear Lord, I thank Thee, for that sweet "I will,"
 Since Thou art with me, I will fear no ill.'"

* * * * *

TA-HUNG MARU. BELOW HANKOW.

August 29th, 1900.

On the whole, the Upper Yang-tsi was perhaps not so perilous as some of us had feared, but still nearly every day was marked by some special danger, out of which God delivered us.

The worst accident of all was on Wednesday, August 22nd, when we were passing through a dangerous whirlpool (formed by a great rock projecting out of mid-stream at the entrance of the K'uei-fu gorge). Suddenly one of the other boats, much larger than ours, came swirling down the same whirlpool! Our little boat then got crushed in between the big boat on the one side and the rock on the other! Utter wreck for us seemed imminent, and I am afraid most of us gave up hope then; but God showed those heathen boatmen and us, also, that His arm is not shortened that it cannot save. In an instant of time, and as by a *miracle*, the house-boat swirled back round the rock. The reaction made our boat rebound on to the rock causing an utter smash-up of the back of the boat and breaking the rudder! Seizing the oars and rowing hard, the men got us out of the whirlpool and put in to shore. A few hours' delay enabled them to mend the rudder, and we came down the rest of our journey in a broken boat. It appears that at that spot hundreds of wrecks have occurred, and one of the men said that if the missionaries had not been on board, the boat must have gone down—"it is their God Who saved them."

Notwithstanding the perils and dangers of that never-to-be-forgotten journey, God brought us on our way in peace—and the conscious presence of "Jesus Himself" was ever with us.

On the morning before reaching I-ch'ang we suddenly perceived that a boat, full of Chinese soldiers, seemed trying to overtake us. Whether the men had any evil intent against us we could not tell, but at one time they let off a gun and frightened us a little. However, our boatmen rowed hard and kept ahead of them, and we reached I-ch'ang in safety. There we left the boat and came on by the steamer *Ch'ang Ho* to Hankow, where we were obliged to change again to this Japanese steamer, which left two days later for Shang-hai.

We reached Hankow on August 26th, and heard with the deepest sorrow the terribly sad tidings of the sufferings of so many of our dear fellow-missionaries in the provinces of Shan-si, Chih-li, Cheh-kiang, and Ho-nan. Some have been "counted worthy" to enter deeply into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, and have been found "faithful unto death"; while to others, who have "escaped the edge of the sword," it has been given to suffer shame and pain and sorrow and the loss of all things "for Jesus' sake."

On reaching Hankow most of the escaped party were too ill to go further, and have remained there under the care of an English doctor and good nurses. A few were able to join us on this steamer, and from them we have heard that some have had forty-five to fifty days of painful flight—"in perils of robbers, . . . in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, . . . in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst," often ill-treated and beaten by the way, "in stripes above measure, in prisons frequent, in deaths oft." Some parents have seen their little ones sicken and die from exposure and want of food, and three ladies died ere they reached Hankow.

Such a tale of sufferings the world has never heard. With sorrowful hearts we wait for God's "hereafter," when we shall know His wise reasons for allowing this heartrending sorrow to happen.

We cannot but fear that it will go hard with the native Christians at this time. God grant that we may be constantly in prayer for them. He is able to keep them steadfast and true and faithful.

But through the clouds of sorrow, we already catch glimpses of "the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" that must follow all suffering for Christ.

For the dear sufferers, who have laid down their lives for Christ and China, there is glory now, and a martyr's crown of Life; while many of those who have escaped will, to the glory of God, bear branded in their bodies "the marks of the Lord Jesus," until He come.

For these, and for each of us who have in God's purpose been spared these sufferings, surely these troubles must result in lives more devoted, more earnest and consecrated, more glorifying to Him. And for China, it will mean glory too, for Life everlasting *must* come to thousands through these lives laid down.

JOHN xii. 14.

He hath heard the prayers for China, He hath heard its sore complaints,
 And answered prayers and cryings with the life-blood of His saints.
 Shall we say the cost is greater than the end for which we seek?
 Nay, rather let the voices of the dear departed speak—

REV. iv. 10, 11.

"Christ is worthy, ever worthy, at His feet we cast our crown,
 And gladly for our Saviour lay our lives in darkness down;
 What is sown in grief and darkness shall be raised in joy and light,
 God's harvest shall be worth the cost, His victory worth the fight."

