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AN ANCIENT BRIDGE NEAR HANKOW, WITH THE KULING MOUNTAINS BEHIND.

THE SONS OF HAN

Stories of Chinese Life and Mission Work

BY THE
REV. BERNARD UPWARD
(HANKOW, CENTRAL CHINA)

WITH SEVENTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

A BOOK for young people, with plenty of pictures and stories, was asked for; and these pages of missionary commonplaces are the result.

The idea throughout has been to give an account of some of the phases of Chinese life and of mission work among this great people. With a field so wide in which to range the difficulty is altogether one of selection. Child-life is so fascinating a subject that these pages might easily have been filled with stories of children and their ways. Folklore is an inviting study, and material for it abounds, yielding many a weird story. To describe fully the different branches of our mission work in Central China would, perhaps, not have been the best way to introduce the young folk, for which this little book is intended, to the study of a great people of whom the missionary can truly say that the more he knows them, the more he finds in them to love. The writer has taken a few of the more prominent aspects of Chinese life as the missionary sees it, and sought by pen and camera to bring them before his youthful readers, in the hope that seed of interest may be sown that will in years to come spring up and yield fruit to the saving of the Sons of Han.

BERNARD UPWARD.

HANKOW,

July, 1907.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My best thanks are due to the Rev. A. J. McFarlane, M.A., who has kindly revised the manuscript, and has made many valuable suggestions; to Dr. Cormack, who has given the design for the cover; to all those friends who have willingly given information about their own particular work; and particularly to the Rev. Lewis H. Gaunt, M.A., the London Missionary Society's Editor, who has attended to all the drudgery of proof-reading and the piloting of this little voyager through the press.

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CHAPTER I

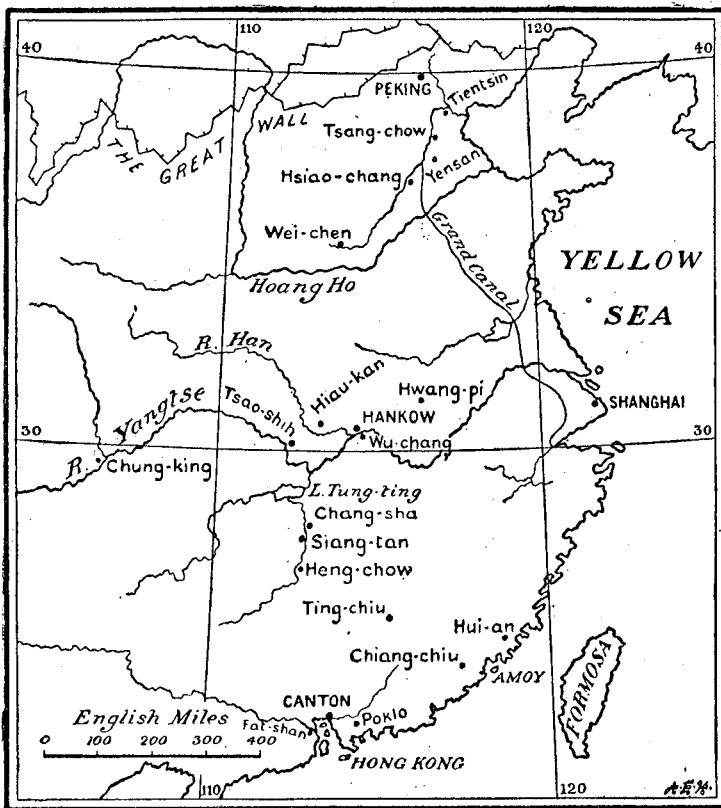
MAKING BELIEVE

LET us suppose ! Ever since we were little children we have been playing this game of “ make-believe ” ; so it will be quite easy to play it once again, as you borrow my pen and camera, and pretend you are in Central China with one of your own missionaries, seeing what he sees, hearing what he hears, and knowing what he knows about the wonderful people called Chinese ; about the way they live and work and play ; about the ways in which they differ from us in their habits ; about the joys and sorrows, superstitions and hopes, of a nation that is *almost* great, and will become truly great when the spirit of Christianity takes hold of these Sons of Han (as they love to call themselves) and gives them what they so much need—moral backbone, Christian character.

As you will be most of your time in Hankow, the heart of the empire, we must first have a lesson in geography, so that you may know something about the place in which you are to spend a few happy days.

If you open an atlas at the map of China, and look at it carefully, you will see that it is a very large country. Indeed it is almost as large as Europe. It is divided into eighteen provinces, each one of them having a name very difficult to pronounce unless you hear how a Chinaman says it. If you place your finger as nearly as you can in the middle of the map, you will be almost certain to touch some part

of the province of HUPEH. (You will be very nearly correct if you pronounce the "Hu" like the relative pronoun "who" and the "peh" like *per* in "person.") On a small map Hupeh does not look

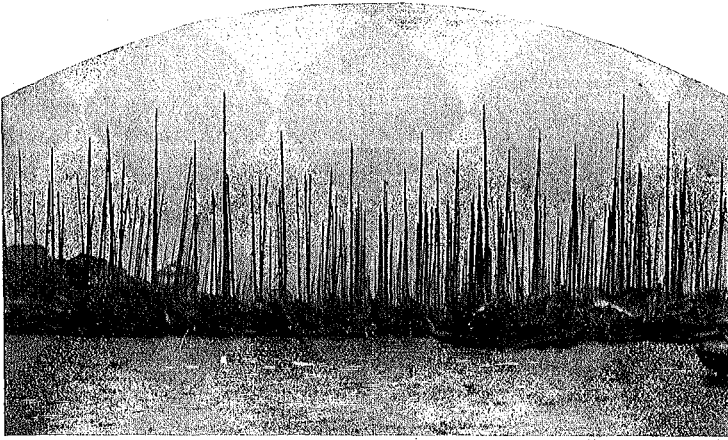


OUR MISSION STATIONS IN CHINA.

very large; so we must remember that it is *half as large again as England*, that it is divided into sixty-seven counties—nearly twice as many as there are in England—with a population of over 34,000,000. One other way of thinking about its size and the number of its people

is to remember that the area of Hupeh is 70,450 square miles, and that for each of these square miles there are nearly 500 people.

The middle of Hupeh is a flat fertile plain ; and through this plain comes the grand old river Yangtse, the Son of the Ocean,¹ from its far off home in the unknown land of Tibet, rolling its mile-wide flood of yellow waters on to the Yellow Sea, nearly 800 miles further east.



THE MOUTH OF THE HAN, ALWAYS CRAMMED WITH SHIPPING.

Later on, there will be something to say about the joys and sorrows these "yellow waters" bring to the people living in the Yangtse Valley.

At the very heart of this great plain is a celebrated cluster of three cities, just at the point where the River Han, coming down from the north, pours its waters into the Yangtse. Opposite the mouth of the Han, on the east bank of the great river (for the Yangtse flows in a northerly direction just here) is the provincial capital, WUCHANG, the centre of government and learning. In it lives the great Viceroy,

¹ *Yang* means ocean, and *tse* means son.

Chang Chih-tung, patriot and statesman. Dr. Griffith John says of him¹ that "The Viceroy of Hupeh and Hunan occupies a unique place among the officials of China at this time. He is a man of profound scholarship, wide information, great mental energy, and restless activity. He is endowed with a strong will and no little courage and daring. As a public officer he is distinguished for his loyalty, his purity, and unselfish devotion to the good of the people under his jurisdiction and to the well-being of the empire at large. In one respect he is looked upon as a phenomenon among the officials of his day. *The love of money does not seem to be in him.* He might have been one of the richest men in the empire . . . as a matter of fact he is known to be a comparatively poor man. . . . All the wealth that flows into his *yamen* [official residence] is spent on public works and public charity. . . . He is to-day one of China's greatest men."

A day spent in wandering about this great city—for its walls are eight miles in circumference—leaves one with the impression that Chang Chih-tung has filled the place with mandarins, students, soldiers, and factories. It is said that Wuchang is the centre of the work of fifty public magistrates; that over two thousand mandarins are living there, patiently awaiting a call to some office to which either money or examination success has entitled them; while one in every ten of its people is either employed in or connected with a *yamen*. Students in uniform seem to be in evidence wherever one goes, so many government colleges are there, mostly built in semi-foreign fashion; while from the top of the Serpent Hill which runs through the city, can be seen rows and rows of barracks crammed with foreign-drilled soldiers, as well as numbers of tall smoke-stacks telling of the restless activity of the Viceroy in both protecting and providing for the people over whom he rules.

There is a story told, that when, a few years ago, the superstitious

¹ See introduction to *China's Only Hope*.

Chinese began to complain of the new notions of the Viceroy, fearing that these tall chimneys with their black smoky clouds would bring ill luck to the city, His Excellency offered a prize for the best complimentary description of these smoking stalks. By this means he secured a good name for the works so dear to his heart and the good will of the scholars towards his new undertakings. For the scholar who was made happy with a prize for the essay that was to calm the fears of the



WUCHANG.

populace, described these tall chimneys as being THE PENS OF DESTINY WRITING THE FORTUNES OF CHINA IN THE SKY. Of course little could be said against them after that. And now no one thinks of them save that they mean busy wheels humming round in the Mint, Cotton Mills, Steelworks, etc., giving employment to hundreds of men, women, and children, while at the same time bringing money into the coffers of the Great Viceroy.

Although the astute man knew well how to deal with the superstitions of the people, yet once at least he has fallen a victim to the same

thing himself. There is a story told against him concerning that long hill that runs across the city, Serpent Hill. A few years ago, the Viceroy, who was constructing a roadway, had a gap cut in this hill to join



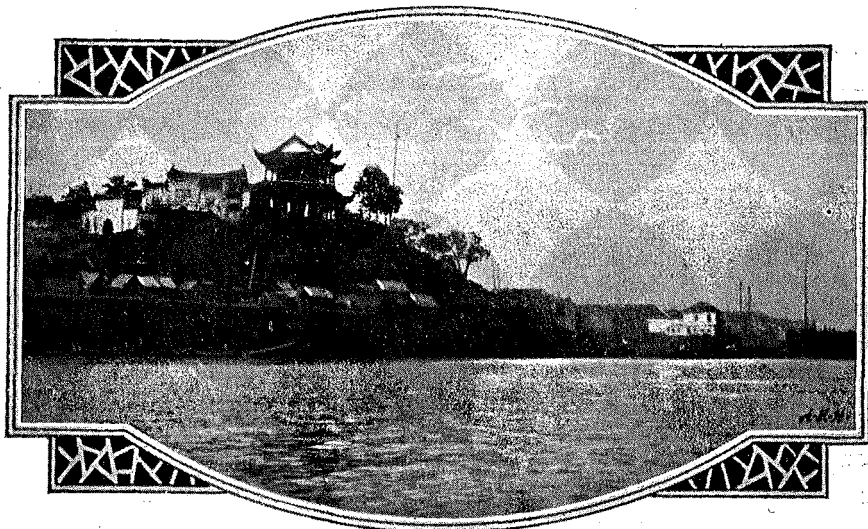
CHANG CHIH-TUNG.

the two parts of the city together. When he did this there was much fear and trembling on the part of the populace. Just fancy! Cutting a "mouth" in the Serpent Hill! It would leave a gateway for all sorts of evil spirits to come in at; and who could tell how many harmful things might come out of the hill itself! However, all fear is gone now. Once again the road climbs up one side of the hill and down the other. It happened in this way. The Viceroy was smitten with a disease that affected his

mouth. All sorts of remedies were tried, and many doctors were called in. Perhaps their medicine was not taken: or perhaps the many medicines were taken all to no purpose. Anyhow the Viceroy got no better. So the idols were consulted. The oracle declared that the trouble was all owing to the Viceroy having cut a "k'ou"

(mouth) in the hill, and that to show their displeasure the spirits had inflicted this disease of the "k'ou" on the Great Man. The prescription was: Heal (i.e. fill up) the mouth that has been cut in the hill, and the mouth of the patient would be healed also. So the cutting in the hill was closed up, and as a result, the Viceroy's mouth—is as bad to-day as ever, or it was so, the last time I heard about it!

Opposite the city of Wuchang on either side of the mouth of the



A PICTURESQUE CORNER OF HANYANG.

Han are the two sister cities: HANYANG and HANKOW. Of the two, Hankow is by far the more important as far as its relation with the rest of China and the outside world is concerned; although from a Chinese standpoint it is a city of inferior grade. Hanyang, excepting for its iron and steel and other Government works, is much like any other Chinese city, a collection of more or less squalid houses interspersed with a few *yamens* and temples, and houses of the better class, all linked together by so many miles of narrow, badly-

scavenged streets, and crowded with a busy population of black-haired humans, each very much concerned as to what he shall eat and what he shall drink and what he shall wear. So for the present we will be content with noticing that the city is there, and hope later on to visit it and find out about its many objects of special interest, which it has in common with every Chinese city.

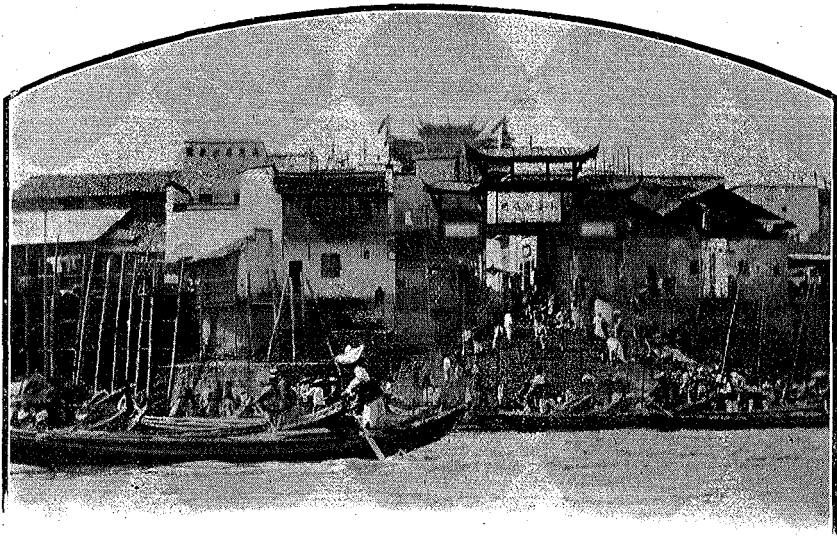
Hankow is such an important place to every student of the history of Missions, as being the birthplace of the Central China Mission, and the home of its founder, Dr. Griffith John, as well as the centre of his labours for half a century, that we must have a good look at the place, and get to know something about it.

There is yet another reason for thinking Hankow important. It is not only the great market city of Central China, but is destined to become one of the greatest, if not *the greatest*, of this great empire's commercial cities. It is, too, to become the heart of China's immense railway system, that is now but in its infancy. From this centre will go out in all directions the iron arteries and veins of a truly vast system : passengers and freight, from all parts, will find in Hankow a great clearing house. And, again, the traffic on the Yangtse, both by steamer and junk, is rapidly increasing. So, in a few short years, there will be rapid and frequent transit, both of the merchant and his merchandise, the passenger and his baggage, from far-west Sichuan to Shanghai, and from Canton in the south to Peking and beyond in the north ; the greater portion of it all passing through Hankow.

The civilizing railway has only just begun to affect Hankow. There are in China, as a result of the activities of the past few years, no less than 3,746 miles of railway completed ; and reckoning the line from Hankow to Canton, 1,622 miles in course of construction. But only 228 miles of the open way really belong to Central and South China, where the most trade is. It will be a revolution when the iron horse is found running in each of these great wealthy commercial

provinces, a revolution that will affect Hankow in a way that at present we can scarcely dream of.

There are two Hankows, really. The one is a "native city" in the shape of a somewhat damaged acute-angled triangle, containing about 800,000 people—a veritable hive of bees: the other is the "foreign concession," with its factories, banks, well¹built residences, and well-bunded foreshore that will, when completed, stretch for



A BUSY MA-TOU OR JETTY.

some five and a half miles along the river side. The one has practically made the other. For without the busy Chinese market, the central point of a very rich province, there would have been no incentive for the foreigner to have settled in this particular spot; and it is safe to say, that without the incoming of the foreigner, with his engineering skill and knowledge of the foreign market, Hankow would not be the place of importance it is to-day.

Of the native city it is said that its glory is departed. Before the arrival of the dreaded Taipings it was a much larger place, and boasts of having had a main street twelve miles in length and a total population of two and a half millions. Four times did the rebels come to Hankow, and the last time poured out all their fury on the ill-fated city: killing, looting, burning, until there was none left to put to the sword, and nought to destroy. One authority says that, "scarcely was one brick left upon another." But the sound of battle passed away. And then, from the surrounding country, the villagers and townspeople came into the desert mart, and soon a new city grew on the site of the former one. This may explain why, to this day, the greater part of the men of Hankow have their wives and families in the country, and pay them periodical visits. And, in passing, it will be well to note that this lack of home life in the city makes the work of the missionary all the more difficult, and the growth of a strong native church so very slow.

But where was the foreign settlement then? What was *it* like? *Fifty years ago there was neither missionary nor merchant here.* The settlement did not exist. If you go out in the summer time, and look at the plain that is in the rear of Hankow, you will see what the site of Hankow was then like—a mud swamp; a breeding place for mosquitoes and other human tormentors, the home of all kinds of fevers and diseases. No wonder it was considered an unlucky spot by the Chinese in those days!

How came it all about? How was the mud swamp changed into the well-appointed concession? This is a long story. And as it is so much involved with the story of the opening of China to foreign residence and to missionary work, it will be better to commence with a fresh chapter.

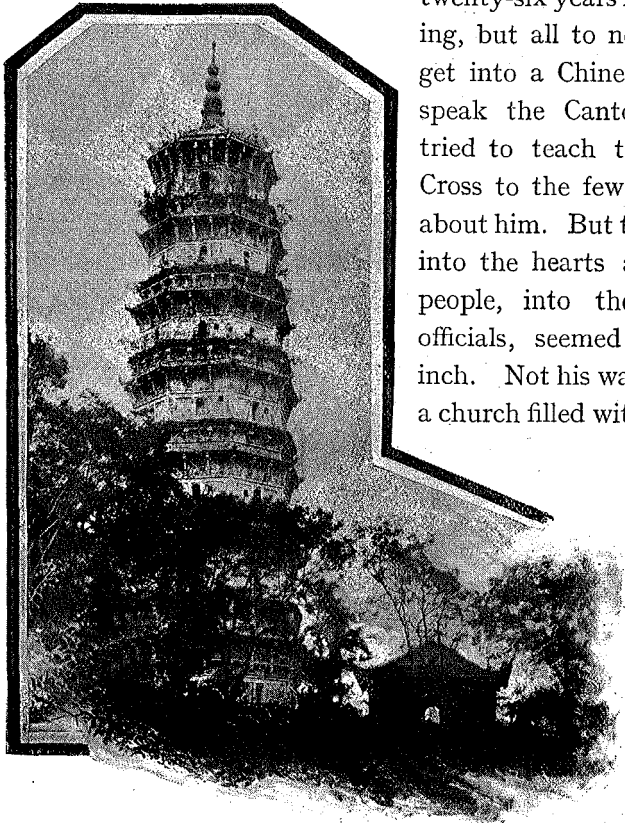
CHAPTER II

HOW THE GOSPEL CAME TO HANKOW

A FEW days ago, whilst looking through an old book, I came across a map of China. What a curious thing it seemed! Names of places and rivers, in their quaint, old-fashioned spelling, were almost unrecognizable: towns that are now of little importance were then printed in large type, while some cities, that every school-boy the world over is now familiar with, were then omitted altogether. Hankow was one of these. Fancy drawing a map of England and leaving out Birmingham! or of America, and leaving out Chicago! Wuchang and Hanyang were there: but Hankow had evidently yet to make a name for itself in the outside world.

In those days, the Yellow River—called “China’s Sorrow,” from the number of times it has overflowed its banks and flooded the surrounding country, with great destruction of life and property—after passing the capital of Honan, K’ai-fung Fu, flowed in a *south-easterly* direction, through the province of Kiang-su, pouring its flood of muddy waters into the Yellow Sea. Now, as you know, it runs away from K’ai-fung Fu towards the *north-east*, finding its way into the ocean through the Gulf of Pe-chili, some 300 miles north of its old mouth. Then, the only port open to the merchants and ships of other nations was Canton; and even that was by no means a free port: now the empire is open from end to end. Truly a great change has come over the country during this past century, as well as a change in our knowledge of the land and its peoples!

In 1807, just a hundred years ago, the pioneer of Protestant missionaries, ROBERT MORRISON, reached Canton, and began knocking at a fast closed door. It was never opened unto him. For twenty-six years he continued knocking, but all to no purpose. He *did* get into a Chinese house, learnt to speak the Cantonese dialect, and tried to teach the message of the Cross to the few Chinese who came about him. But that door into China, into the hearts and minds of her people, into the goodwill of her officials, seemed never to yield an inch. Not his was the joy of having a church filled with worshippers com-



RED HILL PAGODA, WUCHANG.

ing to hear him preach, Sunday by Sunday: not his the joy of seeing the Kingdom of God coming amongst men in the Flowery Land. His was the work of the pioneer: clearing the

ground and preparing material so that those who came after might begin building the Church of Christ. He had, too, to open a way into the Chinese language. Those of us who now have fine dictionaries, vocabularies, and translations

of the Chinese Classics, and are perfectly free to call in the finest Chinese scholar we can secure to help us in our studies of this difficult language, marvel that Morrison ever did manage to translate the Scriptures and compile his Dictionary, in those days when hardly any help was to be obtained from books, and when scholars were forbidden to teach the "sacred" language to the despised foreigner! It has been well said that the making of his Dictionary was such a tremendous task that "no finer monument of human perseverance exists." Then, in the year 1834, with the door of China still fast closed to him and to the Gospel he loved to preach, the door of Heaven opened to receive him, and he passed away from the scene of his earthly labours.

Morrison had failed; so some people said. Had he not toiled for nearly thirty years and only baptized three or four converts? Yes! If we measure his success by the number of converts he secured to Christianity, we shall not call him a "successful missionary." Yet the "failures" of some men count for far more than the successes of others. Morrison was one of those "heroic failures," who, whilst failing to win a large following to Christianity in a land whose people were given over to superstition and idolatry, *because of the failure* won converts from the churches at home: men who brought their devotion to Christ and their knowledge of His Truth to the stupendous work of winning China for their Lord.

This year, we are celebrating Morrison's Centenary. The pens of the great and of the learned all unite in setting forth the magnitude of the task Morrison set himself to do, of the great things he accomplished, and of the debt that merchant, missionary, and minister alike, owe to the poor boot-tree maker's son, who quietly began and heroically carried through the work of putting before the eyes of an alien race the message of the gospel of peace and hope. And perhaps it is much easier for us now to see how really Morrison suc-

ceeded ; and we must not be too hard in our judgment on those who then thought that his life had been a waste of talent thrown away in a hopeless cause.



GATEWAY OF CONFUCIAN TEMPLE.

The next quarter of a century seemed to be equally fruitful of failure. For it was the time of driving in the thin end of the wedge of truth that was to open the fast-closed land. Here are some figures

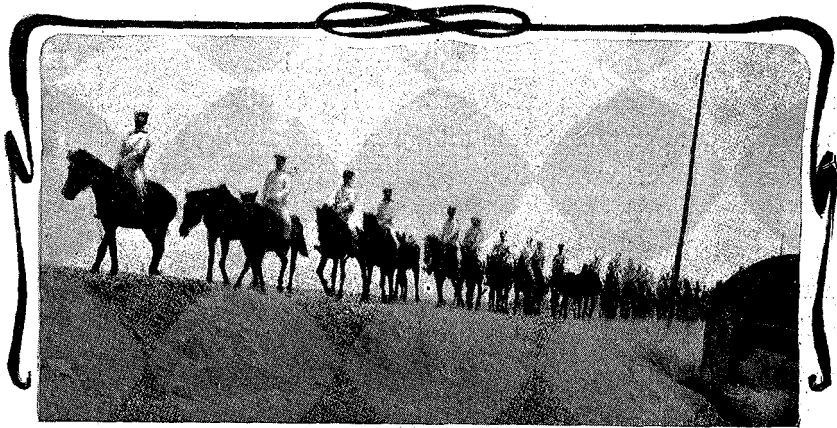
that tell their own story, and make us realize how hard a thing it was to make a beginning in this conservative and self-satisfied empire :—

After twenty-six years of work 3 converts.

After forty years' 9 converts.

Nine out of 400,000,000 people won for Christ! This was how the record stood. Not much to look at if we believe only in figures, is it?

But there was something else happening all this time that never



THE NEW CHINESE CAVALRY, WUCHANG.

can be shown in any kind of statistical returns. For the winning of these nine converts other missionaries from America and England had come out to China, and had, by their coming, stirred up Christians the world over to pray for this land. Political forces were at work, too. Rightly or wrongly, the Western Powers were determined to compel the proud "Son of Heaven," as the Emperor of China is called, on his Dragon Throne, to allow the commerce and influence of the West to come into the land over which he ruled. No doubt there

was much cause for complaint on both sides. China insisted on slighting and treating as vassals all ambassadors from Christian countries ; for China's ignorance of the world outside her own territory was colossal. On the other hand, opium was being smuggled into the country by British merchants or at their instigation, and this opium was grown on British territory. It is not true, however, that the war known as the Opium War was all on account of opium, or that it was mainly because England wished to keep China as an open market for the Indian opium. Reading the history of those times it would seem as if war with China was the last thing England wished for. A British ambassador had been refused an audience with the Emperor because he would not do homage to him as a vassal. Even a viceroy had refused to grant an interview to a British lord because his letters were not sent into the *yamen* as servile petitions. Yet very slowly indeed was England roused to action. It does seem a great pity that the event which at last called for an appeal to arms was connected with one of the most disgraceful trades that has ever marred man's dealings with his fellows.

It happened in this way. A new viceroy was sent to Canton, and one of his instructions from the Emperor was to put a stop to the import of opium which all recognized as being morally evil. He took very severe measures indeed. His actions give a good idea of his opinions of the outside world. The Queen of England, as a *vassal of China*, was commanded to obey the viceroy ! The little foreign community in Canton were surrounded by soldiers, and were given a short time to choose between handing over all the opium which was stored in ships out amongst the islands, away from Canton altogether, or death ! To save their lives, all the opium, some 20,000 cases, was handed over to the Chinese authorities, mixed with lime, and poured into the river. This did little more than bring matters to a crisis. It was the proverbial "last straw," and war, with its

disastrous consequences to China, followed. The Treaty of Nanking, which was signed in 1842, opened five ports to foreign trade and intercourse. And to occupy these ports of Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo, and Shanghai, missionaries were soon speeding over the seas.

Some part of China was at last opened to the preaching of the



OUT TO SEE THE FOREIGNER.

Gospel. Missionaries might wish the opening had come in some other way than by a cleaving with the sword, but they were thankful to take the opportunity presented. How hard their work was may be gathered from the fact that at the end of the first fifty years of Protestant mission work in China **one missionary had died** a victim to an unhealthy climate **for every convert won**. When the second

half of the century dawned, there was, scattered over a wide area, a little Christian Church of about 400 souls. This was the time of dawn on the "Hills of T'ang," as China is sometimes called.

All this time Central China, with its teeming population, was without the message of salvation. God seemed to be working very slowly indeed. Perhaps it was as well that the messengers should learn more about the people they wished to give their message to, ere going right amongst them. For the missionary must ever appeal to the Chinese as a strange people, with strange manners, and strange way of speaking a language that even the little children of the country were quite fluent in! But even whilst the way was being made plain for the opening up of Central China, God was preparing the man to be the Apostle to the Yangtse Valley.

Just before the half-century closed, Griffith John had responded to the invitation of L.M.S. Directors, and joined the band of waiting missionaries in Shanghai. A band of stalwarts it was. Boone, William Burns, Burdon, Medhurst, Muirhead, Lockhart, Hudson Taylor, and Wylie, with many others: all men who have left memories of inspiration behind them, and from whose abundant labours a harvest is even now being reaped. All were preparing themselves for the busy devoted lives which followed; all, too, waiting and praying for the scattering time that should come when the doors of other cities in China should be opened for their eager entry.

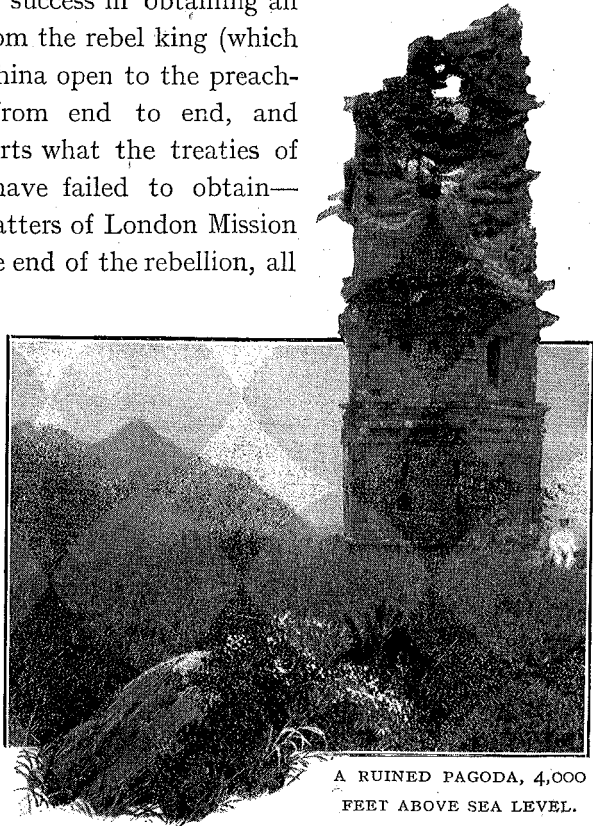
By "waiting for China to open up" it must not be thought that they had nothing to do in and around Shanghai. Theirs was a real *missionary way of waiting*: making long journeys into the country round about the Treaty Port, distributing Bibles and other Christian literature wherever and whenever there was an opportunity, and ever telling in the wonderful Chinese language they had learned to speak a still more wonderful story of the Christ of God they had learned in their far away Christian home, and were now proving the truth

of amidst a people who looked upon them and spoke of them as "foreign devils."

Dr. John and other missionaries had hoped much from the strange movement known as the T'ai-p'ing Rebellion. His journeys to the rebel camps; his success in obtaining an Edict of Toleration from the rebel king (which would have thrown China open to the preaching of the Gospel from end to end, and secured for the converts what the treaties of the past fifty years have failed to obtain—religious liberty) are matters of London Mission history. But with the end of the rebellion, all this was worth little, and the disappointment must have been great to all concerned.

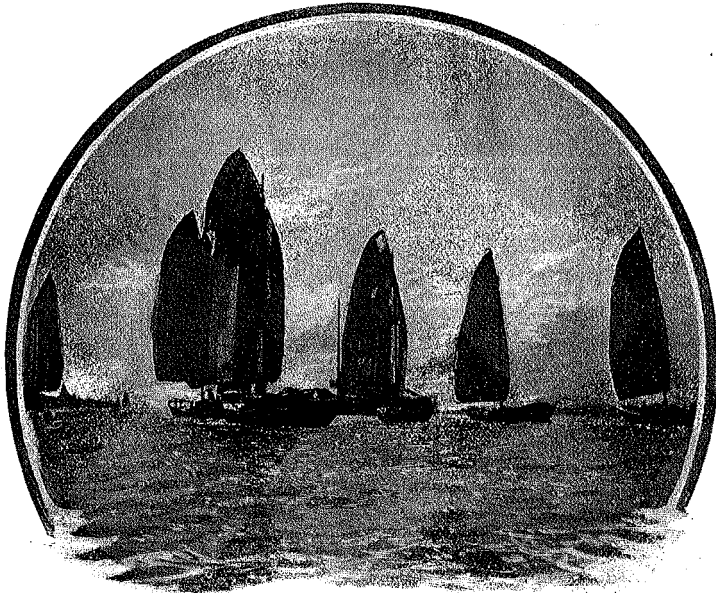
Yet all realized that it was the dark hour before day-dawn, and were persuaded that God was soon to give the open door that had so long been prayed for.

The Treaty of Tientsin was the first step in this direction. By this treaty, nine more Treaty Ports, as they are called, were opened to foreign trade and residence. This meant, too, the opening of the cities of the coast, of North China, and of the Yangtse Valley, to the influence



A RUINED PAGODA, 4,000 FEET ABOVE SEA LEVEL.

of the missionary as well as to the trade of the merchant. In the spring of March, 1861, a British naval expedition was planned to go up the Yangtse and investigate matters, with special instructions to make arrangements for opening the ports of Kiukiang and Hankow. This was an opportunity of getting up river to "spy out the land" and see what Hankow promised in the way of being a centre for



BOATS ON THE YANGTSE.

missionary work. So Dr. John went to Shanghai in the hope of being able to go up with Consul Parkes as an ordinary passenger. He was not in time to join the expedition, however, and had to try and get a passage on one of the few merchant ships that were beginning to run.

In these days we just go to the shipping office and book a cabin on a well-appointed steamer. Everything is done to make the journey

between Hankow and Shanghai both speedy and pleasant. It is but a question of choosing the day of sailing, or the particular Company's boat you prefer to travel by. The cost, too, is but £4 or so. But there was no little difficulty in arranging about that first journey of Dr. John's : many were eager to avail themselves of the very limited accommodation, so prices of tickets were high. One captain wanted over £100 to take the missionary up to the busy market-city in Hupeh ! After nearly three months of waiting, with the Rev. R. Wilson as colleague, the persistent missionary was able to secure passages on the ss. *Hellespont*, and start on that memorable first visit to the place that was to become his home.

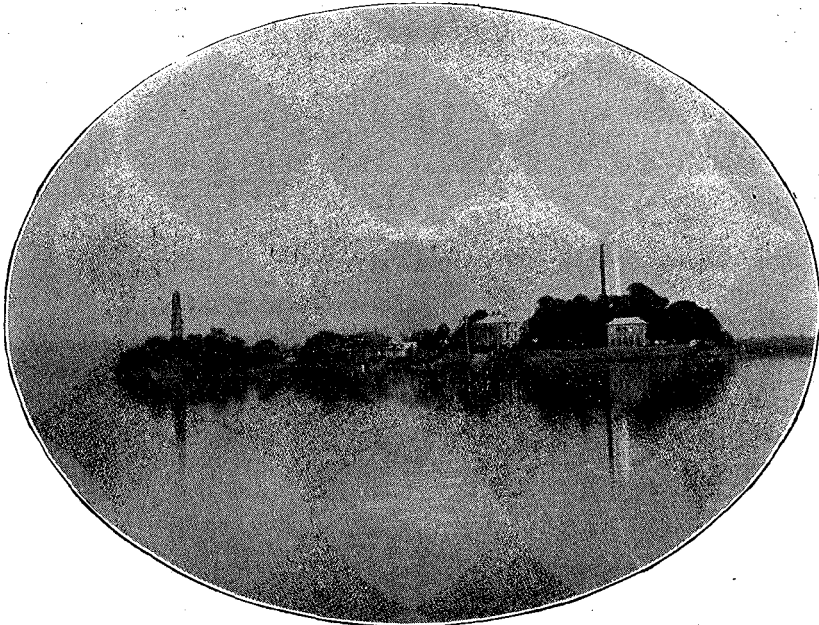
The Yangtse was in flood. And as this means that in some places the river had leaped over its banks and become an inland sea instead of a mile-wide river, navigation was not of the easiest. At length, on the night of June 21, they dropped anchor off Hankow, and waited for the morning's light.

Hankow at last ! Let Dr. John tell in his own words what it meant to him to reach the city of his desires :—

“ It would be impossible for me to describe my feelings when I found myself actually in Hankow. I could hardly believe that I was standing in the very centre of that China that had been closed till then against the outer barbarian, and that it would be my privilege on the very next day to appear as a missionary of the Cross in the streets of the famous city. I thought of the great and good men who had been longing to see what I was seeing, but did not see it. I thought of MILNE, who, on his arrival at Canton knocked earnestly for admission but was ruthlessly driven away. I thought of MORRISON who knocked for twenty-six years but died without having received the promise. I thought of MEDHURST, and remembered the last prayer I heard him offer up at Shanghai : “ *O God, open China, and scatter Thy servants.*” I thought of these and many others, who had

laboured long and well in the days gone by, and felt as if they were present on this occasion, beholding my joy and rejoicing with me in the triumph of Divine Providence over China's exclusiveness. I felt that I had got at last to the place where God would have me be; and my heart was at rest."

The next day a beginning was made. In the streets of the city,



A LOVELY SCENE ON THE YANGTSE.

more than half in ruins, Dr. John and his colleague spoke of the unsearchable riches of the gospel of Christ. And then, having found a house that could be rented, off a narrow, evil-smelling street, the two brave missionaries returned to Shanghai, but only to make preparations for a speedy return to take possession of this great strategic point in the name of the Lord. On his return to Hankow

with his family Dr. John at once began his evangelistic campaign that is not yet brought to its close. A street chapel was soon got into working order, and there, day by day, the good seed of the kingdom was sown in the hearts of men. In this place the missionary met with men from nearly all the provinces in China: men who would become interested in the Truth, return to their far off homes when the business that had brought them to Hankow was concluded, and there, hundreds of miles from the preacher, try to live out some of the new ideals of life they had learned about in the busy market city.

Soon the need for literature was found. There was no Central China Tract Society in those days; so Dr. John compiled his little booklets, that answer the ever-recurring questions, *What is the Doctrine about? Who was Jesus Christ? How can Sins be Forgiven?* and so on. These little books would be carried away to many places the missionary was unable to reach, and so become silent messengers of the Good News.

And this is how the Gospel of Christ was brought to Central China.

Nearly fifty years have passed away since then. Other helpers have come to share in the work. Some of these have fallen on sleep, some have moved to other parts of the empire, but all have had a share in the building up of the Church of Christ in the Celestial Empire. "*The little one has become a thousand.*" That little street-chapel in Hankow was the birthplace of the Central China Mission. For Dr. John was always pushing farther afield. His was ever a life given up to seeking others. And as a result there are to-day the Mission in the West at Chungking; the three centres of Christian activity in Hunan; hospitals, schools, and church in Hupeh's proud capital across the river; the Leper Home, hospital church, and schools in Hsiaokan; church, educational, and medical work that looks upon Tsaoshih as its centre; the newly-made centre at Hwangp'i which has to look after Christian work in three counties; and lastly

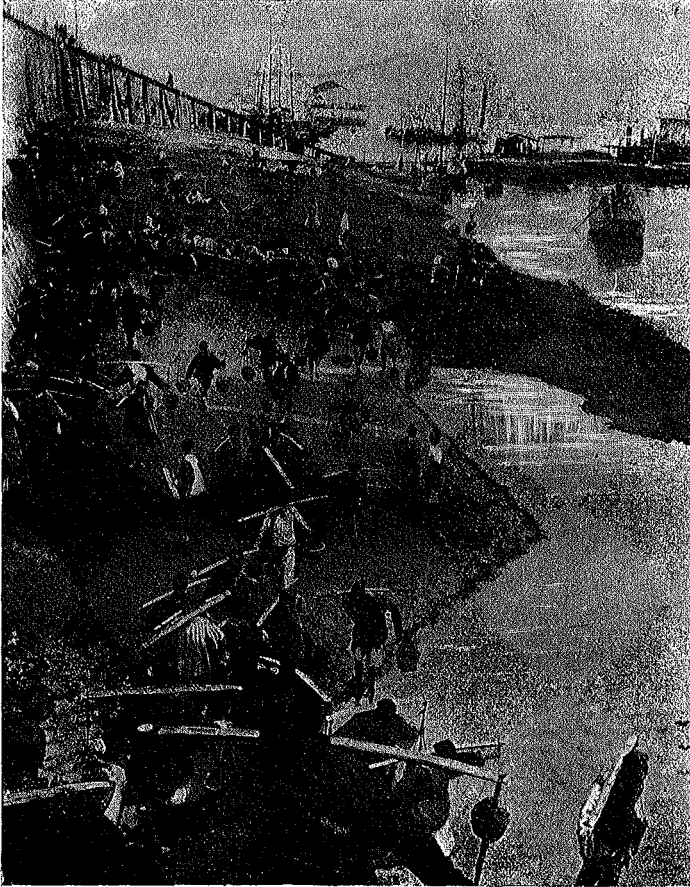
the "mother church" in Hankow itself, with all its manifold activities in preparing efficient helpers for all branches of our mission work.

It would take a visitor months of hard work to look at the work in all these centres, with their hundreds of out-stations; so we must be content to take typical institutions, and in looking at them to remember they are but parts of the whole, yet that each one represents years of devotion and prayer; and that each is there to-day because, in the Spirit of hope and patience, sorrow, loss, disappointment, and failure, have been endured and overcome for Christ's sake and the Gospel.

For some time both missionary and merchant lived as well as worked in the native city, but the Treaty of Tientsin provided for the safety of the foreigners as far as possible, and arranged that plots of ground should be set aside as "concessions," enabling them to be freed from the insanitary conditions that prevail in every Chinese city. Just below Hankow was a swampy piece of ground of about 90 acres. It was a very malarious district, and had the reputation of being very unlucky. The "*fung-shui*," or spirit influences, were all for evil and not for good. When Lord Elgin negotiated for the concession, the wily mandarins thought it would be an excellent joke to give way to the "foreign devil" in such a way as to comply with the Treaty requirements, yet let him have such a bad piece of ground, so full of all things evil, that his trade would be doomed to failure from the very first. So in due time the concession was granted, and the foreigner entered in. But in place of succumbing to the bad luck of the place, he immediately began to fill in the swampy ground (by digging up the mud deposited on the banks of the river during flood-time), made roads, planted trees, and built good houses and warehouses. Then jetties were arranged for along the river front; steamers began to ply between the market-city and the other ports in the Yangtse valley; and to cut a long story short, the mud swamp

was transformed into a quite foreign looking and foreign controlled city.

But Hankow is even now in the making. In recent years other



MUD-DIGGERS.

concessions have been granted to people of other civilized nations, until the river frontage of the foreign part of the concession is five

times as long as it used to be, and the city has grown nearly twice as wide. First Russia, then France, Germany, Japan and Belgium, all "asked for" and received concessions; more low-lying land, of course, but following the example of the British, they raised their ground, built a stone bund, or facing, at the river side, and laid their

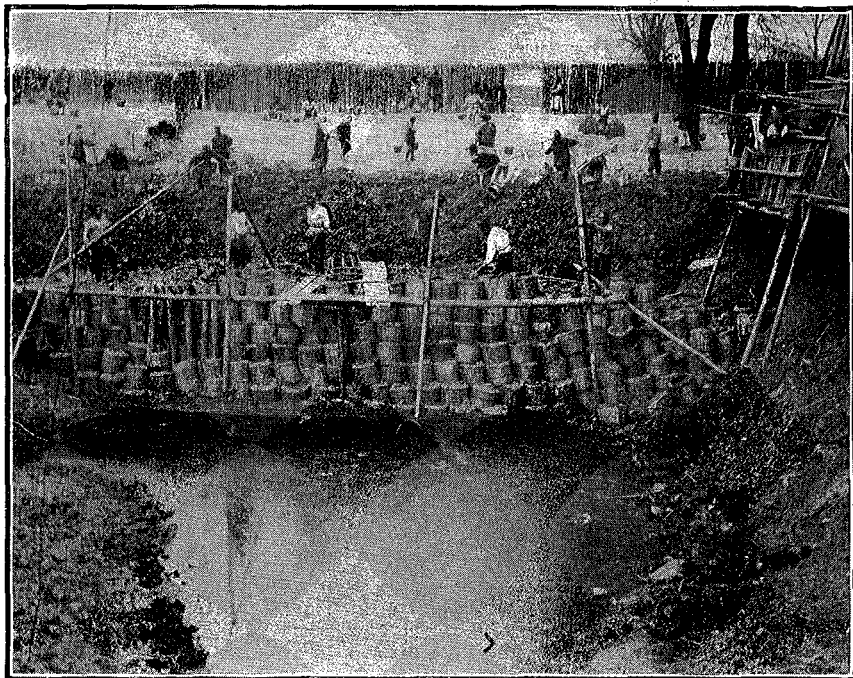


CARRYING AWAY THE SILT.

plots out in European fashion. The Japanese and Belgians have still to do a lot to make their concessions usable by foreigners, but good beginnings have been made.

This object lesson has not been without its influence on the Chinese. There has just been a land boom here; and native merchants and others have been buying up land in every direction. Great schemes

are in contemplation, some even on the way to completion. All this past winter thousands of men, women, boys, and even girls, have been busily engaged digging up the deposited mud on the river frontage and carrying it, in little woven bamboo baskets at either end of a pole, away to the back of the concession. This work, although the pay



HOW HANKOW IS BEING RAISED.

is poor—one farthing for digging up a load and carrying it for a mile—has been the only thing that has stood between many of the country people and starvation, and been to them the hand of Providence supplying the daily bread. One of their proverbs, says, “Three men of one mind, and yellow earth is changed to gold.” Of course it refers to the benefits of mutual effort, but it is true that hundreds

of tons of this earth have been turned into gold by the ceaseless toiling of these long strings of ant-like humans, as they went to and fro with their little spades and mud-filled baskets.

From the lake side, away out in the plain, there is poured in daily tons of earth, by means of trolleys on light railways pushed along by men. The ground at the back of the concession is being raised fifteen feet above the level of the plain. New roads are to be laid out, houses and factories built; and so will spring up a newer and far greater Hankow than was dreamed of, even in the days of its "twelve mile street."

One very important result of this filling up of land, is the doing away with the breeding places of the mosquitoes that swarm here in their millions during the hot weather. And this, together with the blessings of a water supply that is promised in the near future, should make Hankow a place less deadly to the foreign resident than it has been in the past.

CHAPTER III

LEARNING NEW LESSONS

IT does not take the new arrival long to find out that he comes to China to go to school before he can commence teaching the Chinese. To begin with, there is the Chinese way of looking at things that is so puzzling to us foreigners. Even the word "foreign" has a new meaning for us. Everything that is not Chinese is foreign. You are a *foreigner* to the Chinaman; your language is *foreign speech* to him; you act and think in a *foreign way*, which is often just the reverse of his way of acting and thinking. Of course *he* thinks *you* are wrong, and *you* think *he* is wrong in all these things: while all the time both may be right or both may be wrong! The fact is, life in China is very different from life in Europe; climate, manners and customs, all are different; and although some things may seem to us to be done the wrong way round, and others may be altogether against our accepted notions of etiquette, yet there is generally a very good reason for the Chinaman doing things the way he does. And if, at first, no real reason is obvious, you can shelter him either behind the excuse of ignorance or that divinity of the Celestial, "old customs."

All boys and girls in the homeland know that when meeting a Chinese friend you do not shake his hand, but raise your own clasped hands on a level with your chin and shake them *at* him, and of course he returns the compliment. When your friend asks you your age, and all about your family affairs, or when he fingers your garments and asks the price of them, he is not being rude, but acting according to *his* ideas of politeness.

After a little while you discover that very many things indeed are "just the other way round" in this land. The little girl learning to sew is taught to begin at the left-hand and work towards the right, and would never dream of going from right to left as girls are taught at home. We think it correct to put on black for mourning and wear white at weddings. But out here the proper sign of mourning is white : a white button on the hat, a white string plaited into the queue, white shoes on the feet, are all signs of deep mourning. In reading Chinese books we find that the page begins on the right-hand side, and the lines read from top to bottom of the page, so that their "finis" is written where our preface would begin. Another thing that strikes us is that the page numbers of a Chinese books are two-thirds of the way down on the outside margins, whilst the foot-notes are all at the *top* of the page. If you ask a schoolboy which way the needle of the compass points, he will tell you "Towards the south." And a Chinese sailor will speak of an east-south, or west-south wind, as the case may be.