F. BROOK.

*They shall abundantly utter the memory
of Thy great goodness, and shall sing of
Thy righteousness.—Ps. cxlv. 7.*

CHAPTER XXXV.

HOW THE PROMISE WAS FULFILLED.

“The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.”—
PS. cxxvi. 3.

“They rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how He had opened
the door of faith unto the Gentiles.”—ACTS xiv. 27.

CHINA INLAND MISSION. NEWINGTON GREEN, LONDON, N.
June 1901.

FIVE years have passed since, in the early days of 1896, the hearts of all God's children in North-east Si-ch'uan were cheered by receiving the definite promise from God: “Thou shalt see greater things than these.”

We went forth then, a little band of thirty missionaries (excluding a few on furlough), weak in ourselves, but “strong in the Lord and in the power of His might,” to prove that “what He hath promised, He is able also to perform.”

Looking back now over those years that are gone, in spite of there being so much failure in our lives and our work that we regret, we see how graciously God has been fulfilling His word to us. The preceding journals will, in some measure, I trust, have shown forth His faithfulness and power as manifested in one little station, and I only wish I could tell you of the “greater things” that He hath done also in the other stations of this district. For His glory I will write what I know. “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto *Thy Name* give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake.”

The China Inland Mission district in North-east Si-ch'uan is about as large as England, and in the spring of 1896 there were only five stations, viz.: Pao-ning, Pa-cheo, Kuang-tien, Wan-hsien, and Sin-tien-tsi.

During the four and half years that passed before we were called away last August, other workers had arrived and four more stations had been opened, viz. : Shuen-k'ing, K'ü-hsien, Ing-shan, and Sui-ting. In each of these places God has greatly encouraged His servants, the "firstfruits" have been gathered in, and a spiritual Church is being raised up in each to the Glory of His Name.

At Shuen-K'ing, after years of hard uphill work against much opposition, the Rev. A. E. Evans had the joy, on Christmas Day, 1899, of receiving the first ten people into the Church. Since then the work has gone forward, and several more have become interested in the Gospel. In connection with this work there is also an out-station in the country where there are Christians and Inquirers.

At K'ü-hsien and Ing-shan, converts have been brought in, and God's blessing has rested on the work. Between these two places is I-long—a city well known to the members of a Prayer Union Band in England. Some years ago they set themselves to definitely pray for this place, where, at that time, there was no messenger of the Gospel, nor, as far as they knew, any one who knew of Jesus Christ. Since that time, itinerations have frequently been made in the I-long district, and there are now many interested in the Truth there.

At Sui-ting, the most recently opened station, the missionaries have been encouraged by seeing some people burn their idols and come forward as Inquirers.

In the spring of 1900 another house in the city was taken, and Dr. and Mrs. Wilson arrived to begin medical work. They had not, however, been there more than a few months when the order came for all missionaries to leave for the coast.

Included, also, in Bishop Cassels' diocese, are the eight stations of the Church Missionary Society in the west of the province, the nearest of which, Mien-cheo, is five days' journey from Pao-ning.

But there are still large tracts of country with many cities, villages, and hamlets, where, as yet, there is not one witness for Christ.

In 1894, it was estimated that London had six thousand

two hundred and seventy-five ordained clergy and ministers, while the district of North-east Si-ch'uan, with twice the population of London, had thirty-one missionaries all told. Let us not cease to pray to the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth more workers from the homelands into these unevangelised parts, and that more native evangelists should be called forth to preach the Gospel to their own people, and that every member of the Christian Church in China should shine and work for God!

In connection with city-work, there are generally several out-stations in the country round, and in some of these God's "greater things" have most manifestly been seen in the consistent lives and fearless witness of many of these simple, country Christians.

Within fifty miles of Pao-ning there are six or seven villages, in each of which a little company of Christians and Inquirers meet every Sabbath day to worship God and to read His Word together. I was told by Miss F. Lloyd, who had charge of the Pao-ning out-station work for some time before we left, that there are sixty-eight Christians baptised in these villages, and that a large number of Inquirers are under instruction for baptism.

In nearly every station there have been sorrows and troubles, disappointments and discouragements, but through them all God has been with us, working out for us and the native Churches the purpose of His own will.

In Pao-ning, the central station of the district, the work has, through God's blessing, grown in many ways. In point of numbers, the Church, which now has two hundred on its books, has more than doubled itself during the four and half years, and this was also the case, both at Pa-cheo and Sin-tien-tsi.

Mrs. Bishop's hospital, opened at Pao-ning in 1896, has been in the charge of Dr. Pruen; but he has now left for other work, and the hospital is closed until another doctor is appointed. This is a very great need, and one we must not fail to constantly remember in prayer. Medical knowledge and skill, perhaps more than any other gifts, have been found to open a way for the Gospel.

Every half-year, gatherings for Bible-study have been held at Pao-ning, to which the native evangelists, catechists, and other helpers from all the stations of the district were invited. These have, I believe, been times of great blessing not only to themselves, but also to the people of the places to which these men return to work and witness for God.

Another part of the work which has been owned and blessed by God is that of the Opium Refuge, which has been carried on by the Rev. Walter Taylor. Several poor opium smokers have been received into the Refuge for a month at a time, and helped to break off the deadly habit. There, too, they have heard the Gospel, which in some cases has proved the power of God unto their salvation.

The boys' and girls' schools have formed another important factor in the work at Pao-ning. In the former, several lads have been converted, and some have been baptised, and even since the missionaries were recalled, four more school-boys have been received as Inquirers. A Mohammedan lad * who came to the school some nine or ten years ago (when it was first opened by Miss F. M. Williams) is now one of the leading Christian workers in the Pao-ning Church.

The girls' school was opened a few years ago by Miss Wheeler. She fought her way bravely through the initial difficulties, and established the school on a good foundation. She poured out her life for the children, and found nothing too great to sacrifice for them. Under kind Christian influence the children, who, on first coming, were either disobedient and unruly, or cowed and frightened through years of ill-treatment at home, soon changed, and were happy and bright, loving their teacher dearly. But what she longed and prayed for, was their salvation. Months went by, and then she saw that God was gradually manifesting His answer to her prayers, giving her also to see "greater things." A change came into the lives of some, for the love of Jesus had come into their hearts, and last summer, just a few weeks before she left them, she had the joy of seeing four of them baptised. It cost her much to part with the children and to send them back to their homes, when the news came that we must leave.

* See "A New Thing," p. 290.

After a few months at Shang-hai, when things were quieter, and Bishop and Mrs. Cassels and other workers started inland again, Miss Wheeler went with them, but the Lord God now had need of her for higher service. At Liang-shan, March 26th, 1901, within eight days' journey of Pao-ning, after five days' illness, she passed quietly away "to be with Christ."

And now—who will fill the empty place? Who will gather the little ones together? Who will win them for the King?

At Pa-cheo, too, "greater things" have been seen, and the Name of Christ glorified in the earnest lives of many of His children there. There also a life has been laid down for the Gospel's sake, for it was here that the Rev. E. O. Williams died in 1899. Surely these lives laid down for Christ and China must result in Life Everlasting coming to many!

At Kuang-üen, in addition to station-work, much itinerating has been done, and the Gospel preached far and wide.

It was from among the Christians at Wan-hsien that Chao Sien-seng was chosen to be an itinerant evangelist for the district; he is entirely supported by the native Churches.

In the little station of Sin-tien-tsi, the four and a half years were years of happiness and blessing, and together with our fellow-workers in the other stations, we have much cause for thanksgiving. God's presence has been with us, showing us His love and power!

In February, 1896, there were eighteen baptised Christians. Now, there are fifty-two on the Church-books; of these five are "with the Lord."

When we came away, there were twenty Inquirers awaiting baptism, and about thirty others, whom we hoped might soon be received as Inquirers. Our school-boys numbered twenty, and of these, two or three were candidates for baptism.

There has been so much *joy* in the work. Through the many sorrows and dangers, loneliness and troubles that have come, we have learnt to know our God, and have felt His conscious nearness and blessing. We thank God for every precious soul "translated out of darkness into the kingdom

of His dear Son." He is able to keep them "until that day," and to make them "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." We praise God with thankful hearts when we think of Chao Sien-seng going about among the little Churches exhorting them to be comforted and perfected through their afflictions; of Sie Sien-seng and others, with God's help bearing the burden of the care of the Church now; of old Mrs. Chao, pouring out her life day by day, in her efforts to make known the Gospel to others; of Mrs. Uen telling out the story of Jesus, the Burden-bearer, and of many more in other stations, who in simple ways are manifesting Christ to the heathen.