Perhaps their manners, too, will shock us as much as ours do them. In China it is most polite to make a lot of noise, smacking the lips, etc., whilst eating ; and then, when the meal is over, it is a compliment to the host to hiccup freely. All this is good breeding ; and is intended to let the folk know how much the food has been enjoyed. It is the correct thing for a younger man to walk just a shoulder behind his elder companion : it would be rude to walk abreast of him. In the *Sacred Edict*, this is used as an illustration in exhorting the younger brother to give way to the elder. The paragraph reads, "If one of the men of old times saw a man of his own hamlet or village . . . older than himself by five years, he would follow in the rear, and not dare to hurry past him."

A Chinese gentleman would never dream of walking arm-in-arm with his wife : to do so would be a great breach of public manners. He would

not even shake hands with a lady, nor would a lady with a gentleman. Once, in a Chinese city, I was helping a lady over a lot of loose stones on the city wall, and this action provoked the approval of a bystander in the following words: "Look! Even foreigners exhibit filial piety. The dutiful son is helping his aged mother to walk." You must imagine the feelings of the lady, who was but very few years older than myself!

There is little doubt that the foreigner's life is a perpetual puzzle to the Chinese. Do as we will, there must always be many ways in which we offend against their accepted notions of propriety, both by doing what they think we ought not



HOW TO "SHAKE HANDS."

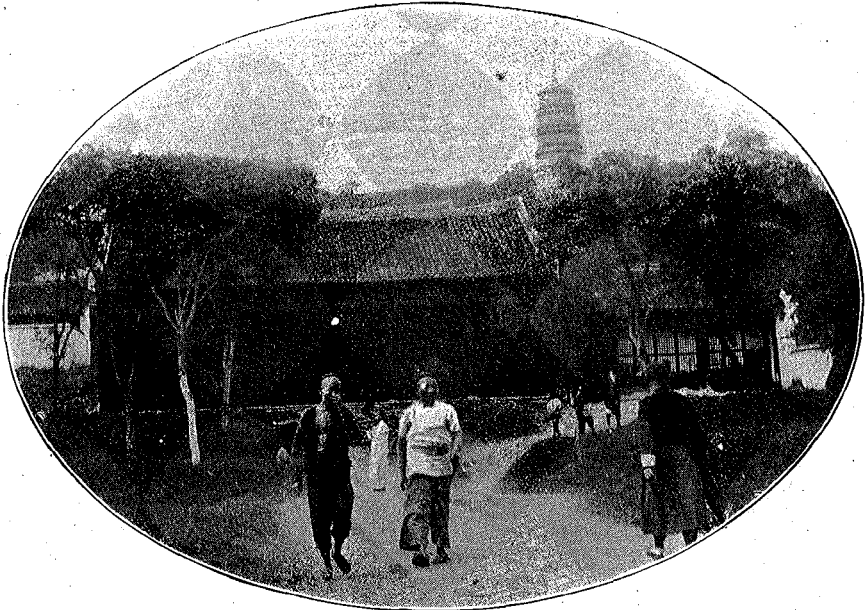
to do, and in not doing what every well-brought-up Chinaman expects we ought to do. Some missionaries make a point of trying to become like the Chinese: others feel the hopelessness of the task, and con-

tent themselves with trying to master the rudiments of politeness from a Chinese standpoint, and then try not to cause them to think worse of the foreigner than they generally do.

One writer on the Chinese religion for the Chinese has called it a religion of "Principles and Propriety." It is indeed true that a very great deal of time and trouble is taken to make the scholars familiar with the laws of propriety. Every schoolboy seems to know how to conduct himself on all occasions. To see them saluting guests in their homes, or engaging in any of the many social duties at such times as the New Year Festival, gives one the impression that they are little old men. When we are told that a book containing three thousand rules of etiquette is studied at school, we begin to understand how it is that a well-bred lad just knows exactly what to do and exactly when to do it, and is never so overcome with bashfulness as not to know what to do with his legs or his hands!

A resident amongst this people soon begins to learn that Chinese life has much to teach him about his Bible. The Bible was written by Orientals, as we know, and much of it is descriptive of life lived in oriental lands. We used to wonder however a man was able to take up his bed and walk! But a stroll along a Chinese street lets us see the meaning of this; we meet a man with his bed—either a woven rush mat in the hot weather, or a wadded quilt in the colder part of the year—slung on one end of his carrying pole, or else tucked under his arm, humming some song in a high falsetto voice as he goes along his way. In almost every village we pass through, we are certain to see the "woman grinding at the mill"—the little stone hand-mill of the east. A missionary seldom takes a journey without somewhere receiving an invitation to a "feast." Then, just before the hour appointed, comes the *second* invitation, "Come, for all things are now ready." Until this second summons comes no movement is made towards the house of the host.

Whilst at the feast, we notice that there are "higher and lower" seats. It would never do for the host to make a mistake in the seating of his guests. A friend of mine was once at a feast when such a catastrophe happened, and all the guests rose and left the house! "Friend, go up higher," is another sidelight on Bible teaching. The fact is, it is very good manners to pretend to decline the seat the host wishes you



WORSHIPPERS LEAVING A TEMPLE.

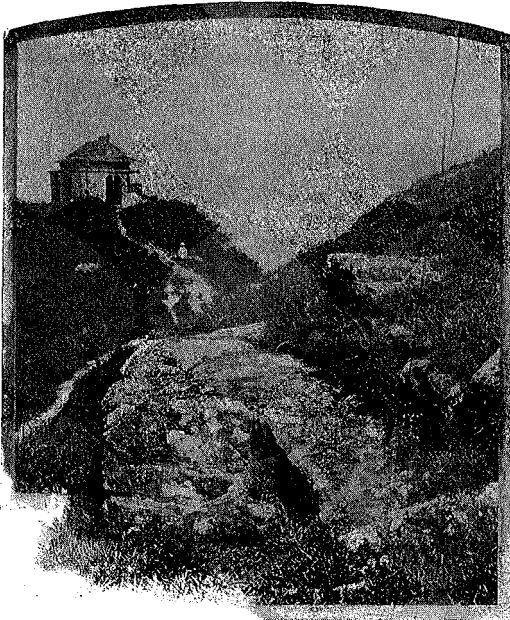
to sit in, and try to take a lower one. This is all "make-believe" humility; for every one knows perfectly well how they ought to sit, and how they eventually *will* sit; but for the sake of keeping up appearances there is a good deal of pulling one another about, and of wordy warfare, before the guests are all properly seated, each in his proper place, according to age or position. Even the boys in our schools observe this strictly: and it sometimes happens that the master has

to be called in because two boys are of the same age at one table, and as they cannot both sit on *one* seat, there is trouble until provision is made for the transference of one of the "equal ages" to another table.

The "dogs that eat of the crumbs" are a great acquisition to a feast—especially so from the foreigner's standpoint. All bones and scraps are thrown under the table, where the half-starved "*wonk*"

(dog) is eagerly awaiting his share of the good things. Many a poor missionary, hopelessly trying to swallow a huge piece of fat, which he has inadvertently taken with his chopsticks from the common bowl, has blessed the friendly dog who came to his rescue.

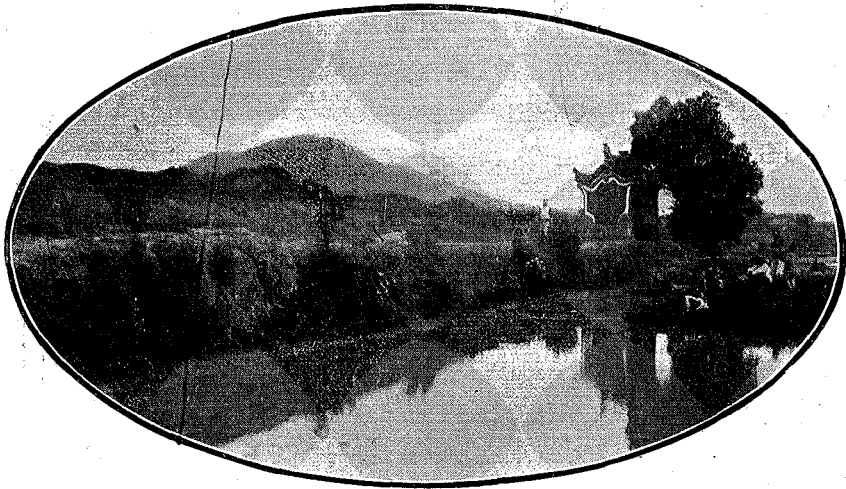
"Children playing in the market place"—it is still the old-style kind of game: weddings and funerals, with an idol procession thrown in, when there is a terrific beating of old tin canisters in lieu of



"UPON EVERY HIGH HILL."

gongs. Weddings and funerals themselves serve to light up the pages of Sacred Story, as we see the various scenes being enacted in much the same way as they were two thousand years ago. It is true that there is no chorus of happy maidens going out to meet the bride, but the friends of the bridegroom are there to escort her to her new home. The custom is only just the reverse of the Jewish method; and we sometimes

expect this in China. But if we have once seen a Chinese wedding, we no longer wonder at Jacob being deceived in his marriage with Leah ; for the bride's face is covered with a red veil until after the ceremony. Thus, not until happily (or otherwise) married, does the bridegroom lift the veil from the face of his bride. The " mediator," or " middle man " is very necessary in all matters of arrangement between two parties ; and in none more so than in settling such affairs as engagements and marriages.



"UNDER EVERY GREEN TREE."

In most parts of China silver is still " weighed out "—so many ounces of silver—just as Abraham weighed out his silver when purchasing the plot of ground for Sarah's grave.

There is a new meaning for us in that sentence of the prophet's complaint " Upon every high hill and under every green tree," when we find an idolatrous and superstitious people erecting their altars and shrines in these places, especially so when there is any freak of nature, either in shape of tree or contour of hill.

Texts are written on every doorpost ; whilst one often meets some congratulatory inscription or complimentary verse "graven with an iron pen on the rock," and this even on the tops of very high mountains.

"Hired mourners" are often to be met with, shedding crocodile tears for a couple of hundred cash a day, and making the district miserable with their wailing. Quite ready, are they, to stop for a while on the approach of the foreigner and have a good look at him and gossip about him before resuming their doleful duties.

All these customs, and many more, such as the drawing of water, wearing of sandals, casting of lots, etc., are daily reminding us of the parables from common life that were spoken by the Christ in the days of His flesh.

One other "text illuminator" and the long list will be brought to an end. What is the meaning of "*Use not vain repetitions*"? The Chinese, not unlike many religious people of other lands, do their praying in two ways, both by praying themselves and paying others to pray for them. On one of my visits to a Buddhist Temple, I found priests only at prayers. They were walking round and round in the hall in front of the great Buddha idol, ringing a little bell, and chanting their Sanscrit prayers. The sounds were Chinese, but the meaning was quite another matter. A good part of the "vain repetition" seemed to be the continuous repetition of Buddha's name—"O-mi-to-Fuh." The rhythm of the chant, the ting-ting of the bell, the solemnity of these priests, the sickly scent of the burning incense, the evening shadow in the dimly lighted temple, all these burned themselves into my memory, and had I not known something of the lives of these men when not at prayers, I might have thought what a good thing it was to find some *real* worship in China, even though it was worship of a piece of carved wood, or rather of what the figure represented. As I watched and listened, the expressionless faces, the reiterated name, the meaningless

sounds, brought before my mind the picture of the Saviour teaching His disciples to pray, and the words seemed once again to be spoken in that weird idol-temple, "*Use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do, for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.*"

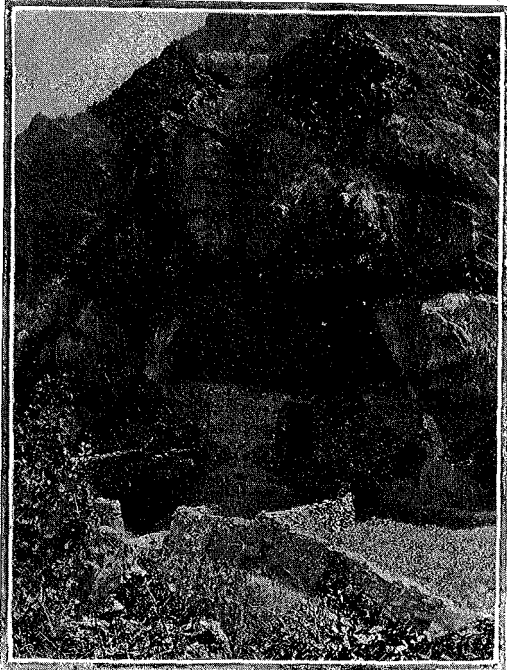
A few months later, when spring had clothed anew both hill and plain, on one of Buddha's days—the first and fifteenth of the month being sacred to him—I came in my journey to a temple in which some fifty women were kneeling down on the round grass-mats before the shrine, chanting in chorus the magic name, keeping time with their voices and swaying bodies as they bowed their heads to the ground before the idol. As soon as my presence was observed, even though I tried to keep in the shadow of the door, some of the women saw me, and in a moment worship was forgotten in the novelty of having a foreigner to look at and talk about. Not wishing to disturb them, I withdrew; and as I left the temple precincts once more rose on the morning air the monotonous chant: "*O-mi-to-Fuh, O-mi-to-Fuh.*"

○ Poor souls! Conscious of a lack in their lives: longing for some Power greater than themselves to help them: anxious to escape the pangs of hell which they are taught to expect on the other side of the river of death: they vainly hope that the endless repetition of the name will be accounted unto them for merit, and thus, in some way save them in the evil hour. To cure them from disease, to bring them happiness, they know nothing better than this "vain repetition."

Returning from my visit to a neighbouring village in the evening of that day, I remember meeting an old lady, sitting by the road side. She was curious and inquisitive, and we had a long conversation. At last, after satisfying her about my relations and friends, my clothes, my age, and many other things, I told her about the Christ of God who taketh away the sins of the world. "Is that true?" she asked; "will Jesus pardon my sins?" Then after a little further talk she said, as I left her, "I'll never worship that old Buddha idol again as long as I live.

Here I have been all this day kneeling before him till my knees are stiff, and I do not feel one bit the better for it. I am going to worship Jesus." And as I went on my way I wondered if *anything* of the Truth had got into her heart.

One other picture. It was the 1st of January and we were on the



"AT THE TOP OF A HILL WHERE WAS A TEMPLE."

top of a high hill, where was a temple. Whilst standing quietly watching an old grey-bearded fortune-teller, I noticed a young, well-dressed man come in. His child was sick; would he recover? If so, what medicine should be used. These were his questions. Without a word the old keeper of the oracles handed him a canister in which were a number of bamboo spills about one foot in length and one-eighth of an inch thick, all of which were numbered. The young man held this in both

hands in front of an idol and commenced to shake the canister, all the time repeating the "*O-mi-to-Fuh*." Presently the sticks began to rise, some higher than others, and after more shaking and more "*O-mi-to-Fuh's*" one of them fell to the ground—the idol had drawn the lot. What did it mean? We returned together to the old man (for I was greatly interested and had forgotten all about "good manners"), who

no sooner read the number, than he shook his head slowly from side to side. "What is the matter?" eagerly asked the young man. "This won't do at all, at all. You could not have drawn a worse one from the pack; better have another try," was the very *disinterested* rejoinder. So another lot of cash was given the old fortune-teller, for his rule was "Money first and fortune after," and the whole process was gone through again. This time the oracle was favourable, and the young fellow's face lighted up with hope, as the old rascal, after referring to a slip of paper that tallied with the number drawn, said that the child would recover if some part of the inside of a pig were burnt to ashes, ground to powder, and given to the little one to drink in some tea! Poor little sufferer. I wonder whether he did get better?

CHAPTER IV

“ IN JOURNEYS OFT ”

ONE day, just before Dr. John went on furlough, we were talking about the wonderful opportunities now presented in China for the Christian educationalist, and of the work the London Missionary Society might do in teaching and training the young folk in schools where there would be a Christian atmosphere. “ Yes,” said our famous missionary, “ but this would have been utterly impossible without all these years of evangelistic work. We had to sow the seed for a long time to prepare for this. Now the time has come ; and no one rejoices more than I do in these training institutions. College, Medical School, Divinity and Normal Schools : I am thankful for them all. But they can never displace the preaching of the Gospel.”

The missionary is first of all a *preacher*. He brings a new message to the Chinese : a message from God, and one that the people need, though they know it not. It would have been quite easy, in one way, to have settled down in Hankow, and formed a little Church that would by this time have got to be a self-supporting and self-governing one. But the missionaries were always thinking of *the people who had not yet heard*. So, instead of staying in Hankow, waiting for the people to come in and be taught in some marvellous way at a very distant date, the missionary just started on his preaching tour, here, there, and everywhere, wherever there was a good opportunity, and whenever he could get the time.

So, in this way, the work begun in Hankow has crept out and

out ; until now there are little groups of Christians meeting in their chapels every Sunday, in very many of the important towns and villages of this great province. Some missionaries in China are able to give themselves altogether to this pioneer evangelizing, but most of them have churches, or schools, or colleges to attend to in the centre. It is always a joy, however, to get away for a tour round the outlying districts, visiting the converts, examining and baptizing candidates at the outstations, cheering and helping the native evangelists who are left in charge of these village churches, and always finding some new place to visit, some new work to do.

Starting on a journey in China is not exactly like what it is in England. You must not think of going to a booking-office, getting time-tables that tell you how much time it will take you to do your journey, and exactly how much money you will spend. A country tour in the Far East means a perpetual triumph of patience over inclination, and of “ hope over experience.” You can generally plan for the starting, and get off within an hour or so of the appointed time, but after that it is best to have a plan that you *hope* may be carried out, but—take everything as it comes.

First there is the passport to be secured. We go to the Consulate and ask that this document may be prepared. This may take some time, as it has to be signed by the British Consul and also by the Chinese Taot'ai (an official who has charge of two or more prefectures). The passport is supposed to ensure the traveller being allowed to go from place to place without being molested or hindered by the officials, or stopped at ferries and customs-barriers. This is one of the fruits of the Treaty of Tientsin, already referred to, and gives the applicant the right to travel in any part of the provinces mentioned in the passport, for the period of one year. After this time has expired the thing is only a “ sheet of paper,” and a further passport has to be taken out.

The next step is to let the magistrate of the district to be visited know of your intended journey. A few days after this letter had gone off, and whilst we were busily engaged in making all the preparations

for a tour, my boy brought in a large red visiting card, saying, "An official to see you, sir." I soon found out that he had been sent to see me about my journey. He told me what a bad lot the people were in the district I wished to go to; how the whole country side was disturbed; and how that all the country-people would be gambling and having theatricals, and so would be very



PHOTO OF PASSPORT.

turbulent, and I might have some unpleasant times, and so on. He had really called to find out why I was going to Hwangkang, in the hope, too, that I might be persuaded to give up the idea. You will not blame him for trying to "frighten me off" if you

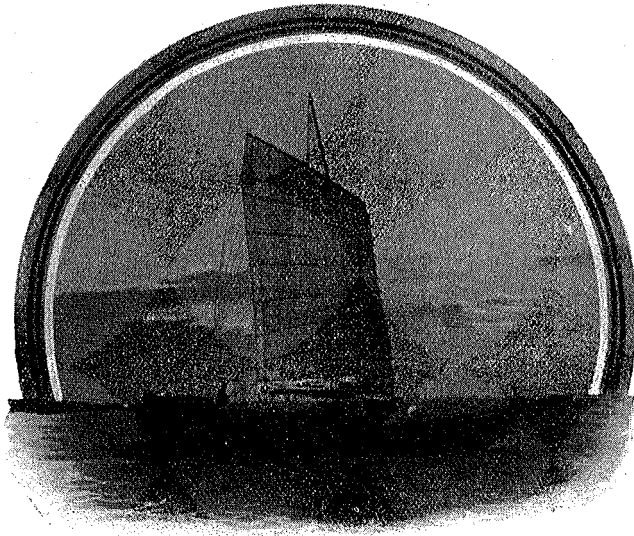
remember that the awful massacre of English and French missionaries had only just occurred in an adjoining province; and the populace, very much in ignorance as to the real facts of the case, believed that this calamity had befallen the nation because of the murder of the official by the French priest. There was another reason for his anxiety. The magistrate had been newly appointed to office, probably having had to pay a large sum of money for the appointment; and he was very anxious indeed that nothing should happen that might endanger his “button,” that is, cause him to be dismissed before he had got back in fees and “squeezes” the money he had paid out—as well as something over by way of interest.

After a long chat it was made clear that the journey was unavoidable; that I was only going to visit the various churches in the county and had no ulterior motive in going, and also that it was the most convenient time for me to go. At the same time I promised to delay my going for a few days to give them time to put out proclamations telling the people to be on their good behaviour. With this arrangement the “great man” professed himself to be quite satisfied: and after drinking tea together in English fashion, we took leave of each other in Chinese fashion with a succession of profound bows that only a Chinaman can make to perfection.

The morning of the day we were to start dawned all too early. It seemed but a few minutes after my head touched the pillow, when my boy came in with a knock at the door and an awakening remark of, “It is half-past five, sir, and I ought to be rolling up your bedding.” So far, all was well. I had got up at the right time, and we should be able to get off by seven o’clock easily! But breakfast was late; and then, just as I was sitting down, a Chinese evangelist came in to see me. Then a letter had to be written, and fellow-travellers to be waited for, and coolies to be called at the last minute to take the baggage to the boat. And then, the boy remembered that the bread

had not been packed, and the basket had already gone on board, and sundry other things that always happen in the land where a start is generally made at a much later hour than originally planned.

At length we really got off. At the riverside we picked out our boat, after a little difficulty, from amongst a score or two of craft. The bargain had been made for a whole boat to ourselves, manned by three *men*: it had also been made clear that there was to be no



OUR BOAT.

cargo on board, smuggled or otherwise. On more than one occasion it has been my happy lot to arrive at the boat only to find several unwelcome passengers fast asleep up in the bow, behind a heap of baggage. Their snores betrayed them! Of course the *laopan* (skipper) was very

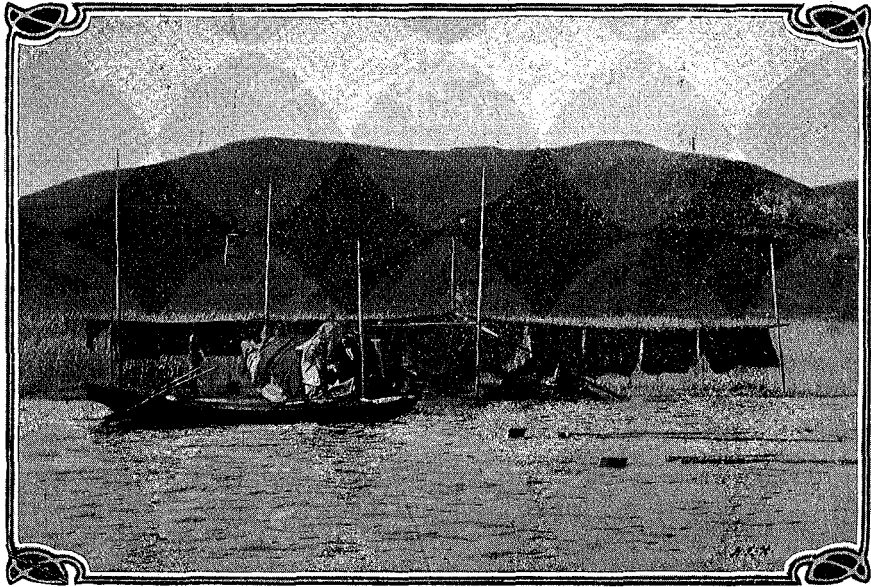
angry with them for being found on board *before we had started*: once away from the anchorage he would have presumed on the good-nature of the foreigner to let him make this little squeeze. This particular morning, Mr. Ch'en had gone along at an early hour, turned out some undesirable cargo, banished some of these unbidden passengers, kept at bay many applicants for places in the boat, and so we were spared the petty annoyances that would have made it im-

possible for us to have secured quiet conversations on the important matters we were to investigate on our journey.