Separated now by thousands of miles, our hearts go out in longing to Christ's little flock in that far-away corner, and in prayer we draw near to them through God. I often think of that passage about Mr. Greatheart in "Pilgrim's Progress"—"He betook himself to prayer." God may have called us all away from work that He might teach us to *pray* more. The dear native Christians all over China are in God's care and keeping. He will never leave them nor forsake them.

Dear old Mrs. Uen's words, "They can't take away my God," are a continual comfort to us.

The great enemy of the Gospel may *seem* to some people to have triumphed now that more than a hundred missionaries and thousands of native converts have been killed, churches destroyed, the surviving Christians scattered and persecuted, and every missionary recalled; and yet, if we look higher, we see that the Lord sitteth above the water-floods, King for evermore; for the Lord reigneth in the *hearts* of His people in China, and thousands of lonely, suffering hearts cry out to-day: "They have taken all, *but they can't take away my God!*" No, and they never, never can. He will never leave His people, and in their simple, trustful lives He is even now triumphing gloriously over all the power of the enemy. We believe that through these troubles, in God's own time, the doors will be opened wider than ever in China, "and the King of Glory shall come in."

And looking onward, and upward into Heaven, we behold

by faith "the great multitude which no man can number of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb." "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

And thousands more shall follow them up to the City of God; and in that day, when "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ," there will, we believe, be millions from the land of Sinim to praise Him for evermore.

"Thou art worthy . . . for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

"Thou art coming, O my Saviour!

Thou art coming, O my King,
In Thy beauty all-resplendent,
In Thy glory all-transcendent;

Well may we rejoice and sing!
Coming!—in the opening east
Herald brightness slowly swells:
Coming!—O my glorious Priest,
Hear we not Thy golden bells?

Thou art coming: we are waiting
With a hope that cannot fail,
Asking not the day or hour,
Resting on Thy word of power,
Anchored safe within the veil.
Time appointed may be long,
But the vision must be sure;
Certainty shall make us strong,
Joyful patience can endure.

O the joy to see Thee reigning;
Thee, my own beloved Lord!
Every tongue Thy Name confessing,
Worship, honour, glory, blessing,
Brought to Thee with one accord,
Thee, my Master, and my Friend,
Vindicated and enthroned,
Unto earth's remotest end
Glorified, adored, and owned!"

F. R. H.

He rehearsed, one by one, the things which God had wrought; and they, when they heard it, glorified God.—ACTS xxi. 19, 20 (R.V.).

We thank Thee, that Thy Church unsleeping,
While earth rolls onward into light,
Through all the world her watch is keeping,
And rests not now by day or night.

The sun, that bids us rest, is waking
Our brethren 'neath the western sky,
And hour by hour fresh lips are making
Thy wondrous doings heard on high.

So be it, Lord; Thy throne shall never,
Like earth's proud empires, pass away;
Thy Kingdom stands, and grows for ever,
Till all Thy creatures own Thy sway.

REV. T. ELLERTON.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

RÉSUMÉ OF THE WORK OF THE PAST YEAR.

“As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.”—
PROV. xxv. 25.

MISS F. M. WILLIAMS has written an account of the work of the last few months at Sin-tien-tsī by gathering together the various items of news that have reached us from the people there. The following is quoted from her account.

“Since we left Sin-tien-tsī last August, the work has been faithfully and steadily carried on by the evangelist, Sie Sien-seng, and the Bible-woman, Chao-ta-niang. From time to time encouraging letters have been received from the former, telling that the services, classes, and school-work have gone on as usual, and have been well attended.

The following is a translation of the first letter received from Sie Sien-seng.

“The Evangelist, Sie-en-kuang, sends greetings.

“To Great England’s missionary teachers, Uei Kiao-sī and Tai Kiao-sī (Miss Williams and Miss Davies), peace.

“On the 18th of the 7th moon (August 12th), the Sunday after the teachers left, all the Christians and Inquirers gathered in the chapel, in number as many as when the teachers were here.

“On the 20th, when I heard that more than a hundred bad men were gathered together near here, I assembled sixty of the volunteers to protect the Mission house, and gradually the men dispersed.