A Chinese proverb runs, "*Between moving boats, cursing: but 'tween anchored boats a chat.*" We certainly experienced the truth of the first part of the old saying as we pushed and bumped our way out of the jam of boats at the jetty. As our craft moved out, each of the skippers on the outside edge was anxious to secure the vacant place, or at least get a few yards in nearer the shore. No one would give way to the other, and all used their oars as poles to keep a neighbouring boat away, or use it as a vantage ground for getting a good push; and all the time reviling one another as only Chinamen can. But with the hoisting of the sail—in this instance a choice collection of holes dexterously sewn together—and once out in the fairway, we soon left the foul language and evil smells of the riverside behind. The current was with us, the favourable wind filled out the bamboo ribs of the lean-looking sail, and with the help of our "three men" at the oar, we slipped rapidly down stream. You would wonder wherever the "three men" were, if you had made the contract and then saw the crew: I could only make out one and a half, plus a quarter in the shape of a very small boy without a hair on his head! However, the word *ren* (man) is applied to anything human, and doubtless the skipper had no qualms of conscience in charging for these oddments as being according to contract; he certainly wanted his full number of cash, and a few hundreds extra, when we reached our journey's end.

A day on the Yangtse in a small boat, sailing close in shore, makes one realize something of what this mighty stream is to China and her millions. Thousands of ships are ever coming and going on its waters, from the tiny *sampan* to the big battleship that sometimes anchors off Hankow. Millions of people are dependent on its waters. We passed hundreds of fishing boats, all busily catching yet never

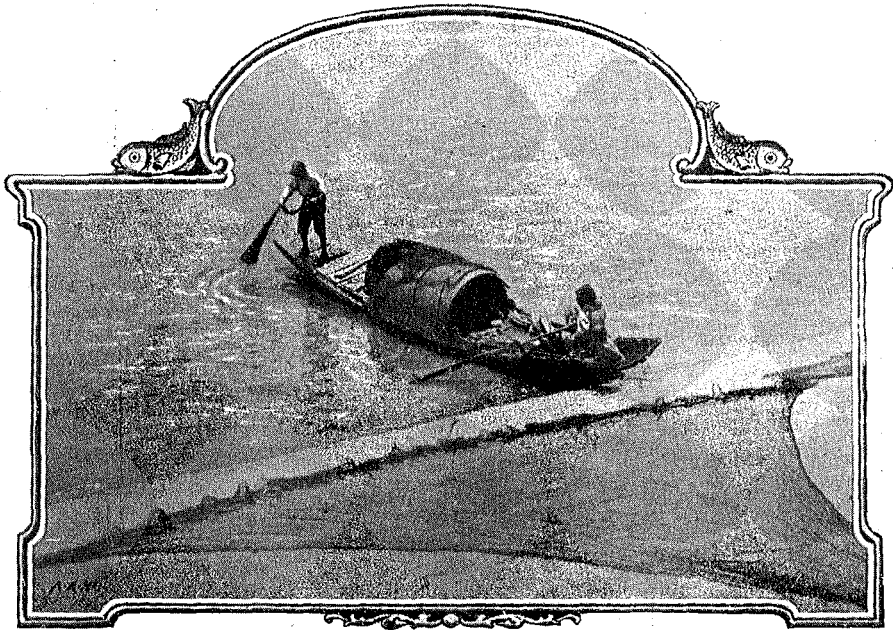
seeming to lessen the number of fish that teem everywhere. Some were trawling ; others had long lines, with a short string and a hook every yard or so, and again we met some paying out their long nets, hoping to enclose a large number of finny things in one big haul. In the shallow waters close to the banks, men were wading with large nets something like those used by the shrimpers at home : whilst we



THE CAST NET.

often passed a very characteristic kind of net on the bank. This is a kind of see-saw net which is lowered at intervals into the water. The net itself is usually about 15 or 20 square feet, though often of much greater size. Four bamboos are tied together at the thicker ends, and one tip of each is fastened to a corner of the net. This is slung at one end of an angular wooded erection fixed on the bank, so as to be easily lowered into the water and raised at intervals

to enable the caretaker to rake out the fish by means of a little net at the end of a long rod. Each fisherman has his own *plant*, or spot to work at : and there is a big row if another comes along to try and oust him. This has given rise to a proverb that is used in speaking of a selfish man : "*Each fisherman keeps his own pitch.*" For a long time I was puzzled about a peculiarly shaped net that was always put



V-SHAPED NET FOR CATCHING TINY FISH.

down close in to the bank. On the top of the water was a V-shaped frame supporting a very fine meshed net. The wide mouth pointed up stream ; and from the tapered end a narrow net-passagc led into a square box-shaped net about a foot square. Of course I knew it was used to catch fish, but I wondered why they wanted such tiny ones as that kind of net was catching, for as we passed I

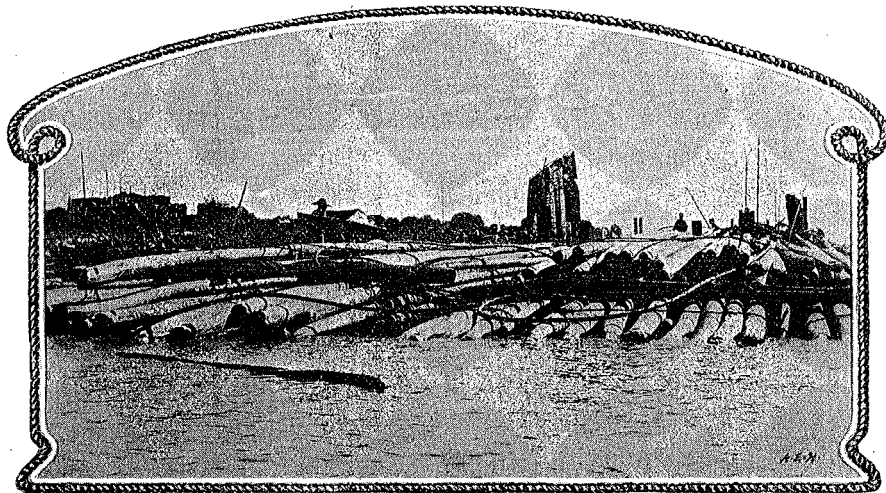
saw a man in a little boat visit one of these square nets and dip out with a basin a lot of wee, wee fishes and put them in a bucket. Later on, while we were travelling over some hills, I met a number of men carrying loads of these same tiny fish in buckets. They were taking them inland, selling them by the basinful to the farmers and villagers, who would put them into their water tanks and ponds to grow into useful ornaments for their dinner-tables in days to come !

Sometimes we passed huge rafts of timber and bamboos, being carried from their western homes to the various ports on the river. These rafts were often very large, and one of them had quite a small village living on the top in little bamboo-woven huts. The raft-villagers were mostly trusting to the current to carry them to their destination ; but at times they had to work with all their might to prevent a collision with some junk, or prevent the huge thing running aground. Such curious oars they had ! In place of the usual blades, they had a row of big wooden pegs stuck in on either side at the end of the oar ; and these long sweeps seemed to give them all the power they needed to enable them to steer past the various difficult places they came to.

After a pleasant run of three hours or so, we said good-bye to the Yangtse and turned up a small tributary towards the north. With this turn everything seemed to turn. The current was now dead against us ; the wind had shifted, too, and no longer gave us any help ; the sun hid behind a bank of heavy clouds, and before very long we were in the middle of a big thunder-storm. Then our bedding had to be rolled up to keep it out of the water that was leaking in from below and pouring in from above. The crew stopped work at the big scull in the stern of the boat, and came in for shelter with us under the leaky bamboo-woven mat that formed our shelter amidships ; and not until the heavy downpour had given place to a persistent

drizzle would they pay any attention to the rather strong language of the skipper, and start work at the scull again.

Most things come to an end. By sunset we were in sight of Ch'ang-chih Pu, and soon rowed over the flooded fields right up to the city gate. There we found Mr. Yen, our evangelist, and a half-dozen Christians who welcomed us in true Chinese manner, and formed our escort to the Hall. Of course there was the usual collection of small boys,



TIMBER RAFT.

who are always “on the spot.” The traveller finds him everywhere, and always finds it pays to be on the right side of him. I have always found it a good plan to greet him *en passant*, and thus save many an uncomplimentary epithet and many a hoot being hurled after me.

As I reached the door of the *Li-pai T'ang* (Worship Hall) four soldiers gave me a salute, and the corporal in charge handed me the card of the official who had sent them. Later on I found out that these, with two runners from the magistrate's *Yamen*, were to be my

escort throughout the tour. To their credit, be it said, they watched me well; except at night, when we were all wrapped in slumber, their eyes were always on me and my doings. On the road, if I turned aside to look at a flower or to examine a tree, they turned aside also. If I stopped, they halted; and when I moved on they followed at the respectful ten paces distance. I was shadowed by them from the time I landed in Ch'ang-chih Pu until they saw me on board my



INQUISITIVE VILLAGERS.

little ship bound for Hankow ten days later. I have to thank them for many little kindnesses, however. Some of the photos could not have been taken but for them: some of the crowds would have been more than rude but for their help: and when chairs or coolies could not be secured in the ordinary way, they settled the matter very expeditiously with the local headman who was at the bottom of the trouble: and once at least, but for their help, I should never have

forded a river dryshod. Never did I pay "wine-money" (as a tip is called in this land) more cheerfully than when giving them a few hundreds of cash each at parting.

Mr. Yen had known of my contemplated visit for at least a month, and the approximate hour of my arrival at least a fortnight; but with true Chinese forethought he refrained from making any preparations for my reception until I had actually arrived. Consequently the first half-hour of my stay in that guest room at the back of the little chapel will be well remembered. No sooner had I seated myself at the table, opposite the door, than someone brought a very dirty wet cloth and began rubbing some of the dirt of ages off the table, "so that the Pastor might have a clean spot whereat to dine." This performance over, a broom was produced, and considerable energy displayed in moving about the loose particles on the mud floor, which having been laid down many years ago, was now well worn into holes and hollows. Of course the dust soon filled the room and settled on everything in it. It was his way of showing respect, and what could one say to him?

By this time it was noised abroad that the foreigner had come. Folks began dropping in to chat with or stare at me. It is really remarkable how many texts the missionary finds to preach on: texts that are not in the Bible at all! The average Chinese guest who drops in to see the preacher is very keen on showing his interest in things Western. He by no means lets the missionary do all the talking or questioning. His "how's and "why's" are as plentiful as Autumn leaves. He wants to know all about trains, and steamers, electric light and tramways, the price of cloth and of foodstuffs in "your honourable country," your age, how many children you have, the business that has brought you to the place, and so on. This latter gives the missionary his opportunity, and before many minutes are past the "Old, old Story" is being told. Very often the guest tries to lead the talk into other

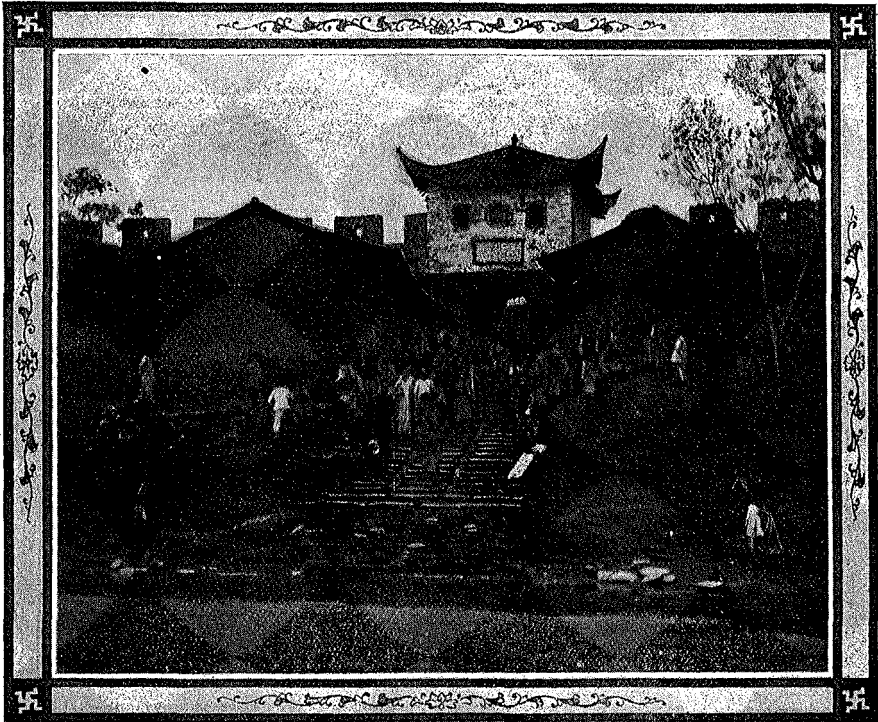
channels, and sometimes it is expedient to humour him, but in the end the visitor hears the Gospel story told. And not only the visitor, for there are many cracks and knot-holes in the board partitions of that guest hall, and each crack and hole has its bright eye: and the stifled whispering that is going on all the time the other side of the wall tells of the inquisitive listeners who are very much interested in, and busily commenting on, the conversation the missionary is holding with the local man.

After a hasty meal, taken in very primitive fashion, with quite a crowd of onlookers, we found that the little chapel was packed to the doors, and that the roadway was blocked up outside by the folk that could not get in; so not having any fixed time for service, but just leaving it delightfully vague for the "evening," we could begin as soon as the audience was ready.

A country service is not easily forgotten. The singing is decidedly a "preliminary," for most of the congregation cannot read, and being heathen have no hymn books. Those that can sing, do so with *all* their might, with little regard for time, and with none at all for the tune. The leader can pick out little bits of two or three tunes coming from different parts of the hall; and notices, too, that some get to the end of a verse when others are at the end of the third line only. But they are doing their best, and will learn better by-and-by. After the singing we bow our heads in prayer. But first we have to carefully explain to the crowd, who have come to see, what it is that we are going to do. At times, seeing the people kneel and hearing one of the worshippers addressing someone, they give a startled look around to see who is being spoken to. Then, seeing no idol, it proves too much for them and they leave precipitously. Perhaps they imagine that we are invoking the spirits—all evil ones to them—and are afraid of some calamity coming upon them.

After another hymn we begin to talk: three or four of the evangel-

ists and myself in turn explaining what the Gospel means to us and has done for us. It must sound so strange to them; so different from all that they have thought about it. A proverb or two arrests the ear; a reference to a local custom serves to open a door into the



AWAITING THE FOREIGNER'S ARRIVAL.

mind; and then one has the ready attention of an audience as long as the preacher is interesting. To-night they all seem in a listening mood; for very few of them go away at the close of an address. It is very interesting to watch them from the little platform. The first few rows are seated; but then the crowd gets too thick for the seating accommodation and they stand as thickly as they can squeeze

together ; behind these, again, there are one or two rows standing on the forms ; whilst the window-sills at the rear are well patronized. There is one youngster who is of an inventive turn of mind, for I see him bring in a small square table on which several of his young comrades can stand with him, and thus have the privilege of being in a " reserved seat."

Of course, there are some interruptions. One strong-minded woman comes in search of her husband, and finding him sitting down in the front, at once suspects him of " eating the foreign religion," and tells him to come home. A chance remark, however, arrests her, and she stays quite a long while listening to the story. Another has come away with the key in his pocket and has to be called out to give up the needed article. Yet another has a joke at the preacher's expense, but is promptly subdued by those around him. One asks a question—not one of the subtle Hindu kind, but with reference to a real tangible difficulty. " How can your religion be good when you tell people not to ' *chin Seng* ' (reverence spirits) ?" Here is the preacher's opportunity ; and he explains about the true worship of the True Spirit that it is our one aim to teach. Another says : " Why do you teach people not to honour their ancestors or parents ? " Again, the true reverence of ancestors, and the true honouring of father and mother by obeying them whilst living, is contrasted with the lack of care while they are in the flesh and the worship of their names when they have passed away.

The crowd are always interested in hearing these questions answered, and appreciate a straightforward attempt to clear up a difficulty. There is not much trouble as a rule in getting an ordinary Chinaman to agree with you that all men have sinned. A proverb, current in some parts, says, " *There are two good men : one is dead, and the other is not born yet.*" There are some who do not at first follow the meaning of the man who is speaking of " sin," because to the Chinaman the

term "sin" and the "punishment for sin" are identical. I used to wonder at the often-heard blind beggar's lament, as he sat by the roadside asking an alms: "My sins are great, my sins are great! Give a copper." One day I discovered that he was not thinking of *his own* evil doings at all, but meant that this calamity had come upon him because of the sins of a previous incarnation—he was really speaking of this *punishment* as being for sins committed when he was alive in a previous generation, for he believed in the transmigration of souls. Others again say, "Sin? What sin have I committed?" They think only of the grosser forms of wrong-doing like murder.

Sometimes the meaning they get hold of is not quite the one the preacher wishes to teach them. For instance, about four years ago a missionary told me the following story: "Last Sunday afternoon I was preaching in the church on the text 'Without shedding of blood there is no remission [of sin].' At the conclusion of the sermon a well-dressed man came up to the front of the pulpit and asked to be allowed to say a few words. He then went on to say that he had committed sin, and as what the preacher had said was true, he wished to have his sins remitted; and thereupon drew out a knife and gashed his own wrist so that the blood flowed freely!" This was not at all what the preacher had been saying, was it? To use a Chinese idiom, "The preacher spoke *east* but the man understood *west*." But generally when the theme is the forgiveness of sin, and the mercy of God, there is a sympathetic audience, and a good many affirmative noddings of heads, as well as well-meant compliments to the new religion, such as "The man may be a foreign devil, but what he says is true."

After the service has gone on for about two hours or more, the smoky lamps begin to burn dim. Some of the audience get sleepy or yawn very audibly, so with singing the Doxology and prayer,

the meeting comes to an end. Some stay behind for a further talk on some of these matters, and promise to come to the regular Sunday services. A few tracts are sold and explained, and then the front door is closed as the last few stragglers leave with a new thought in



THE PROPHET'S CHAMBER AT LIN SAN HO.

their hearts about the foreigner and the strange story he has to tell about the forgiveness of sins : how that

Jesus, who lives above the sky,
Came down to be a man and die.

Just before midnight, all feeling very sleepy, we get through our

church business with the evangelist in charge, and prepare for bed. There was no bedroom for me; yet it was better so, as I had the large guest room for myself instead of some little stuffy hole without any ventilation. Two stools were brought from the chapel, a door was taken off its wooden hinges, and soon I was wrapped in my wadded quilt fast asleep on this springless mattress. Not for long, though. First came some belated travellers from the station we were to visit next day. They had come to lead the way, and had to be provided with a plank-bed in the chapel. Then, next door it sounded as if a Vulcan were forging thunderbolts, so much noise did he make. It was a brass-worker who had been lazy all day, and now was making a great effort to get a large boiler finished by dawn! The family dog took up his abode under my bed, and every now and again gave me a gentle reminder that he was there taking care of me. It was thoughtful, too, but not over kind, of good chanticleer to remember that I had brought no watch, and so give a lusty crow every hour or so to let me know that time was passing; whilst at intervals the watchman trudged along the street beating his hollow bamboo, crying out the hour, and warning all thieves and evil persons to get out of the way. On the whole, I was rather glad when five o'clock came round, and we all began to get up and prepare for the journey before us.

CHAPTER V

FROM VILLAGE TO VILLAGE

THE boat is exchanged for the sedan chair, or humbler barrow, when the waterways are left behind. Neither is an ideal way of travelling, from any point of view. The barrow, with its great wheel screeching in its wooden axle, bumps you all to bruises as the sturdy wheeler trundles along over the rough unkept roads, now in deep ruts, now through deep mud, and again over loose stones and boulders. On the other hand, no one likes to be carried on the shoulders of men for the greater part of a day. It goes against the grain altogether. The only other way is to walk: but that means arriving at the journey end too fatigued to work properly. The traveller in China has to do as China does in getting from one place to another. So we just swallow our feelings, hire a chair, and determine to give the bearers as frequent a rest as possible by getting out and walking.

In the clear Eastern atmosphere we are seen from afar as we wend our way through the rice fields; and at each village entrance the women, children, and the few old men who are beyond work, are out to welcome us. At one place it must have been dinner time, for all had their rice bowls and chop-sticks in their hands. It was amusing to see the way the little ones kept their eyes glued on the "procession," all the while shovelling the rice into their mouths as hard as they could! We were much struck by the stately appearance of one venerable silver-haired dame who was out to see a

foreigner for the first (and perhaps the last) time in her life. I do not know what sort of being she expected to see, but we came along so quickly that she had no time to get ready to take in the strange sight. A startled, excited "Ho!" that made everybody laugh, was her only ejaculation; and we had passed by before she had recovered from

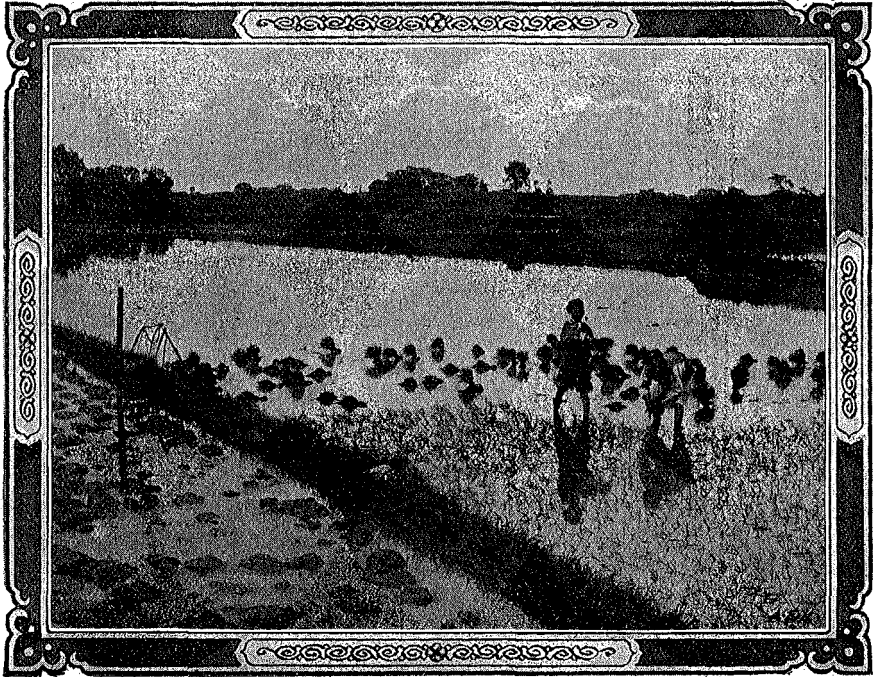


RICE FIELDS.

the shock of seeing such ordinary looking folk, instead of the awful beings she had imagined us to be when telling her grandchildren of the "foreign-devils" and using them as bogeys to frighten naughty children to sleep.

It reminded me of a time when I was travelling across one of the rice plains some six years ago, and heard an old lady crying out,

“Where is the foreigner? I hear there is a foreigner coming. Where is he?” All the time she was hobbling along as quickly as her poor bound feet would allow her. So I thought I would let her see the “strange sight!” When she came up to the place where I was standing, I introduced myself to her. She looked at me steadily



PLANTING OUT THE RICE.

for a few moments, and then said incredulously, “You a foreigner? Why! you have not got devils’ eyes; and you are not ugly to death! You a foreigner! *Ai yah!*”

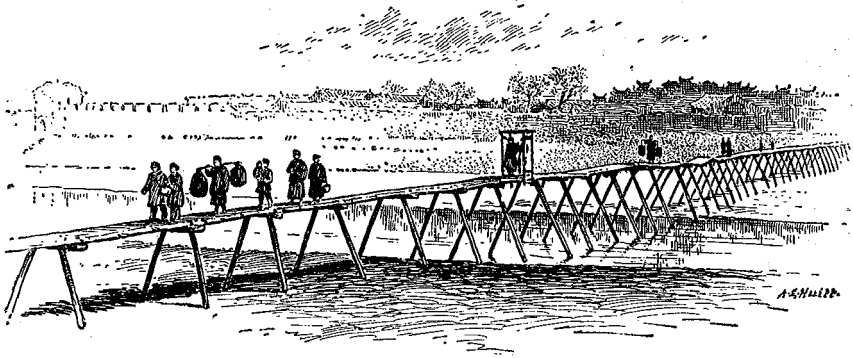
About mid-day a halt was called for a meal; it was a lovely shady spot we had come to. No noisy village within sight; just the place for a picnic. But my coolies thought otherwise. What was the

use of staying there, with no table and no stools to sit on. At the village, only a mile ahead, there was an inn where we could get all we required! After half-an-hour's walking we came to the place—a collection of mud and grass hovels. There certainly was an inn—of a kind. It consisted of one big room, black with the smoke of years. The fire had been lighted in it daily to cook for any wayfarer who wanted a meal, and as there was no chimney the smoke had to find its way out through the cracks in the roof or through the low open doorway. There were two stools in the place, and we secured one. A table, too, was found—a small collection of very dirty boards somehow laid on four rickety legs. The villagers soon made a circle round us when the table was taken out on to the road in front, and in the centre of a ring of wondering eyes our table was spread.

It would all seem a very ordinary lunch to you boys and girls at home. But these people had never seen such a sight before. They looked eagerly at the knives and forks and enamelled plate and cup and saucer and no doubt thought it was very barbarous to eat that way instead of using the *kw'ai-tsi* ("nimble boys"), as chop-sticks are called. When my boy produced two oranges they felt more at home, and grew quite excited as to which boy would get the *peel*. Then we had a little talk with them under a big willow, telling them, as we had told many such a little group of almond-eyed, black-haired villagers before about the Carpenter of Nazareth, who once was a villager in Judea, but who was really the Son of God who had come to bring heaven near to men, and men near to God. As we left, we were followed a short distance by sturdy legs, and a long way by wistful eyes, until a dip in the hills took the strange-looking man with his strange-sounding message away from their sight—perhaps for months, perhaps for years, perhaps for ever.

After leaving this latter village we had an uneventful journey to Li-kia-ki, our next stopping place. As the sun was setting we came

to the trestle plank bridge spanning the now shallow river. It was only wide enough for one to cross at a time, though I measured it some 240 paces long; it appeared to be about twenty feet above the water. It reminded me of the old fable of the goats, to see some coolies lying flat on the bridge to let an empty chair cross over them. Half way across *we* had similar difficulties to get over. One was to get past a group of well dressed girls who were crouching down, and clinging to the unprotected side of the bridge, to let us pass. Then we entered by a great hole in the city wall made by the recent floods.



THE BRIDGE AT LI-KIA-KI.

Whilst staying at this place many were the stories told of the ravages made when the floods were out. Water had been standing in the rice fields fifteen feet deep, whilst the river that now flowed along so peacefully had risen forty feet in a single night. Barrowmen and heavily-laden coolies had been swept away by the rushing waters; ferry-boats, heavily freighted with terror-stricken men and women, trying to get away to a place of safety, sank with all on board. Passing along we had seen everywhere traces of the mischief that had been wrought. One hamlet had been entirely demolished, not one house

was left standing ; in other places the wooden house-skeletons were there, but the walls, built of sun-dried bricks, quite good enough for ordinary times, had collapsed altogether when the floods stood around them and dissolved the " feet." I asked how many lives had been lost, but no one could tell. They told me of the terrors of one night in the city, when houses fell by the score, burying and crushing their inmates ; some in cases transfixing them with the broken, falling beams. Even as I write, ruin stares many in the face, for the floods left all the fields covered with fine sand, that has to be carried away or trenched in before there can be any crops. Many of the men have gone away to try and get work in other parts of the country, and it will take a year or two to make this part of Hupeh into a fruitful field. Here and there were a group of women trying to get at the soil under its load of sand ; their only hope being to get a few square yards on which to grow some food, against the coming days of famine. Away on the distant horizon could be seen the mountains of Honan, lifting their peaceful heads to the blue sky, as all unconscious of the calamity they had sent when they poured their sandy torrents on to the fertile plain below.

You will be glad to know that last week (May 5) the Hankow church collected 328,000 cash (about £35) for the relief of the sufferers. It will help many to buy seed or otherwise tide them over their difficulties.

On our journey through this county we found the attitude of the people to the Gospel, the receptions we received, the scenery we passed through, all as variable as the weather we experienced,—one day scorched by the heat : the next unable to move because of a heavy storm raging, and then when we did get off, having to wade through mud and water up to our knees. At times we were on the plain—a dull monotonous level, only relieved by the hundreds of hamlets that looked like islands in a green sea of growing crops.

The thought *will* come,—what a number of years it will be before the Gospel reaches each of these “islands!” Standing on a little knoll I can count half a hundred of these clusters of houses, and am told that there is not a Christian living in any one of them. “Is it not hopeless,” says some one, “to expect the conversion of China,



A CELEBRATED TEMPLE BUILT ROUND A CAMPHOR TREE.

when all over the eighteen provinces a similar sight may be seen : as far as the eye can reach, nothing but heathen temples, and peoples that bow down, when they bow down at all, to deaf and dumb and blind idols ? ”

Just think for a moment ! With great difficulty a beginning was made in this county only thirteen years ago. So far from Hankow,

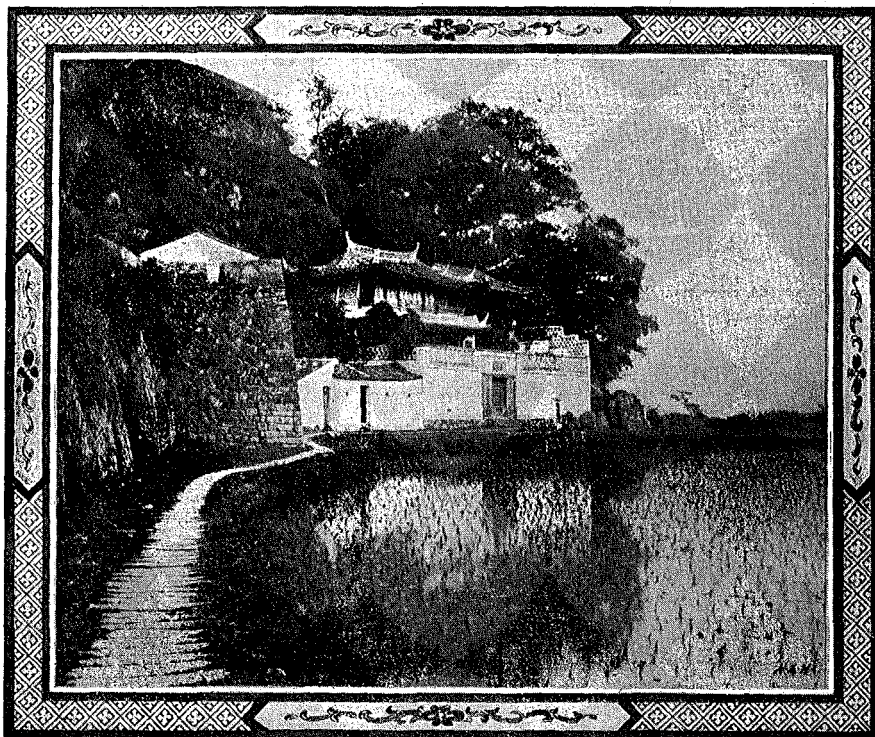
and with very little foreign supervision on the spot, in spite of persecutions from without and trouble from within the little church, the work has slowly grown and spread out, until now there are services held in thirteen different places. Much preparing of the ground and much sowing has been done, no little reaping, too, has rejoiced the missionaries' hearts as they have gone round examining candidates for baptism. And while there may be much to disappoint, there is also as much and more to wonder at, that in such a little while GOD has given such an increase. Morrison and Milne hoped that after a hundred years of work in China there *might* be a thousand Christians won to Christ. And now that the hundredth year has come to its close, we find that there are nearly **four times that number of missionaries** at work in the Empire, and **two hundred times as many church members** ! Our successors, a hundred years hence, will be counting the small number of heathen left !

Once, passing through a village, we came upon a woman who was standing out in the roadway, screaming out curses at the top of her voice. We had heard her long before we saw her ; and her shrill voice followed us long after we had left the place. " What is the matter ? " I asked. " Oh, a thief has stolen something of hers that she left out to dry, and she is cursing him and his ancestors."

Another time, just as the evening shadows had come down on plain and mountain, and when the hour of stillness had come over all, we were startled by hearing a woman's plaintive voice begin to wail at the side of a coffin a little way up the hillside. She began softly, in a way that gave one an eerie feeling, until it was discovered that it was no wandering sprite howling in the darkness, but a poor woman whose heart was aching because the breadwinner had gone out into the unknown and she knew not whither he had gone. After a little while her voice grew louder and shriller until there seemed to be no other sound in heaven and earth but that wailing of a desolate soul. Even

while the longing came to be able to take some message of comfort to her, the voice died away, and the quietness that came seemed almost to hurt one's ears.

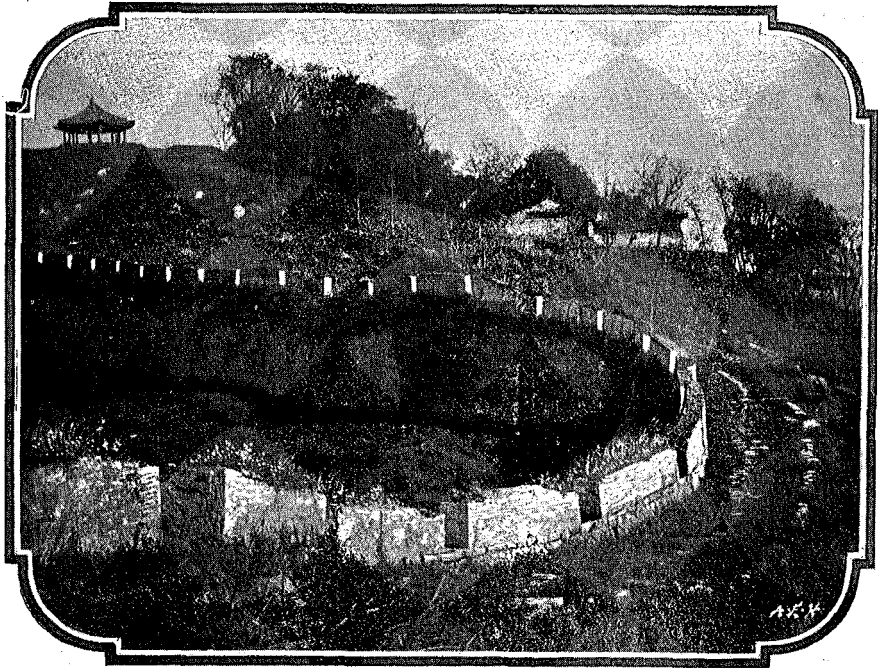
This chapter would be far too long if I told of all the sights, strange



TEMPLE TO THE GOD OF RICHES.

to English eyes, that were met with ; of the huge water buffalo ponderously dragging the primitive plough through the muddy rice-patch ; of the curious-looking chain pumps worked by the feet of two or three men and boys, raising the water from the lake or pond to the fields above ; or of the various cities and villages we visited and

stayed in. I have already given you some idea of the country service in districts where the work is still young, and the majority have not yet become interested in the Truth. In the main, it is but a repetition at each place, with various little differences owing to the increased friendliness, or otherwise, of the villagers or townsfolk.



SAN TIEN CITY WALL.

Many are the stories we have to hear of the Christians being subjected to persecution in times of heathen festival. At one market village, there was an old man dragged by the hair of his head the whole length of the street, because he would not pay the idol dues at the Dragon Boat Festival! Sometimes the trouble seemed to be

brought about by want of tact and patience on the part of the half-enlightened inquirer ; but we must remember how slowly the truth of Christianity dawned upon our own land, and how slowly the way of the Cross is yet learned even by people who have been all their lives brought up in a land where Christianity is not the "foreign" but the "native" religion, and then we shall have more sympathy with these little ones in the faith, where all the law that is, is against them and their religious grievances.

In the course of our journey we came to a place called San Tien, or Three Taverns. It is a busy market town, looking like a real city encircled by its big stone wall. It is in a district sometimes visited by the robbers from the mountains, and so all the larger towns are thus protected. Our little chapel in the neighbouring town is in the remains of a house nearly all destroyed by one of these robber bands. The charred ends of the beams still remain as silent witnesses to the ill deeds done years ago.

I had been told that this was to be the first stay of a foreigner in Three Taverns Town, but that the people would be quite friendly. This proved to be a true prophecy. For in spite of the immense crowd of people that made it almost impossible to get along the streets, even the small boys were on their best behaviour.

This was to be a red-letter day for the few Christians who live here. The chapel was to be formally opened for worship, and the first believers baptized and received into the Church. Within half-an-hour of our arrival the "whole city was gathered together at the door." More than once the patience of my escort was on the point of giving out, for some fellows "of the baser sort" were by no means easy to deal with ; and more than once I had to go out and tell them not to beat the people who were trying to crowd into the house. Next morning I heard that one rascal, afraid to say anything against the *men* of our party, thought he could curse the evangelist's wife with impunity,

but that the corporal had given him a caning for it. However, I did not see anything of it. Perhaps it was as well.

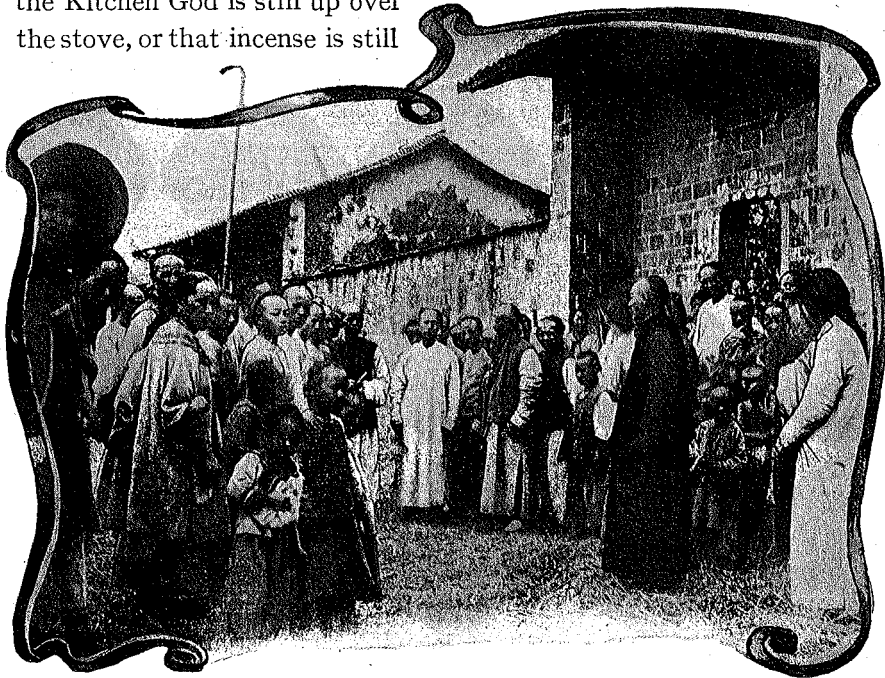
At half-past four in the afternoon we were told that all the inquirers had come, and were ready for examination. So, with the help of the two evangelists who had come with me from Hankow, the work commenced. Most of these people had been professing Christians for over two years, and some for even a longer period. You see, it is very difficult to get to know the reason a Chinaman has for joining himself to us; and we have to take many precautions that would not be necessary at home. It used to be said that the early days were the days of "rice Christians," as they were called, when men came to *ch'ih riao*, that is to EAT the doctrine. You may remember that one of Dr. John's first visitors was a boy who came with this idea in his head—the foreigner had come to give away food, etc. This stage has been passed through. Then came another stage, when men found in Christianity a new power that would come in and help them against the oppression of their unrighteous rulers. This was the *law suit* stage, when men came hoping to get justice without having to ruin themselves by getting it through bribing the magistrate. And this, too, is passing away. But great care is necessary, for even with all the probation and public examination of a candidate, a good many weeds still get planted in the garden of the Lord, and have to be rooted out; alas, after sometimes dropping a good deal of their seed to spring up in days to come.

What is an examination like?

Well, it is, firstly, an attempt to find out if the man has been trying to learn the lessons Christianity teaches, and seeking to know what the true religion and worship of God is. So we begin by asking a good many questions about Jesus Christ, and the way of forgiveness. We also ask the candidate about idol worship and other evil practices.

But as most of these questions can be answered by learning Dr.

John's catechism, the missionary tries to find out something of the man's ideas about good living. He is asked about his trade or business: about his desire of joining himself to us, and about the duties of a Christian to others. Often in this cross-examination some fact leaks out, that tells us the man or woman is not clear of idol worship—the Kitchen God is still up over the stove, or that incense is still



PASTOR LIU PREACHING TO A VILLAGE STREET AUDIENCE.

burnt to the idols; or else that the man is a gambler, or an opiumsmoker.

It was a very mixed lot that came up for examination at San Tien that evening. One man was a bumptious young fellow who came up to the table and sat down with a swagger and leer. After answering a few doctrinal questions in a very ostentatious manner, he began to snigger. He was promptly pulled up short, and sent away to learn the

first principles of Christianity. We found out later that he had induced the young colporteur here to put his name down as an inquirer on purpose to make fun of us and our religion; but the "joke" was turned against him, and his boon companions gave him a bad time of it for having failed. One man, who seemed to know all about the truth, and who, from his answers, appeared to be a conscientious man, gave us no little trouble of soul. *Something* told us something was wrong. When asking him about gambling I detected a smile on the face of a bystander—a smile that was instantly smoothed away into a look of stony indifference when he saw I was looking at him. So I declined to let him pass. Later on it came out that he had been an inveterate gambler for years, and was still addicted to this vice. Another man was found to be an opium smoker. He resolutely denied the accusation, even though his face told its story all too plainly. He was caught by an *apparently* careless remark to which, taken off his guard, he assented. "Not got to the craving stage yet, eh?" "Not yet," was the reply that made the listeners fully aware of his situation. I could not help feeling sorry for him. He was in earnest about the whole matter, and wanted to become a Christian that he might be free of his evil habit. Perhaps he thought there was some magic in the water he would be sprinkled with in baptism, and that this would set him free from the scourge. At any rate, I had to tell him he could not be received into the Church, even though he only smoked a *little* of the hateful thing, but that the Christ could enable him to break the power of this sin, and free him from the chains of this vice. We urged him to get cured of the habit, and present himself at our next visit.

But this is all one side, and that the dark side, of the story. Many are the stories we hear that gladden our hearts that night. One husband and wife have come together to publicly confess Christ. She is by far the more intelligent, and is really a woman "whose heart

the Lord has opened." He is a simple-minded countryman, who seems to have been led into the fold by his wife. This much is certain: they have both learned to love their Saviour, and have already endured hardness for His sake. We gladly welcome them.

Two young men of eighteen years are quite bright. One of them is a young scholar. He answered a good many questions from Matthew's Gospel, and had evidently thought much for himself on some of the great matters that perplex all minds that try to find out who we are, whence we come, whither we go.

After about two hours of steady examining, we have to stop. My fellow travellers remind me that we have had no meal since the morning and that now is a favourable opportunity to look after these creature comforts. The interval passes, and we once again give ourselves to the welcome task of seeking from among the many those who are ready for baptism.

It is a very unique examination service, I must confess. Never before nor since have I had one exactly like it. At such times one likes to get the candidate alone, and really get to know something of the way he has been led to find the Christ; but on this first occasion in San-tien it was out of the question. The Chinese mind—ever ready to suspect the worst of the foreigner—might imagine all sorts of things going on in secret, so we have to make these sacred things public property for this time. The opportunity is fraught with glorious possibilities. At times over sixty are crowded into that little room at the back of the chapel, to hear the candidates asked questions; and as the story of the Cross is gone over fifty times that night, many must have got such a grasp of the "fundamentals" as would not be possible in the ordinary way. It is amusing to note how the heathen audience enters into the spirit of the examination, and when one candidate, through nervousness, made a mistake in answering a question, a smart youth, who had never heard the Gospel before that day,

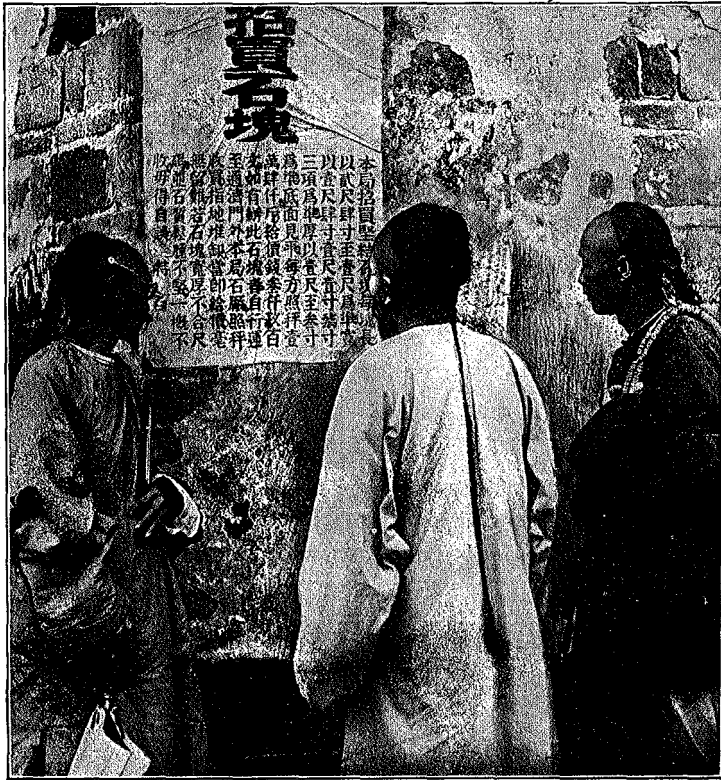
was keen to correct him, and then blushed crimson at his temerity as he saw my smile that greeted his well-meant effort. The greater part stay the whole evening, and by the time we get to the last ten or so, a great number of heads nod approval at a correct answer given, or shake soberly at a mistake.

It is 10-30 p.m. before we have finished and the case of the last candidate is decided on, and as we are to be on the march by 6 a.m. on the morrow, we have to hold the dedication service and baptismal service forthwith. Even at this late hour the interest of the townspeople is fully sustained, and there are as many outside in the open space before the chapel as there are within the building. The whole of the front, consisting of shutters, is taken down so that all may see and hear, and we have a splendid gathering that lasts until after midnight. Even then it is with difficulty we get the people to go home. Twenty-five adults and five children were baptized, and a greater number entered on the Inquirers Roll. With thankful hearts, though tired bodies, we went that night to bed.

My next experience of San-tien was of a very different nature. In one way it was the same—crowds of people gathered together to welcome us, but were not quite so noisy as on the previous visit, and as there was to be no baptism service this time we had quite a long evening before us, which we hoped might be a fruitful preaching of the Gospel. We waited some little time after our evening meal, selling booklets and chatting to the people, who (as Evangelist Ch'en said) always had "hungry eyes," no matter how long they stared at us; and then, as the folk began to settle down, we decided to have service.

The people of this district have a reputation for being rowdy, but as on the previous visit all the pushing and crowding had been of a good-natured curiosity order, I thought little of the rather boisterous demonstration made by two or three, when at seven o'clock I tried to get order and commence.