“On Sunday, the 25th, I counted the Christians and Inquirers assembled in the chapel and found all were present. I preached on three ‘Fear nots’—Mark vi. 50, Matt. xxviii. 5, and 10.

“ At every meeting since the teachers left, and at morning and evening prayers, we have besought the Triune God to protect the missionaries in peace. But I do not know after this long time to what place you have come ; nor do I know if God has answered our prayers, not to let evil men hurt you, or the devil tempt you.

“ I beg the missionaries soon to send me a letter. We are awaiting that to have hearts at rest.

“ About all the matters connected with this mission-station, the teachers must not be anxious, but comfort your hearts !

“ I, with all my heart and strength, am bearing this heavy burden.

“ The four soldiers, whom the district magistrate engaged to guard the house, day and night walk round the premises, and there is no trouble.

“ The school-boys, big and little, assemble every day and study as formerly. Chao-ta-niang is constantly in the guest-hall, preaching the Word and teaching both Christians and heathen.

“ On Sunday, the 2nd of the 8th moon, again the number of Christians and Inquirers assembled was complete. I preached on—‘ Ye are the salt of the earth.’

“ May God protect you, and His peace keep your hearts and minds that you may soon return to China and Sin-tien-tsi ! This is what the whole Church, Christians, and Inquirers, and I myself earnestly pray for.

“ All the Church-members send greetings of peace.

“ Written by Sie-en-kuang, 2nd day of 8th moon ”
(October 29th, 1900).

On December 15th, 1900, Bishop Cassels and a number of other missionaries, who had been waiting at Shang-hai, took advantage of a new German steamer going direct to Chung-k'ing, to return to their stations. The steamer was, however, wrecked on December 27th, fifty miles above I-ch'ang. The missionaries escaped with their lives, but lost all their things. The vessel sank half an hour after she struck the rocks, the captain and some of the crew being drowned. Bishop Cassels returned to Shang-hai, but Mr. Aldis was

able to continue his journey by native boat, and reached Pao-ning early in February. Writing from there on March 6th, he says :

“Being alone, I have not been able to visit Sin-tien-tsī yet, but I have seen several of the Christians and had letters from Sie Sien-seng, and I judge the Church is in a good condition. They have been absolutely free from persecution or trouble. The work in all the stations has gone on satisfactorily ; and both Hu Sien-seng and Ku-hoh-lin (a former school-boy) have been a great help as leaders in the Church. This time of separation has been a blessing to them and to all. The whole province is, from all accounts, quite quiet, and travelling perfectly safe. The boys’ school has continued all the time we were away, with an attendance daily of about twenty boys. Four of them are now being prepared for baptism.”

Bishop and Mrs. Cassels, their children, and four lady-missionaries, left Shang-hai for the west on February 4th, and reached Pao-ning on April 4th. A great sorrow came to them on the overland journey, when Miss A. F. Wheeler died at Liang-shan after only five days’ illness. There, in a quiet place among fir-trees, on a hill outside the city, her body was laid to rest “until He come.” Her loss to the work is a very great one. Do pray that God will soon send forth some one to carry on her work in Pao-ning, and that, before long, Liang-shan, where her body rests, may become a centre of Gospel light !

Bishop Cassels visited Sin-tien-tsī on April 13th. Writing from there on Sunday, the 14th, he says :

“The first to meet me on the road were Hsüeh-an-ren and Chao-ta-niang, the latter with tears in her eyes. Another group were at the wayside inn, and the rest at the steps. We went straight into the chapel for a hymn of praise and the General Thanksgiving.

“As it was then dusk, the Christians scattered, and I had my bowl of rice with Sie Sien-seng. We had a good talk and a Bible-reading and prayer before retiring to rest.

“This morning, at the Communion Service, I gave an address from the story of the Storm on the Lake, of which

we read that 'it was dark, and Jesus had not yet come unto them,' rather on the lines of 'For a small moment have I forsaken thee.'

"At the Morning Service, Hu Sien-seng preached from Luke viii. 40.

"In the afternoon, after the service, I told the people what I could of you and Miss Davies, read your two letters to them, and we had special prayer for you both. Then I listened to what the Christians had to tell about the past months. Five spoke, one laying stress on the fact that whether the attendance was greater or less, there had always been a service kept up all these months. This is indeed a matter for gratitude to God in a young Church like this!