The "pulpit" here is a little platform with a reading desk facing the door. The little chapel is only some thirty feet in depth, so the platform and doorway are not far apart, quite near enough for the one in the light to be easily seen and heard by those in the darkness



READING A PROCLAMATION ABOUT THE NEW RAILWAY.

without. We went through the preliminary part of the service in quietness; but soon after our veteran evangelist Mr. Liu began to speak the storm burst. One or two people at the doorway began to make a noise; and a stone was thrown against the wooden shutters

in front ; but merely asking the people not to make a noise, Mr. Liu went on with his address.

At this juncture, a shopkeeper came in and began to take down the shutters, saying " We can neither see nor hear," but as he was behaving very rudely, I went down to stop him. It was fortunate that I did so. No sooner had I reached the floor than a volley of bricks and pieces of stone, hurled at close range through the open doorway, struck the back of the pulpit just where my head would have been. Volley after volley came, but providentially no one was hurt. A Chinese lantern was smashed just over my head, but the one large paraffin lamp escaped. The only one struck was old Mr. Liu, and that only by a rebounding stone. Some of the missiles narrowly missed the Rev. Dr. Taylor, who was accompanying me on this journey. The pulpit front was smashed in, and other damage done to the wood-work, however.

We presumed that the rascals, after bombarding us in this manner, had run away, for there came a lull, and Mr. Liu went on speaking, hoping the affair was over. But after a short interval the stoning recommenced, and there was nothing for it but to close the meeting with the singing of the doxology and the benediction, all to the accompaniment of the breaking of tiles on the roof, and the rattling of stones on the shutters.

The town constable came, and he and our escort did all they could to stop the disturbers, but the spirit of evil seemed to be abroad, and stones came flying through the darkness from all directions. The evangelists came and asked me if I would send my cards to the local gentry, the *Literati*, telling them of our little trouble, and asking them to use their influence. For they are supposed to be responsible for the good behaviour of the people. Fully knowing it would be useless, I did so and then we sat down, quietly praying that nothing serious might occur. You see, we realized we were in our Father's

keeping, and had no reason to be afraid. If we had shown signs of fear it would have been very bad for the many converts who were gathered with us.

As anticipated, the *Literati* proved but broken reeds, and we then found out that the old evangelist had previously sent to them without my knowledge at the very beginning of trouble, but their answer to his request was that they were "too busy to come." When the

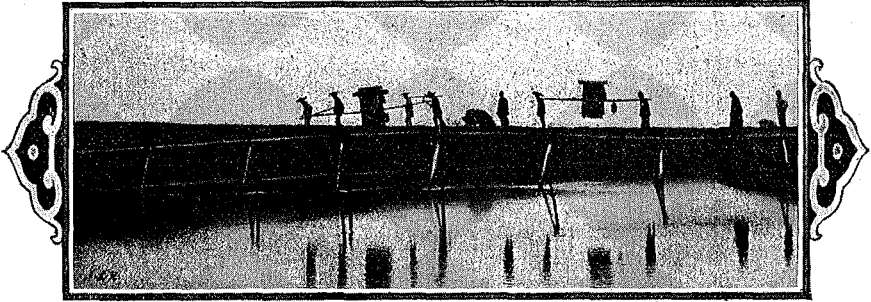


CROWDS FOLLOWING THROUGH THE CORN FIELDS AS WE LEFT SAN-TIEN.

messenger went with my card, the reply was sent—"It was very unfortunate, but they were all away at the neighbouring city, and so could not help me!"

So we quietly waited: reading, or writing, or chatting to the Christians around us. Even while the stoning was going on, I got to know the reason of it all. In this district there is a very powerful clan—the Sung clan. One of the young men belonging to them had for

some little time been of a thoughtful turn of mind, eager to learn the way of life. He sought for this knowledge in many ways, but at length, hearing of the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, he found the Truth in Him. The clan were determined he should have nothing to do with Christianity, and began a series of petty persecutions, getting more and more violent as they saw his constant determination to follow Christ. Quite recently they had hired some ruffians to assault and beat him whilst on a journey; and now, as a last resort, they had determined on wrecking the meeting at which he was to be present. What their end was, and how they



A DIFFICULT BRIDGE.

thought to accomplish it by such means, we must not spend time in speculating on.

After about an hour and a half the stone throwing ceased, and the rowdies dispersed, largely owing to the efforts of our small escort, who worked hard to prevent any mischief coming to us. It would have been a bad look-out for them if we had suffered any personal violence. Then rain began to fall, and we knew there would be no more trouble that night. So we gathered in a little group in the chapel, listening to the stories of persecutions in bygone days told us by Mr. Liu and Mr. Shu, who have both been through the fire more than once. Later

on a young convert brought in a wooden tray which he placed on a stool in front of us. Next he began to shake his capacious sleeves and out came two or three pounds of roast pea-nuts. So we all fell to discussing these and the intricacies of the Chinese language.

At least four of our number spoke two different dialects, and it was most interesting to us to compare notes. Old Mr. Shu, very asthmatical, but very much of a talker for all that, was most down on some of the natives for carelessness in speaking their own language. He instanced some peculiarities in the different districts he had travelled over in his colporteur days ; and was specially down on the people of one district who could not even pronounce the word *ren* (man) correctly. He next began a disquisition on the way missionaries mispronounced certain sounds, and to his delight, to say nothing of my own (?) he put me through a long cross-examination on the Chinese sounds as heard in Hankow. It began to get monotonous. He was having it *all* his own way. So it was time to turn the tables on him.

“ Now, Mr. Shu, say *nan*.”

“ Nan,” he replied, quite correctly.

“ Please say *lan*.”

“ Nan.”

“ No. That is wrong. Say LAN.”

“ Nan ! *Nan* ! NAN ” getting louder and louder, and very red in the face as four of us shook our heads and laughed at him. For like a true son of Central China, he could not distinguish the difference between the initial “ n ” and “ l.”

By this time it was ten o'clock, and feeling rather tired we suggested bed. No sooner said, than we were reminded of our recent anxious moments by another shower of stones, that did no other damage beyond breaking a few tiles and giving us a start.

The Chinese were watching us closely to see what we would do. So, we had two stools brought, two doors taken down, our bedding

unrolled, and in the little chapel we began slowly to undress. This quietened them wonderfully, and ere very long they were all following our example.

But we reckoned without a donkey who was stabled in an adjoining room, and who frightened sleep away for some time by the rattling of his chain. Rats swarmed over this house, as indeed they did over every other place we stayed at. And when I did begin to doze off, every now and then I would wake up with a start, thinking another stone had hit the building. It was only a rat, that had taken a big leap in his gambols and come down with a thud. Towards morning sound sleep came ; and when we woke the sun was rising over the eastern hills, dispelling all the darkness, and with the darkness taking away the covering under which evil men find it so easy to do evil deeds. Soon, however, we were under way, and left San-tien so quietly that very few people knew we had gone.

Late that night, the rowdies came again. They tried to burn down the chapel by placing a pile of brushwood against the door and setting it on fire. This time the gentry *did* interfere, as it is a very serious offence to start a conflagration amongst the wooden houses of a Chinese city. *One* of them, single handed, kicked out the fire, and with the help of the town constable drove off the miscreants who were bent on doing us mischief.

CHAPTER VI

BOYS AND GIRLS

EVERYWHERE the traveller goes there is sure to be one side of Chinese life that is of perpetual interest, so full is it of colour and attraction. In town and village, in the busy, bustling city street,



A CHINESE BABY.

and beside the quiet country road, there is ever the child: often very dirty and neglected, yet as often sweet and engaging. In the midst of child-life the sordidness of the average Chinese life is forgotten. These little "angels of humanity" have their times of pain and trouble and suffering, as have children in all lands. But the thing that strikes us everywhere is the fun,

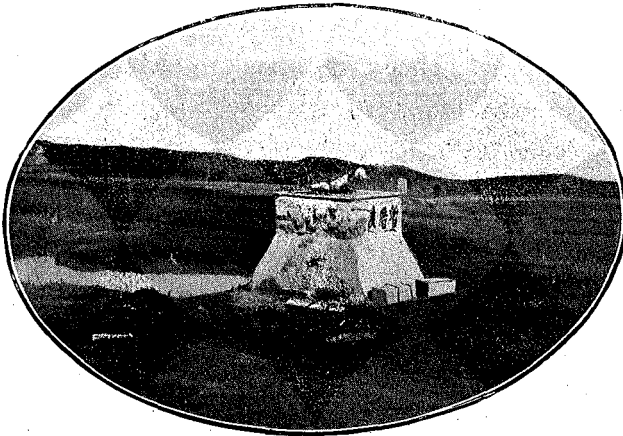
and jollity, and real pleasure of living enjoyed by these little yellow-skinned folk. In fact they are very much like the boys and girls at home, only they show their happiness in somewhat different ways.

Yet when we begin to ask about their lives, how they live and grow, we are almost inclined to say that the poor little Chinese babies are "born to trouble." No sooner has the little baby uttered its first cry than the reign of the baby-doctor begins. She is usually an old woman who is the mother of several children, and owing to her experiments on them and her grandchildren has become "wise" in her knowledge of how to treat the baby. She is very much believed in by the young mothers, who often prefer to bring her in, even though there is a good Mission doctor within a few yards of the house. Not so very long ago in England the baby had almost as bad a time of it. Let us hope that in a few years time a new era will dawn for it in China. What does she do to the baby? Well! She not only has several "cures" for it in its sicknesses, but a good many "preventatives" to keep it from getting ill.

How would you like your little brother to be treated like this? When but a few days old the little mite has to be burned with a lighted match on the nose and crown of the head. To be efficacious this has to be done again and again until the baby cries with pain. If it did not *feel* the burning, then they could not be sure that it would be *kept from catching cold*. When the cry of pain is heard, then the family feel they can "let down their hearts," which is their way of saying they need not be anxious. If in spite of this the baby does catch cold, then he has to suffer for it in more ways than one. The baby-curer (or "baby-killer" as some missionaries are tempted to call her) is at once called in. Perhaps the little thing has a sharp attack of bronchitis. So the old lady puts on her large tortoise-shell rimmed glasses, seizes the little sufferer with no very gentle hands, forces open its mouth in order to examine its throat, and with a chop-stick, or sometimes a pair of them, begins to dig out from its tender throat the "white phlegm" of which they are so much afraid. Once, when I was sent for to see a Christian's sick baby, I found the old woman

in the midst of her cruel work. She gave me a decided reproof when I stopped her ; saying also, with a triumphant smile, " See, what a lot of phlegm and blood I have got up ! " And then shaking her head slowly observed, " Whatever is it that makes him cry so ! " She must have thought me very impolite when I told her what I thought about the whole business.

The chances from the very first seem all against a child's living. There is little real cleanliness in the homes, and none at all outside



BABY-TOWER.

of them. The young mothers are sometimes too young to know how to take care of their little ones ; and every child invariably gets what it cries for if it only cries long enough. At a very early date it begins

to eat raw potatoes or cucumbers, or anything it can grab from the table when the family is dining. It has unlimited opportunities of rolling in and playing with the dirt and filth of the street or yard, and much that is not good for it consequently gets into baby's mouth. But as the Chinese are not yet worried with " microbe theories," these things never trouble them. It is no great matter of surprise that every morning for the last three months, when on my way along the road at the back of the native city towards the college buildings, I have counted a score of little coffins being carried out for rude burial.

Each little rough, unpainted, unplanned wooden box represented a life sacrificed to ignorance or indifference. Riding along this road, too, one sees three baby-towers. On the top of each is a grating on which are usually some little coffins awaiting somebody's "good deeds" to give them a burial; and occasionally I have seen on the ground at the foot, some little bundles of matting that tell of parents too poor to afford even the thin coffin. In each of these baby-towers is a square hole. The use of these holes is mostly confined to the poorest people of all, and let us hope that they only use them for the dead.

But in spite of all this, and of all the infantile aches and pains common to childhood, the baby who is old enough to toddle about begins to reign in the household. A boy-baby is always wanted, no matter how many mouths there are already to feed; and even a girl is sometimes welcomed. Why do I say sometimes? Perhaps the grandmother does not think they ought to afford to keep a girl; perhaps the husband is very cross because it is not a boy; perhaps there are already too many girls in the family; and the little unwelcome stranger is put on a cold shelf as soon as it is born, to die, if it is not thrown into water, or destroyed in some other way. You see, they think that very little children have no souls, so it does not matter. Yet strange to say, I have often seen Chinese burning paper money and incense by the side of the baby-towers at the back of the city. I wonder if there is sometimes a fearful thought that comes: "We had better treat their spirits well, *in case* there should happen to be any souls in children." How far such conditions are from the ideal kingdom-of-heaven-life Jesus spoke of! These people need very much to be taught how Christ looked upon children and child life.

The Roman Catholics have done a lot for the children of China in having Foundling Homes where unwanted little ones can be left and cared for. I was in one of these places recently, and saw the little

girls who had been left on the doorstep of the Hospital by night, or brought by neighbours and friends in the daytime. Even the tiniest ones seemed busy as bees and perfectly happy. Some were at play, some at their lessons, some at work making exquisite pillow-lace—their little fingers seemed to be dancing for joy in the sunbeams that were playing upon them, whilst the bigger girls were hard at work making their wedding clothes just previous to their marriage.

Very touching was the story of a little babe, whose feeble cry I heard when passing along from one building to another. In a village ten English miles away a little baby had come to the home. Alas! it was a girl. The mother wanted it to love and cherish. But the father's mother was very angry. She would not have the thing in the house. "What," she said, "another useless girl! Are there not mouths enough to fill already?" So she cursed the unhappy mother for bringing a baby-*girl* into the world. Had it been a boy there would have been a different story to tell. As the hours flew by the old grandmother got more and more angry; and at last she laid hold of the tiny mite and threw her into a tub of ice-cold water. Love for the child, and anger at the cruel mother-in-law, gave the strength of frenzy to the young mother, though she was little more than a girl herself. She rushed for the child, snatched it out of its perilous bath, wrapped it in her own garments, and then, weak as she was, and though bitterly cold the weather, tramped her weary way to the Foundlings' Home.

No one knows how she got there, nor how long she took on the journey. With all her remaining strength she called the porter and then collapsed, utterly exhausted, with the babe clasped to her bosom—saved.

A girl has no soul, they say. And some of the girls seem to believe it. Nearly nine years ago, when on a preaching tour with an elderly evangelist, we came in our journey to a large farmhouse. We found

to our regret that all the men were at work in the fields, except one old *gramfer* who was too deaf to hear anything said to him, and almost too blind to see. Hearing the sound of voices and laughter we went to a large barn, and found the young daughters-in-law of the establishment, with their hands as busy as their tongues, weaving cloth. The



ONLY THE WOMEN AT HOME.

old evangelist could never miss an opportunity of telling the good news of salvation. So, while I was being looked at by several pairs of bright eyes, he began to tell them why we had come from the city far away. We were not pilgrims on a journey to some sacred hill, and so had not come to beg money or food to help us on our way. We

had not come to buy of their goods ; and although we had come to sell, our merchandise could not be bought with silver and gold. Then he told them of Jesus, who wanted to be their Saviour, and cleanse their souls from sin. "Souls," shrieked one of the young women, laughingly, "We! *Souls?* Why, we are ONLY GIRLS!"

Jolly, laughing boys and girls! How the grown-up people must envy them as they play together—making mud-pies, playing shuttlecock, and using their feet as bats, forming little processions as they play at being grown up: just like the children at home. If you knew some of them you would wish there was a "garden-city" to which they could all be taken while still very young, and there taught to be good and true, and given an opportunity to grow up clean-lipped, and clean-handed men and women. Some of you have heard about the little slum-babies of the great cities, who are brought up in daily contact with the bad things of life. It is something like this out here. Their little eyes and ears are all too soon busily taking in bad words and actions; and as they grow up they imitate. And not only imitate. The little boy is taught to curse his mother, "to make him smart," says the father. Poor little chappie, he has no notion of the meaning of the words he says. He is taught, too, to call out all sorts of names at other people. Taught to lie: by hearing everybody around him telling untruths as a matter of course. No wonder he grows up like all the other boys around him. Taught to steal by seeing the others doing it in the house. It is a very common thing for the daughter-in-law to steal in her husband's household, in order to help her own mother; and the complaint of an old grandmother about her little daughters-in-law was something like this, "They are all thieves, every one of them. They would soon ruin us altogether if my own daughters did not steal in their new homes, and send help to me."

From his earliest years the child is taught to gamble. He plays

for cash, as boys at home play for marbles or buttons ; and much prefers to buy his sweets or peanuts by a throw of the dice or a turn of the fortune-wheel, hoping to get a " big pennyworth " by a lucky throw or turn. As he grows up it is not surprising that his every game, be it guessing, dominoes, or chess, is played for money.

As a little child, the girl is as free to play and be as merry in her gambols as the boy. All too soon these early years roll swiftly by, and the discipline of life begins. Walking along one of the quieter streets of a city I once heard a child screaming loudly. " Mother-in-law beating her," I said to myself. " What a shame ! " But a few more steps, and I came to an open doorway, and then saw what it was all about. Two women were sitting down, gossiping at a great rate. Between them was the little girl, screaming with pain. Nothing was the matter ! They were only following Dame Fashion and binding her feet : making her a cripple for life : crushing the little toes with every pull on the tight bandage ! By and by she will get used to the pain and be able to hobble about : like one walking on stilts. But her days of child-scampering are over. She is learning to become a woman.

The little boy, too, has to learn to become a man. But being of much more importance than a girl, he very early learns to take first place. Even in the matter of choosing a name there is a great difference made. The little girl may be called Sister One, or Two, or Three, or even be content with less than that ; but the boy has more trouble taken with his name. This is how one little boy got his name. When he was born there was great joy in the home because the parents had wanted a little son very much. Now he had come, they knew that God had sent him. For they believed in the Gospel for a little time, and had learned to pray to the true God. So very soon the father went off to the nearest chapel to ask the evangelist about choosing a name for his little son. Of course they wanted a Christian name, and not a heathen one. So a few of the converts were called together, and then

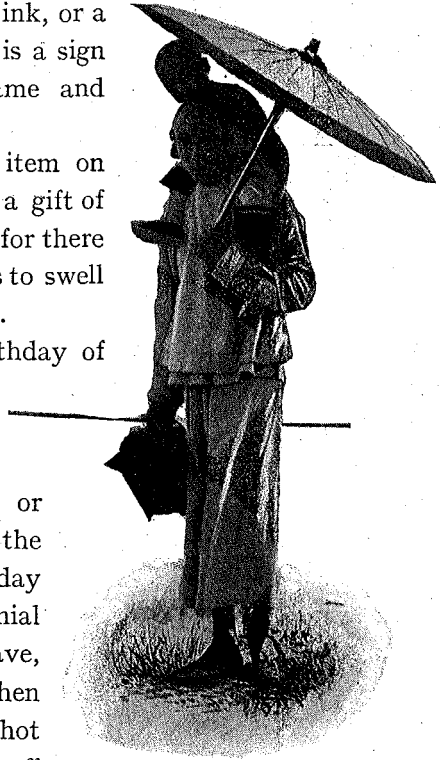
the evangelist in a simple manner told God all about it, and how they wanted a good name for this child. After praying awhile, he said, taking a Chinese Bible in his hand, "Lord, let it please Thee to cause the Holy Book to open at a place where there is the name of an apostle or prophet, which we may take as the name for the child." It fell open at the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew. On reading it through, to their intense delight, they discovered not one name only, but two—Noah and Daniel. In a truly Chinese way they put the best construction on the matter, and gave thanks for the grace that gave such an abundant answer to their petition. But now they were in difficulties. The boy's name is usually of three one-syllable words. The first one has to be the surname. So if the family name is Pao, then the other name might be Ren Ching, or some such name. Now Noah in his Chinese dress *is* a two-syllable name—No-yah. But this was not reckoned very easy to pronounce. So they decided not to have No-yah. But then Daniel in his Chinese style is Da Ye Lee. This would be one syllable too many. However, a brilliant idea came to one of them, and all agreed to drop the first syllable, and so call the child Ye Lee.

The first great day in the boy's history is when he "completes the circle," that is when the end of his first year on this planet has been reached. He is then according to Chinese reckoning *two* years old, and not *one* as we would count it. A great feast is given in his honour, presents are sent him, a large silver necklet is put round his neck, and perhaps a chain with a silver lock on is added. This latter is to lock him down to earth, of course, and so prevent him from running away, i.e., dying. But more important in some ways than any of these things, the feast alone excepted, is the placing of the inkslab, reckoning-board, pen, scales, stick of indian ink, etc., before him. Baby-like he will grab at some one of the things that takes his fancy, and he is eagerly watched to see which he touches first. Great is the

rejoicing if he touches the pen, or ink, or a piece of writing paper. For this is a sign that in the future a scholar's fame and career will be his.

The feast is a very important item on this birthday, as each guest brings a gift of money, and so after the feast is paid for there is a good balance in hand that goes to swell the slender resources of the family.

Although this is the great birthday of the first year, there are two other days that are reckoned as important functions: the first is the occasion of the baby's first bath or wash, according to the time of the year. This is generally on the third day after its birth. The second ceremonial day is the occasion of its first shave, when it is about a month old. Then baby's head is rubbed all over with hot water and the fluffy hair shaved off with a keen razor.



HOW TO CARRY A LITTLE DAUGHTER.

After the first circle is completed birthdays are not kept, except every ten years,—the New Year's feasts being the birthdays of the whole family. When the *Ta Sen Erh*, or tenth birthday, comes along, there is rejoicing and feasting according to the social position of the family and the number of tens that have been passed. A seventieth or eightieth birthday is the occasion of great celebrations—feasts and firing of crackers, and presentations of silk banners and other gifts being only limited by the amount of money in the family purse.

After young hopeful has played about for some five years or so,

he goes to school. With the new era that has dawned on China from an educational standpoint, it is difficult to say anything that is very definite about him at this age. Old customs are changing, and many things that have been done for millenniums no longer obtain. A few years ago the boy would have gone to a private school or else would have joined in the use of a teacher in some other family. Now he probably goes to a Government school, wears a fine uniform, and learns very little that is much good to him. For although China has gone in for new lines of education she has not yet got teachers for her schools who know much about the subjects they are supposed to teach. We must remember that for hundreds of years the *book* and not the teacher has been the main idea in study. The teacher may be a very poor tool indeed, but if the scholar has the book what does it matter? So now science is taught (?) by men who know no more about it than they have got from the casual reading of a book. They explain the characters to their scholars, and that is an end of it. Of course there are a few good men who have studied in mission colleges, or received an education abroad, but the majority of the *best* that China can show have been to Japan for six months, learnt a few foreign notions, imbibed a good deal of unbalanced "patriotic" teaching, and are wishing to pose as the pioneers of progress and reform.

Even yet, in the majority of cases, it is safe to say that the boy, on first going to school, goes through the same process of enlightenment as did his forefathers. On the first day of his school life he bows in reverence before the Tablet of the Great Sage of China, Confucius. He then prostrates himself before the teacher, who is now to take the place of father, offers him a present of money wrapped up in red paper (which offer is never under any circumstance refused), takes his place at the appointed table, and begins to swell the chorus of similar juveniles who are howling out at the top of their voices Chin's First Steps to Knowledge, that wonderful compendium of information known as

the *Three Character Classic*, from its being all written in lines of three words. There is no attempt to *teach* him, as we understand the term ; all the boy does is to take a few characters at a time, repeat them after the teacher, and then shout them out, over and over again, until he has " put them all into his stomach," where the intellectual faculties are supposed to lie.

This *Three Character Classic* is a remarkable book. At the very beginning is the sentence that has set learned men wrangling ever since they found that there were things to wrangle about. " Men, when born, are naturally good : though alike in nature, in practice they widely differ," it says. It then goes on to show the necessity for young people to receive instruction (probably to enable them to get back some of that natural goodness, which by this time they show signs of having left far, far away).

The book is really an abstract of common knowledge, which might, in the hands of a capable teacher, be very useful in training the child to observe and think. But this kind of teaching has no part in the average scholar's education. He has to learn how the ancients thought, and not to cultivate his own powers of observation. So the child has to learn the *sound* of each character, and be able to rattle off the whole book from beginning to end, almost without a pause—and never know the meaning of a single sentence. Take these first few lines, for instance :

Duty to elders ought early to be understood.
 First practice filial and brotherly duties : next observe and listen.