"You will be grieved to hear that all over North Si-ch'uan and further north, a terrible famine is feared. Scarcely any rain has fallen since we left last year, and the spring crops are almost a total failure. In addition to this, last year's rice-crop was bad; but, worse than all, there is scarcely a rice-field anywhere with water in it; they are dry and cracked, and all this at a time when the rice-seed should have been sown and the young shoots appearing. At Si-gnan, last winter, the famine was so severe that human flesh was eaten. We can hardly fail to take it as a judgment on North China for the sins of last year."

In a postscript to his letter, written later, the Bishop adds :

"There was a good deal of rain before I left Sin-tien-tsi, but much more is needed."

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From Ing-shan, another of the stations in North-east Si-ch'uan, Miss Kölkenbeck writes :

"Miss Culverwell and I came overland from Wan-hsien, and had a quiet and pleasant journey. We arrived here on April 12th, and found our house perfectly intact. The caretakers and mandarins have done their work well. We got our boxes from the *ia-mên*, and found all in good order. The mandarins have been most kind to us. One of them called on us the other morning in full dress, and his wife came the next day. Nothing could exceed their friendliness. The Christians seem as bright as ever, and

the work has gone on, one or two others have become interested, and Sunday services have been kept up as usual. It is nice to be at home again, after all our wanderings, and to be at work once more."

* * * * *

There is indeed much cause of praise and gratitude to God that these stations in the far West of China have been kept, not only free from trouble, but that in them during these months of suspense, the work has been going forward, and that now the missionaries have been able to return.

The following is a translation of the most recent letter received from Sie Sien-seng, June 15th, 1901 :

"To the two missionaries, Uei Kiao-sī and Tai Kiao-sī, peace. We thank God for His grace in sending Bishop Cassels to Sin-tien-tsi on the 25th of the 2nd moon in the 27th year of Kuang-hsü. All the Christians and Inquirers went forth to meet him. On the 26th day, Sunday, there was first the Communion Service, after which Hu Sien-seng preached from Luke viii. 40—'When Jesus returned, all men welcomed Him, for they were all waiting for His return.'

"The Christians, Inquirers, and school-boys filled the church. Only Uen-ta-niang was absent, having gone to Üin-lin-pu. T'ao-kuang-kin and family do not want for food and clothing; their consumptive son is at home making sandals. Chang-nü-tsi (the gipsy-girl) has run away and has not returned.

"Very few missionaries have returned to Pao-ning, and no one can be spared for the work here in Sin-tien-tsi, so Bishop Cassels has appointed me to take charge, and every Sunday lead the services and preach the Word, every Wednesday teach the Inquirers, and every Thursday to prepare the confirmation candidates. Chao-ta-niang is constantly in the guest-hall, preaching the Gospel; and in the afternoons she goes into the valleys to teach both Christians and heathen in their homes.

"Old Mrs. Li is well, and constantly attends the meetings. The Hstieh and Uang families earnestly (*lit.*, hot-heartedly) observe the Sabbath, and Mr. and Mrs. T'ang and Li-k'uen and his wife diligently keep God's laws.

“Since the autumn we have had no heavy rain, and are without water to drink, and have to carry water from distant wells, and the rice-fields are dry.

“Whenever we meet together, we pray for the missionaries who have gone home, also for those who have come back, and for all the native Christians throughout China, and we earnestly beseech God to graciously send rain upon all men!

“Early and late, we pray for Uei Kiao-si and Tai Kiao-si, our teachers. May God give to each member of your families, old and young, ‘the peace that passeth all understanding!’ Even yet more fervently we pray God to increase your strength and wisdom, and soon bring you back to China. This is what my heart wishes. All the Christians and Inquirers with one accord send greetings.

—“Written on the 28th of the 2nd moon (April 16th) from Sin-tien-tsi, by the Evangelist, Sie-en-kuang.”

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“Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as we are.”—(John xvii. 11.)

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word.”—(John xvii. 20.)

“Father, glorify Thy Name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.”—(John xii. 28.)

MAP OF CHINA

Shewing { 1. All Protestant Mission Stations in China up to June 1866, when the C.I.M. was founded (they numbered fifteen) These are underlined in black.
 2. The Stations of the China Inland Mission which (with the exception of Ning-po & Fung-hwa) have been opened since June 1866. These are printed in red.