* * * * *

There are three powers—heaven, earth, and man.

Three lights—sun, moon, and stars.

There are three relations : between prince and minister, justice.

Between father and son affection ; 'tween man and wife concord.

Just these bare statements and no explanations. To illustrate the " fours," there are the four seasons and the hour points of the compass. The " fives " introduce him to chemistry and ethics, but

leave him with the barren statement that there are five elements : water, fire, wood, metal, and earth, and that these five elements are the origin of everything. The five cardinal virtues are humanity, justice, propriety, wisdom, and truth, all of which the child hears frequently mentioned *as words*, but seldom sees exemplified in the actions of his elders. The "sixes" are the six kinds of grain (grown in China), rice, millet, pulse, wheat, rye, and barley ; and also the



OUR HANKOW AND WUCHANG MISSIONARIES.
Dr. Griffith John is seated in the centre ; Mr. Upward, the author of this book, is the second from the left in the back row.

six domestic animals, horse, cow, sheep, dog, fowl, and pig. Then come the seven passions : joy, anger, sorrow, fear, love, hatred and desire ; showing that there is as much "human nature" in the Chinaman as there is in his Western brother. Next are enumerated the eight kinds of music, or rather materials of which musical instruments are made : gourd (some kind of instrument made out of these hollow

wooden things), earth (an instrument made of burnt earth, i.e., porcelain), skin (drum), wood (a raucous clarionette), stone, metal (bell), silk (stringed instrument), and bamboo (flute). The nine relationships follow. These are the four senior and four junior generations; the middle, the ninth, being of course the learner himself. And the ten serves to set forth the ten moral relationships, being affection between father and son, concord between husband and wife, the proper dealings between the elder and younger brother, proprieties between juniors and seniors, the friendship of friends, and the relationship that should exist between prince and minister. Then comes the reason of the inclusion of these things in the primer: "All teachers of youth should give lucid explanations, supply illustrations and proofs, and clearly mark the stops." But this kind of teaching, even if it ever comes into the mind of the teacher, is postponed until that day which is known as "to-morrow"—the day that never comes.

After this opening section comes an outline of what the boy will have to study later on, beginning with the sayings of the ancient sages Confucius and Mencius. Next comes an outline of Chinese history down to the year 1644 A.D., when it comes to an abrupt stop. Why? Because no history of the present dynasty must be taught in the schools. Nowadays in England, unless he has already compiled an autobiography, a great man is scarcely dead before his "life" appears. What would you think of a law that enacted that no biography of a man should be written until his family had become extinct? For that is really what this taboo of current history amounts to.

And after all these things, the little book is brought to a conclusion with sundry reasons why the child should study, and many inducements to him to give himself to letters.

Except in mission-schools, and secondary schools where the "New Learning" is taught, the scholar follows his predecessors along

a well-beaten track. An early task is the learning of a little book called the *Hundred Family Names*. It is a list of the various characters used as surnames in China. The nearest thing we have to it in the home country is a Directory; and very few of you will think there is much "fun" in learning to repeat a book like that!

After this comes the learning of the Classics proper: The Confucian Analect, The Great Learning, The Doctrine of the Mean, Mencius, The Book of Changes, The Book of the Odes, Chinese History, and the one book Confucius is supposed to have written, The Annals of Spring and Autumn. But unless the youth is destined to become a scholar, and regularly sit for the Government competitive examinations, his education ends long before he gets through this long list.

A year or so at school: playing truant whenever he can; learning what he is made to by means of the cane (or whatever takes its place in the Chinese school); repeating a book or two; and then leaving to be apprenticed to some trade, or to help his people in the fields—this is the history of many a boy's "education;" and he leaves school without knowledge to write the shortest letter, or read the simplest book. But if his school-days have been few and often sorrowful, he soon finds that he is now in a realm where the hours are long, where prizes are few, and only to be obtained after plenty of hard work. In this school of the world he learns both how to make the best of a bargain, and the best of a life that is all too crooked. Even whilst we are thinking of him as a child, he is married to a girl, scarcely in her teens, it may be; grows up, grows old, and leaves the days of childhood far behind.

His little sister has *her* well-trodden path to pursue. Far too early, the few toys she has are put on one side. Quite pathetic is it to watch her working away like a little old woman. Often she is sold away from home for a few dollars, to become a daughter-in-law in a strange house. In reality this means that she becomes a household drudge.

When she is old enough, the son takes her to be his wife. By and by she too will grow up, have children of her own, get daughters-in-law under *her* thumb, and have the joy (?) of treating them as she was treated when a little girl.

Going about among the common people of China, the traveller cannot help wondering where the laughing child-spirit has gone! Why has it left these, who, but a few years ago, were merry children? Then, on thinking of their monotonous lives, their dreary round of struggle against disease and disabilities, there comes the sense of the hopelessness that is like a cloud over all. There is for them no "sure and certain hope." How much there is against them! How little to inspire them! Each seeks to live for himself by living on others: their oft-quoted proverb, "Big fish eat little fish: little fish eat shrimps: shrimps eat mud," but too well telling the story of their lives—the "big fish" being of course the officials, and so on, down to the "mud": the common people.

O pray that many such, ere the light of life flickers out, may get to know Jesus, the Light that is the life of men.

CHAPTER VII

PLAYTIME

AFTER school is over, the children are supposed to walk soberly back to their homes. They must on no account hop, or skip or run, or whoop, or sing, and so on. Such is the rule that is read out each term on the re-assembling of the day-school. But like a good many other rules in this land, it is seldom kept.

They must not play in the streets! So very often, when little boys are playing together in some side-street, you might hear one of them suddenly say, "Teacher's coming!"—his quick eye has seen the old pundit, or perhaps the missionary, coming round the corner. In an instant all play is over; the coins they have been playing with are scrambled for; there is a rush into the nearest friendly house, or down some alley-way; and by the time the teacher arrives there are only two or three boys to be seen, who politely step aside and bow in the most gentlemanly manner, scarcely daring to raise their innocent-looking faces to him! He, of course, generally pretends that he has seen nothing, unless there has been other than innocent fun. Indeed, one of the first things the young missionary has to learn is that for many things he must have no eyes, and in some cases he must leave his ears at home. Chinese boys and girls are great tale-bearers; and a fault-finding teacher would have a very bad time of it if he listened to all their complaints, or corrected his pupils for every trifling fault.

If two children quarrel, or if two students have a battle of words

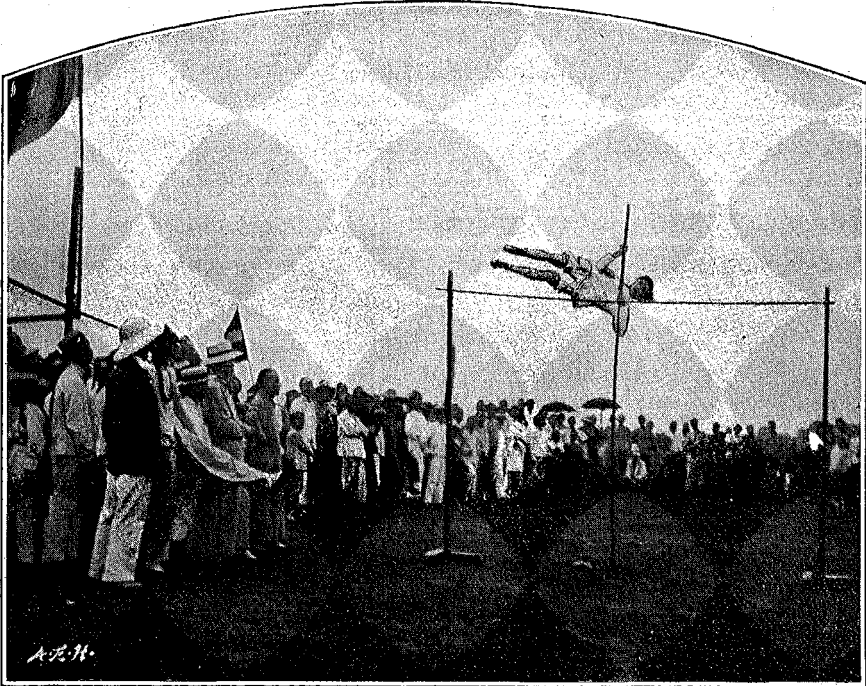
with each other, both sides eventually rush to the master, each anxious to get his story told first. Both stories have to be listened to; and very little must be said until many questions have been asked of other people. But it is generally a safe rule to be prepared to find that the one who most fiercely accuses the other is the real culprit.

As in other lands, playtime comes as a welcome friend to the young folk of China. In the cool of the summer evening, or in the sunny winter afternoons, when there is no school or no home duty to call them away, you may often find the children at play. At such times the playground of the mission school, the quieter side-street, the village green, or the vacant places on the city walls, are their favourite haunts. Sometimes you will find them playing at soldiers, or Mandarins, or pretending to be coolies carrying little loads on a bamboo pole, and trying to imitate the coolie sing-song cry as they trot along; or again they pretend to be cooks and make the most delicious mudpies! And then it is quite a common sight to see them playing at weddings and funerals, just as Jesus Christ saw the little ones doing



SWINGING IN THE PLAYGROUND.

in the market places of the towns of Palestine. A good many of their games are imitations of grown-up people at work, or engaged in the social duties of life. For, like true children, the little almond-eyed and black-haired celestials live for some time in the city of Make-



PASTOR LIU'S SON WINNING THE POLE JUMP AT THE HANKOW COLLEGE SPORTS,
MAY, 1907.

believe, which, as you know, is the chief town of the country of Nurserydom.

Many of their games are like those played by their brothers and sisters the world over: Blind Man's Buff, Catch-as-Catch-Can, The Wolf and the Lambs (this they sometimes call "The Hawk and the Chickens"), Hopping, Prisoner's Base, and so on. They are also

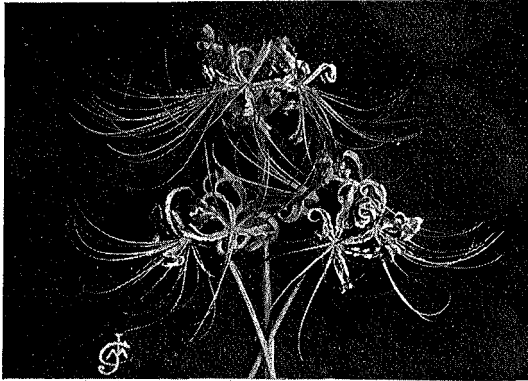
learning to play other games in the Mission Schools, and are getting quite fond of the more manly games such as football, cricket, tennis, hockey, and all kinds of running and jumping.

Of the truly native games there are a great number. Some, as I have already mentioned, are purely imitative. Others teach quickness of action, or of thought. Let me describe one of this latter kind at which I have often watched boys, both small and great, playing with much enjoyment to themselves as well as to the onlookers.

It is an "Apology Game," and consists of trying to make another boy "lose face" whilst at the same time each player is keen on "saving" his own. Some score of boys sit down on their heels in a circle, with their faces towards the centre. One boy is then counted out and a handkerchief given him. He steps out of the ring and commences to run round from left to right. There is no song sung, as in some of the children's games, but there is plenty of excitement and the game is really a very quick one. For as the "out" man runs round, he tries to catch some one who is not on the watch. He drops the handkerchief lightly on the back or behind the heels of the unsuspecting one, and without a moment's pause still keeps on his run. But the little fellows soon notice that his hand is empty. Round go their heads more quickly than can be described. And just in time, one of them finds the white thing on his shoulder or on the ground behind him. He is up in a moment; and off round the ring as fast as his legs can carry him, lest the "out" man catch him. On coming to the vacant place the erstwhile "out" man squats down, and watches keenly the tactics of his successor with the handkerchief. Perhaps it has been noticed that one of the number is not watchful, or is so taken up with hoping that some one else may be caught as to forget all about his own danger. Lightly as a feather the tell-tale is dropped on him. On goes the quick runner without a pause. Not

another boy looks at the unconscious victim, who is presently awakened by a vigorous slap on the back when the "out" man has completed the circuit after dropping the handkerchief. Then there is much jeering and shouting at him. All his playmates, still squatting on their heels, laugh heartily at him as he goes into the middle of the ring and makes a low bow all round. He has very much "lost face"; and now with all his wits about him, he becomes the "out" man and tries to score off somebody else.

Girls have games that are the counterpart of those played by the boys. One favourite is a "Garden" game; they sometimes call it



CHINESE WILD FLOWERS.

"Watering Flowers."

The lady (one of the girls) makes a beautiful garden, planting in it many exquisite flowers, represented by her playmates. Then, gathering her apron up in front to make it look like a bowl, she goes round the sitting children, pretending to sprinkle them with

water lest the sun scorch them and they wither away. All the time she sings a little ditty about her "beautiful flowers." After watering them she finds she has to go away; so calling her little slave-girl (the other "out" one), she bids her to be on the watch lest a thief should come and steal the flowers. Whilst the lady's back is turned, the naughty slave "steals one,"—that is, places her over in a corner.

When the lady comes back she soon finds out the theft. "One of my flowers is gone! Who has stolen it?" she cries.

"A man came and stole it. I ran after him, but could not overtake him," is the ready answer.

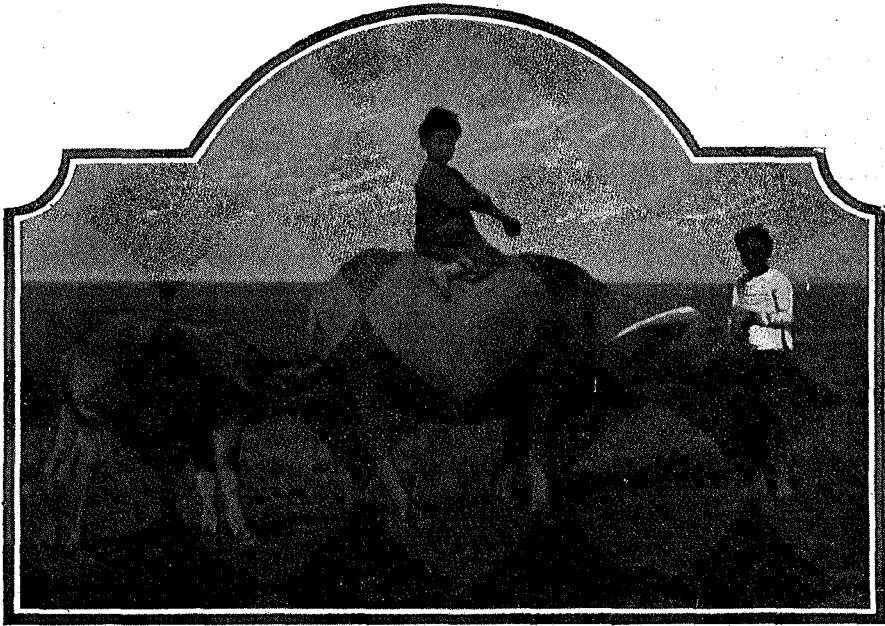
Once again the flowers are watered, and the slave told to watch while the mistress "goes to have her rice." Now is the chance to steal one more of the blossoming plants. When the new loss is enquired about, the same story is told. And so the game goes on until all the "flowers" are "stolen." All sorts of stories are made up by the wicked slave to account for the successive misfortunes, such as "a chicken ate it," or "a pig swallowed it," as one flower after another goes. With all the flowers gone the lady falls to crying, gets very angry, and beats the slave girl, who runs away.

Even while the lady is bewailing the loss of her beloved plants the voice of a flower-seller is heard in the street. "Who'll buy my pretty flowers?" (It is the slave going by with all the children going after her, holding on to each other's skirts). So, thinking it a good opportunity to fill up her now empty garden, the mistress comes out, recognizes her stolen flowers, and begins to "steal" back her property by taking one and another away from the end of the "string." After the last one has been safely replanted in the garden she comes to the naughty slave, who is still going round crying out "Flowers for sale! Pretty flowers for sale," all unconscious that the plants have been taken back. Of course a "pretence whipping" follows. The children shriek with laughter as one and another is stolen, or is taken back again, and the game closes with a kind of screaming match, the excitement being at its height during the "whipping" given to the naughty thief. It is very good exercise, alike for lungs and limbs and tempers.

Sometimes the boys and girls play together. I have just come from a little village where I saw some fairly big girls joining in a merry game of shuttlecock along with some smaller boys. The shuttlecock is made of a few feathers or paper shavings fastened to two or three cash to give it weight. This is kicked up in the air with heel

and toe and inner side of the foot ; the player spins round on one foot, and is just in time to kick the shuttlecock high in the air again ere it falls to the ground. The one who keeps it up longest, wins.

Toys there are in plenty on the street stalls. Nowadays no toy-shop is considered well stocked unless there is a collection of the commonest of common foreign productions as well. The native



RIDING THE WATER BUFFALO.

toys are mostly of the "cheap and nasty" kind. True, they can be bought for next to nothing, and are but meant to please the child for a passing moment. So you will not be surprised to hear that "Dolly," the dearly loved child of the little girlie-mother, is unknown. (This refers to the native article ; in Mission schools where boxes of gifts come out from home, or in the Ports where the influence of

foreign toys is beginning to be felt, dolls are of course found in plenty.) There are some things, figures made of clay and painted in gaudy colours, that might be called "dolls," but as these so easily come to pieces, their life is too short to allow of any great attachment to them on the part of the little girl.

A few years ago several of us went to see a celebrated temple. One of our number was a little English girl of some six summers. *Of course* she could not dream of going without taking dolly to see the strange sights, could she? For three hours the journey was by boat. After this we had to walk through a Chinese village to get to the temple. As it was a busy time for the farmers, most of the men were in the fields hard at work, and the inevitable crowd that came out to see us consisted mostly of women and children. However, we went through the place quietly enough, had a good look round the temple, and saw all its wonders. One of the sights was a hole in the rock, from which it is said rice once flowed to save the starving people in a time of famine. You see, the people had been praying to the idols and making vows; so there *had* to be some answer to their prayers or they would have smashed up temple and priests and idols and all! Some of us were inclined to think that the miracle was accomplished in this way: There was a little tunnel leading to a cave just above this wonderful hole; some bags of rice must have been taken there in the night, and when the time for the miracle came along, one of the priests just emptied the rice down the small funnel-like cleft. Soon afterwards the rain came in plenty, and good crops followed. There, to-day, is an inscription upon the rock, telling of the wonderful thing that happened long ago and setting forth the power of the idols within the temple.

Having seen all there was to be seen, and having had a good scramble on the hills behind this sacred spot, the time came for us to return. As we came back to the village a great crowd came out to meet us.

I do not know what wild story had been going the rounds, but you can guess something of what it was like when I tell you that these people had all come out to see "the little dwarf mother and her wonderfully tiny baby!" Never having seen a doll before, they thought this one was really alive! Much to the dismay of the little girl, who thought something dreadful was sure to happen to dolly, the rough village folk would not be content till they had fingered the doll, and satisfied themselves that it was only made of china.

Peep-shows of all kinds are very popular with the young folk, and even with those who are old in years but not in spirit. It is quite a common sight to see the showman with his little stand of pictures, which he exhibits one at a time to the open-eyed and open-mouthed audience gathered round him. He can describe any picture at a moment's notice; for if he has not "kissed the blarney stone" he has at least gone through the Chinese equivalent to this performance. What *he* does not know, very few of his audience do, and knowing that it is generally safe to presume on human ignorance, he just makes up his stories about the subject matter of his picture as he goes along, regardless of truth. (It must have been from some such a storyteller that my teacher got the startling information that foreign fowls were as strange as the foreign people in their habits, for the hens in foreign countries laid *square* eggs! It was difficult for him to believe me when I told him the truth about the matter.)

Punch and Judy is a very popular entertainment. And although Punch is not exactly like our Punch, and Judy is not the same as our Judy, yet Dog Toby is there, very much in evidence, with his ruffle round his neck, looking like an old friend.

The Chinese are never tired of looking at any new or interesting object. A very little thing will not only gather but suffice to keep a crowd. Not long ago, in a country village, the children so filled the little chapel that grown-up folk had no room to sit down, although

they had come to service. As most of the youngsters had been there for two or three hours, I felt called on to suggest that it was long past their supper time, and that, as they had seen all there was to be seen, they had better run along home; adding, as a concluding sentence, "You must be quite tired of looking at us."

"Tired of looking!" said the old evangelist, "they would look at you all day, and then come back to-morrow as though they had never seen you!"

And he was quite correct in his estimation of their "looking" propensities. All day long will they stand watching the theatricals, though they have but the faintest notion of what it is all about.

We have already seen to what an extent money enters into the games and thoughts of the children. One money-game is played in this way: Two holes are made about ten feet apart; then, with one foot behind one hole each boy in turn tries to lob his cash in or near to the other hole. When all have pitched their coins, the one in or nearest the hole has the privilege of spanning. If by putting his thumb on his own coin he can reach any other coins with his little finger, he keeps them.

A great favourite with the children is the game called "Rolling Cash." The cash is held upright between the thumb and finger about three feet from the ground, and dropped so as to strike on a piece of sloping brick or tile, when it bounds off and rolls away. When all have played, the boy whose cash has rolled the farthest tries, by pitching his own coin, to hit those of his opponents. All he hits he wins. If he misses, all take up their coins, and a new game begins.

Thus in one way or another the Chinese child manages to get a good many hours of play out of the year. Even if there are no companions to join with him in a round game, there is his top to spin, or his kite to fly. This latter amusement he goes in for with much zest every spring and summer, in company with many of his adult fellow-country-

men. Or, if these things do not please him, there is the solitary and patient watching by the waterside, when, like his Western brother, he drowns a good many worms in his attempts to catch fish with his

hook and line.

As these little ones grow up, they seem to grow out of all these games, with the exceptions of the all-alluring kite-flying and the all-prevailing gambling. Fun and innocence are no longer twin-sisters, like good fairies, presiding over the amusements of the people. Gambling, the opium-pipe, the theatre, and other wicked things, are all too much mixed up with the adult Chinaman's recreation, so we will not talk about it here.

Little girls, as they grow up, get more and more shut into their homes; and ladies have to find their amusements mostly within their own houses. Until Christ,

with His saving power, comes into their lives, they think very little of the difference between right and wrong in the affairs of life; and as they are shut out so much from the beauty of the world and the joy of life, we must not wonder, nor must we think too hard of them, if their leisure time is given up to gambling with cards, dice, or dominoes.



A HAPPY "MOTHER" WITH HER DOLLY.

If they have social intercourse among themselves, then talking scandal, and the use of the opium-pipe, pass away the tedious hour.

Let us pray for, as we pity, the women of the Flowery Land. Hundreds and thousands have had but little training as girls. Few can read, and fewer still can write. Very few of them have the mother's joy of seeking to bring up their children to speak truth, do good, and serve Christ. A prison life is their's: broken into only by an occasional visit to a temple or theatre, or a trip to the old home. Even then, when they do get out of their prison walls, it is but to be carried in a closely covered sedan chair, seeing and being seen but little, as they are borne swiftly along on the shoulders of their sturdy bearers.

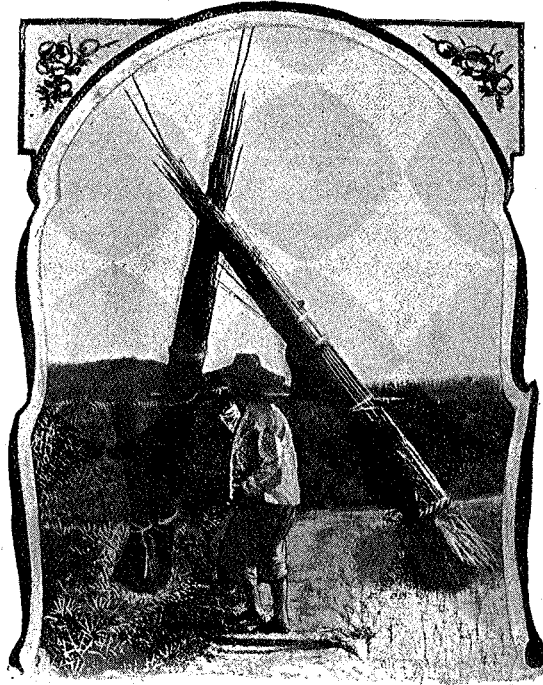
CHAPTER VIII
FESTIVALS AND HOLIDAYS

WE frequently hear it said that the life of the Chinaman is one ceaseless round of toil. His working day is from sunrise to sunset—although it must be confessed that he takes a good many pulls at his pipe and drinks a good many basins of tea in the course of a day, all of which can by no means be done in a hurry. The school-boys are equally fortunate (or unfortunate) in the amount of time they have to spend over their books. No Saturday or Wednesday half-holiday comes to vary the monotony of school routine ; and, until recently, the work went on for seven days a week. Lately, however, owing to the influence of the Missionary Schools, the Government Schools in this district are being closed on Sundays. Shopkeepers and merchants, with the exception of the few who have put away their idols and turned to Jesus Christ for salvation, have not yet learned to value the Day of Rest. Business goes on as usual. Here and there one may possibly find a shop with the shutters up, and a notice outside to the effect that “*To-day is Worship Day : no business is done.*” But the majority of the buyers and sellers are as busy as ever, making the contrast all the greater when, after a long walk through the busy streets, one turns into the Worship Hall to find the congregation all quietly waiting the arrival of the preacher.

It must not be supposed, however, that the Chinaman works away from morn till eve, day in and day out, from year’s end to year’s end, without a holiday. China does not keep Christmas as a holiday, nor

has she followed the example of Japan, in making her New Years Day the same as ours. China's New Year comes about the end of January or beginning of February. But when it does come, it is the event of the year. For weeks beforehand everybody is talking of and preparing for it. Hung out on the roofs of houses, or suspended on poles over the doorways, no matter where one goes, fish, ducks, chicken, and long strips of pork can be seen drying in the sun. These are the delicacies that are being "saved up" for the feasting that are to come.

Inside the houses the people are also very busy. In most of the eighteen provinces the motto at this time is "*Away with the old: change it for new!*" And this means, amongst many other things, an annual "clean up" of the house. In the south, the wooden beds are taken to pieces and thrown



THE REED CUTTER.

into the lakes or canals; tables, chairs, buckets, and other furniture, getting a like treatment. After they have had a good soak, they are scrubbed, dried in the sun, put together again, and restored to their accustomed places.

At such times one is glad to remember that very little food is eaten

raw by the Celestials, for it is no uncommon sight to see a group of people by the side of some dirty puddle or canal, washing furniture, clothes, rice, and vegetables for their dinner, all in the same water. And such water! If "cleanliness is next to godliness," the Chinese have a lot of lost ground to make up in their pursuit of both ideals.

Still, at New Year time, they do "make an effort" to get their houses clean. Not only is the furniture scrubbed, the whole place



A COUNTRY TEMPLE.

(Note the large coils of incense drying in the sun.)

gets a good over-hauling. Even the beaten mud floor has a better sweeping than usual. The "old" kitchen god, who has done duty for the "old" year, hearing and seeing all that has happened in the kitchen, is taken down from his shrine over the stove, has some sweet sticky stuff smeared over his lips (either to keep his lips shut, so that he cannot tell tales, or else to make him say "sweet" things about the household), and then, by being burnt in the fire, is sent on his way to the spirit-world to give in his report. The old mottoes, or rather any

shreds of them that may remain, are taken off the door posts, and the "door gods" come off the front doors themselves; and ere the visitor goes round on New Year's Day all these have been "changed for new."

On this great feast day a town wears quite a gala appearance. Each house is resplendent with new door gods, and decorated with mottoes written with black ink on long strips of red paper (unless the family is in mourning, in which case the paper is of a blue colour).

Millions of Chinese have no other homes but their boats. These are by no means behindhand with their preparations. Although the regulation door-post is lacking, there is the mast, and on the front of the mast, a few feet from the deck, the motto finds its place. Sometimes the bow of the ship is decorated with the red strip, with its well-turned sentence of good wish or maxim.

Another important item in the preparations is the making of the New Year cakes, or puddings. One New Year's time I was living in a Chinese house with a native pastor, so I had a good opportunity of seeing how it was done. For two days a man was kept busily at work preparing the rice. After being soaked in water until the grain was fairly soft, it was thrown, handful by handful, into the little stone mill, and ground into a paste, which was collected in a wooden bucket as it ran from between the two stones. When the good people thought there was enough of this rice paste (i.e., as much as they could possibly afford, and a little more), the kitchen door was lifted down off its wooden hinges, wiped over with a fairly clean cloth, and used as a kneading board to work up the dough on. The "head of the household," the children, and several friends of the family, all came in to lend a hand; in fact it was just such a merry time as we used to have when stirring the Christmas pudding at home! Then came the boiling, or rather steaming, of the puddings. This was done on the household cooking stove, which is very much like an old-fashioned copper, but has a

much shallower pan. The puddings were put into little wooden moulds : some having an ornamental surface on the upper side, others round and



"ALL DONE!"

large. The New Year cakes cooked in the small moulds would be used for giving away to visitors, whilst the larger puddings were to be cut up into squares and warmed up with the food at each meal for some time to come. Most of them were flavoured with dark brown sugar only (excepting, of course, the flavour they got from the door on which they had been so mercilessly thumped and rolled) ; but others, the pride of the family, had little lumps of fat pork in them *as well as the sugar!*

To me the boiling was the worst part of it all,—worse even than having to join in the eating of the pudding later on, and trying to look as if I enjoyed it as much as the other members of the household. The fire under the copper was kept going night and day until the last pudding was cooked. As their only fuel consisted of bundles of grass from the hillside, with a few half-dry pine branches, that fire smoked prodigiously. This would not have mattered so much, if the staircase that led from the kitchen to my room in the loft had not been converted into a chimney for the acrid smoke that filled the whole house. Eating, sleeping, writing, or receiving visitors, it was all the same—enveloped in a cloud of smoke that seemed verily to *bite* the eyes, so pungent was it.

You may be sure that by the time the last of those puddings was cooked my eyes were as red as the face of the busy housewife, and ached as much as did her tired arms.

New Year's Eve comes. Out in the streets all is confusion worse confounded. Every one seems to be busy collecting his debts or trying to escape from his creditors. Many a bitter quarrel, much cursing and reviling, and a good deal of giving and taking of blows is there at the time when we should be solemnly thinking of the passing of the old year. This kind of thing goes on, though gradually getting less and less, all the night. Morning dawns; and still in broad daylight men may be seen, looking haggard and worn, unwashed and unshorn, going about with a lighted lantern, "making believe" it is still night time, hoping to get a few more cash out of some unlucky debtor.

By this time a strange quiet is settling down on the city. For soon after midnight the signal cracker would be fired that seemed to set the whole cracker-artillery of the land in action. Such a rattle and sputter, such a popping and banging then takes place, that only those who have tried to sleep through it can fully understand what the first hour or two of the New Year in a Chinese city really means. Then shops are shut up, streets are emptied of their busy throngs, and the New Year Festival has begun.

On coming down to breakfast in the morning, the resident in China will find all the house servants awaiting him, arrayed in their best clothes. The Number One (head servant) begins the ceremony of congratulation, which is the making of a profound bow and the ejaculation of the magic formula, "*Kung-shi, kung-shi,*" which may be interpreted to mean, "I congratulate you." Perhaps you miss the gardener, or one of the other servants, from the little group. You do not need to ask any questions. Presently, when the first lot of "congratulators" have gone out, in comes the missing one—wearing the clothes belonging to the cook or the "boy!" He evidently is in

low water financially, or else has left his best clothes at home. But what matters it? He is quite ready to borrow, and the other is as willing to lend. His "face is saved," the proprieties are attended to, and all are satisfied.

On New Year's Day unlucky words such as "death" or "disease" must on no account be uttered. No scolding words must be used. Were the word "loss" to be mentioned it would be most unfortunate, as bad luck for the year would follow. All must be joy and gladness. The past must be forgotten. The sorrows of the Old Year must be buried in the Old Year's grave; at least for the first few days of the New. The sight of all sights is to see the fathers proudly leading about their children, prettily dressed in their gaily coloured silks or cottons. Even the coolies have on their long gowns; and every one puts on all the "best clothes" he has. To do this there has been a great raid on the pawnshops (by the way, they do not call a pawnbroker "Uncle" out here—but "Great Aunt"—just the other way round, of course, like everything else), though often to get the clothes "out," tools and other things go "in."

As creditors do not dun for money, and as all business is suspended, both of the official and of the commercial kind, the New Year commences peacefully enough. Then comes a change. The holidays continue for some ten to twenty days, and whatever good resolutions may have been made when the year dawned are quickly forgotten. The rattle of dice and dominoes is heard on every hand; and there seems to be a special license for the gamblers during the first fortnight. For, as the new kitchen god is not put up in his shrine during this period, and as the *yamens* are closed as well, all moral and official restraint is assumed not to exist.

Slowly, but surely, however, Christianity is capturing the New Year holiday. In many districts the first month of the year is a golden opportunity for the missionary to gather together the converts, and

those interested in the truth, for conferences, Bible study, and general instruction; for it is the time when there is nothing to be done in the fields, and when there is very little work in connexion with the shops.

One of the first questions a visitor asks at this festival time is, Why do they fire off all these crackers? For not only at New Year time, but on all festive occasions, weddings and funerals and the like, the sputter of crackers, firing of guns, and banging of gongs, are sure to be heard. There is a custom in connexion with some temples to fire off two loud double-crackers (one explosion taking place on the ground and the other in mid-air) before the temple doors are opened in the morning; the ceremony being repeated before they are closed again at night. On asking a Chinese gentlemen why this was done, he replied, "It's just an old custom: there is no meaning attached to it." However, I pointed out that the very names given to the performance in that locality, namely, "Door-opener" and "Door-closer" seemed to demand that there was some superstition connected with it, so he promised to make inquiries for me and let me know the result later.

As I had surmised, there was not only one explanation given, but several, each supposed to account for the origin of the practice. But, as he said, nowadays the people do it because it is "the correct thing" to do, and give very little, if any, thought as to its origin. One of the stories told about the origin of cracker-firing, and the one most generally accepted, is as follows:—

Ever so many years ago there was a good man named Li Muh, who lived in a house on a mountain. Like most good men he had many enemies; amongst them being some neighbours who sent wicked mountain spirits to disturb and injure him. For a long time Li Muh endured all their torments, not knowing how to get rid of his unwelcome visitors. One day, as he was filling some hollow bamboo

tubes with gunpowder, a happy thought came to him; and calling all the spirits to come to a flat threshing-floor in front of his house, he fired off these wooden guns at them. The spirits were not only successfully driven off on this occasion, but were so frightened by the noise and flashes of the explosions of these squibs, that they never dared to return to the place. So ever afterwards Li Muh was left in peace. And of course from that time onward the Chinese people everywhere adopted this plan of scaring away the tormenting spirits.

The reason for pasting the door-gods on the outside doors of the house is of a somewhat similar origin. Every one knows that these two fierce looking warriors, armed to the teeth, are to guard the entrance to the house and protect the household from evil. As in the case of firing off crackers, the origin of the custom is not thought of by the common people, and nothing but the favourite explanation of "old custom" would be given if a Celestial were asked at New Year time why he was pasting those ugly pictures on his front doors. They came to be used in the following way:—

Long years ago, in the Tung Dynasty, the old Emperor fell sick. All the evil spirits were very glad of this, and to prevent his getting well again they came in crowds every night to annoy him and so prevent his sleeping. All night long they kept throwing stones and bricks and other things, making a dreadful noise. At last the old Emperor could stand it no longer, and took counsel with his warriors as to the best thing to be done to stop the thing that was preventing his recovery. Two very brave soldiers thereupon volunteered to stand all night outside his door with drawn swords, and keep the wicked devils away. This they did most successfully. But the Emperor did not like to think of such brave men getting no sleep night after night. So, knowing that spirits are really very stupid, he had the portrait of these two warriors painted on boards,

and placed just outside the doors, where these men usually stood. The ruse was successful. The spirits, thinking that the armed men were going to stand there for ever, gave up persecuting the Emperor and never returned to annoy him any more. He recovered from his sickness, and the cause of his recovery soon spread all over the country. From that time forth the common people adopted this plan of keeping evil spirits away from their dwellings. And that is the reason why every house, with the exception of the dwellings of Christians, is decorated with pictures of these awful looking fierce warriors.

The New Year festivities reach a climax at the first full moon, the fifteenth of the month. On this night every house is brilliantly lighted up with lanterns, giving the whole place a most festive appearance. From this custom the Fifteenth of the First Moon gets the name of the "Feast of Lanterns." It is evidently a surviving custom connected with the worship of the moon in bygone ages.

This chapter would be far too long if every festival was fully described. Suffice it to mention the names of the principal Feast Days of the year, with a few notes on the more important ones:—

New Year's Day; Feast of Lanterns (15th of 1st Moon); Festival of the Dead (3rd Moon); Dragon Boat Festival (5th of the 5th Moon); Ts'ih Chiao (7th of 7th Moon); Mid Autumn Festival (8th of the 8th Moon); Chung Yang (9th of the 9th Moon); and, lastly, The Winter Solstice (11th Moon)—the shortest day.

Of these, the next in importance to the New Year Festival is the *Ch'ing Ming*, or Festival of the Dead. This is the great day of Ancestral Worship. Varying in detail according to local custom, some 400,000,000 people give themselves to the worship of the spirits of the dead on this day. It means far more than the Decoration Day of America does; far more than the putting of a wreath on the grave or tomb of the departed hero on the anniversary of his death; and far more, too, than the loving attention to the grave of the loved

one gone before. In the Ancestral Halls, all over the Empire, sacrifices are offered, and prayers said before the tablet that is there in memory of the departed. But this tablet is not only *in memory* of the departed ; it is firmly believed that the spirit of the deceased *lives in that little wooden tablet* ; and to this spirit the sacrifices are offered

and the prayers said ; thus rendering the service something far more than a mere act of homage in memory of the ancestor. It is worship offered to spirits. The graves are also visited ; and everywhere on this day can be seen the little groups of worshippers with trays of food offered in sacrifice, smoking incense sticks, and burning candles by the side of the mounds of earth or the more elaborate burial places of the rich ; and everywhere are heard the weird voices of mourners calling upon the ones who have gone from them to that unknown country across the river of death.



ANCESTRAL TABLET.

Ancestral worship, coupled with a belief in the transmigration of souls (that is to say that when any one dies they may be re-born into a lower form of animal life), is responsible for some very curious superstitions. One is that animals with five toes are always considered as sacred : they may not be killed and eaten in the ordinary way. In the photograph, "A pig's grave," there are several points on interest. A pig, on coming into this world, was found to have an extra "toe," or as the Chinese say "had five claws." This conclusively proved to the owner that in the previous state of existence the animal had been a *man* : hence the five toes. The very natural

thought is, "He is somebody's ancestor! What if it should prove to be that *my* ancestor has been thus re-born?" The man has no way of finding out, so he errs on the safe side and treats the pig as sacred. I am told that in Hanyang there is a Temple in which there are many of such "freaks of nature" being carefully tended. When this particular pig died, he was put into a coffin like an ordinary human being, and had a proper funeral. Later on somebody in distress

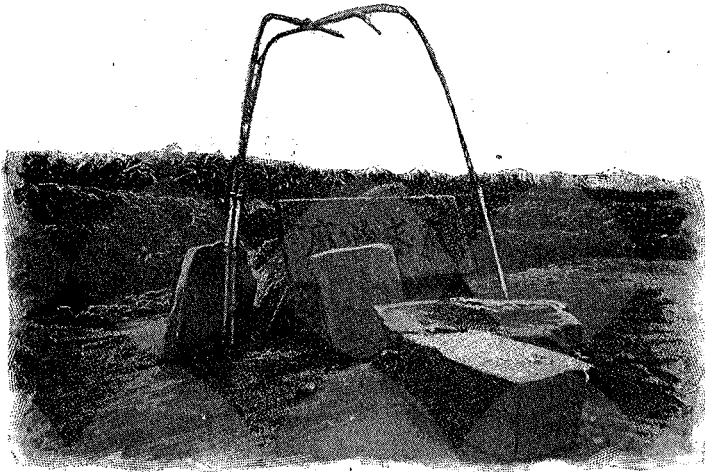


Photo by]

THE PIG'S GRAVE.

[L. C. F. TOMRINS.

came and prayed to the spirit of this "ancestor" for help in some matter or another. Perhaps there was sickness or other misfortune in the house and health or help was urgently required. The sick one got better, or the trouble passed over after the prayer had been offered at the pig's grave, and so the grateful worshipper has presented a "*pien*," or complimentary tablet, to the spirit of the pig. On this tablet in large letters is the inscription which may be translated "*Ask, and ye shall receive.*"

How strange that in a land where it is considered an intolerable

thing to be called a "pig," one of these very animals should have been made into a god!

Scholars tell us that the ancestral worship as practised now, is by no means the same as the "Reverence of Ancestors" taught by Confucius. Indeed we know that China's great sage never knew where his own father was buried, and so could not have worshipped at his graveside. At that early date there were no prayers and no sacrifices. If this were the case now, there would be no opposition to Ancestral Worship on the part of the missionaries. With the present customs and beliefs connected with such worship, there can be no countenance given to it by the Christian. While all would have the memory of the dead a sacred thing, none can desire other than the casting off the yoke of fear, false fear, and false worship, that Ancestral Worship places on the neck of the Chinese race.

On the 9th of the 9th Moon there is a further worshipping of ancestors with sacrifices at the graves.

Next, both in order of time and importance, is the "Dragon Boat Festival." There are two parts to the Feast. The one in which all take an active part, the other in which the hard work is left to the young men, while the majority play the part of enthusiastic lookers-on. The first part centres round the gathering of the *acorus calamus* at noontide, from the waterside. This is steeped in spirits, and the potion drunk as a preventative from the summer epidemics and complaints. The other part is the event which gives its name to the Festival—the racing of the Dragon Boats. This is a sort of regatta, and is another of those instances the traveller comes across so frequently in this land, when the custom survives long after its origin has been forgotten.

The story is, that in the good old days of yore, a Chinese Emperor took a dislike to his faithful adviser, an official beloved of the people, and ordered him to be banished to a distant country. The poor

old man was broken-hearted. Neither able to leave his beloved homeland, nor to bear the disgrace of his unmerited punishment, he plunged into the water to commit suicide. When the populace saw this, they hurriedly launched their boats, and rowed with all the strength they possessed to try and rescue the good old man from his watery grave; each man anxious to be the first to save him.



THE DRAGON PROCESSION.

(Only the head is seen in the picture; the body is supported by a number of men following behind.)

Alas! All too late, they arrived at the spot where Chu Yuan (for that was his name) had sunk to rise no more. But each year afterwards, on the anniversary of his death, the 5th of the 5th Moon, the people raced to the spot to look for his body. And this is the story of the origin of Dragon Boat racing. Then they used their ordinary little boats; now of course they are long affairs, gorgeously decorated and manned by many sturdy rowers.

The people get so excited at these times, and so many accidents and disturbances occur, that it is customary for the Officials to put out proclamations forbidding these races, year by year. Yet the people have their own way, and the proclamation has its usual "face value" only; that is to say, it would save the official "face" if any trouble occurred through the official commands being disregarded.

As a general levy is made on every householder in each district to meet the expenses of these races and the feasting and idolatrous practices connected therewith, there is usually much petty persecution of Christians at this time. Sometimes it really is because the Christian cannot conscientiously pay the money for such customs that always centre round the temple and the idol worship carried on there; and thereupon his house gets smashed or he himself beaten. At other times it is a case of paying off old scores. The real reason not being that the Christian does not pay this particular tax, but his not paying gives some enemy an opportunity of settling an old score. So a few bullies are got together, the man accused of setting himself against the "traditions of the elders," and he is made to suffer in this indirect way for some injury he has done to another in the day before he knew anything about Christ or Christianity.

The feasts of the Seventh, Eighth, and Eleventh Moons are survivals of the earlier worship of the heavenly bodies. In the Seventh Moon the Weaving Maiden, a star in the constellation of Lyra, is worshipped. Of course there is the usual story about her, and how she got up there to her home among the stars, but it is too long to add to this very long chapter.

In the Eighth Moon the Harvest Moon is worshipped. Sacrifices are offered to the rising moon, laid out on the roofs or houses and other suitable spots, while all over the city can be seen large lanterns fixed on poles. Then in the Eleventh Moon is the worship of the Sun. On this day the sun begins to return to the south;

after this the nights get shorter and the days get longer, so it is quite a fitting day for a feast. No matter what the origin of these feasts was, it has long since been forgotten by the Chinese common



A YOUNG HARVESTER CARRYING HOME THE BARLEY.

people, and the celebration now consists of a good deal of eating and drinking, of banging of gongs and firing of crackers, and of visits to temples and worship of idols.

CHAPTER IX

A DAY OF REJOICING

YOU will have found out by this time that feasting is one of the fine arts in China : something that is never out of place, and always the one thing that must be in evidence on every important occasion. Christmas Day without a Christmas dinner ! So would it be to a Chinaman if a day of consequence were passed without spreading a feast and calling in his friends to rejoice with him. At the birth of the baby-boy—a feast. When he has safely “ completed the circle,” the first year—a feast. When he first goes to school—a feast. When he is betrothed to a little girl—a feast. When, later on in life, the marriage ceremony takes place—a feast. When a little child comes to gladden his home—a feast. When a quarrel or lawsuit between him and somebody else is brought to a settlement—a feast. When he opens a new shop—a feast. When he borrows money with which to pay off some of his debts—a feast. When he buys a piece of ground—a feast. At every important turn of his life—a feast. And at last, when he has completed the number of his days—and is laid in his coffin—a feast. Then, some weeks or it may be years, later, when the lucky day has been chosen for burying him—a feast. And all these feasts are above and beyond the holiday feasts of which we have just been reading.

Long ere this, you will have come to the conclusion that there is all too much of the dull drab of monotony about the everyday life of the Chinaman, so you will not grudge him a time when he can make

merry with his friends. Least of all, will you hesitate to share in an "Occasion of Joy," as he calls the Marriage Feast. At such times let our only regret be that he is often tempted to spend so much more money than he can afford over the rejoicing.

Ere the marriage feast is reached, however, there is a long and roundabout road along which the parents and young couple must travel. But as it will all sound so strange to those of you who have never read of these things before, so unlike "our way," and therefore "not just the best way of doing it," I should first like to tell you a story.

One day, in the course of a conversation with a friendly Chinese scholar on the local marriage customs, he asked the following questions—

"Is it true that in your honourable country the young men have themselves to ask the young ladies if they will marry them?"

"Yes: it is the general custom for the young man to propose to the young lady of his choice."

"What a shameful thing! Why, supposing the young lady should say 'No,' what then?"

"If the lady is altogether unwilling to marry him, he would realize that the 'No' meant he must not pay his attentions to her any more. Perhaps he might eventually be successful elsewhere."

"What shame! What shame! Why he would have no face left at all! How could a gentleman allow himself to be so disgraced?"

Of course I explained a good many things that helped him to understand the English position a little better; but the proud Confucianist would never be able to look upon a proposal in any but a Chinese way. It would be, to him, a thing intolerable to be "refused." And indeed, it is commonly reported that the intense dislike to foreigners manifested on every possible occasion by a certain Chinese official, is largely owing to his having been "refused" by a young lady during his student days abroad.

“But why do you English not employ a ‘match-maker’?” continued my friend. “It is so much more simple that way.”

“Who is this ‘match-maker’? What has the ‘match-maker’ to do?” you ask.

Well! Suppose the boy is growing up, and that he has not had a bride chosen for him before he was born, or when he was a tiny baby.



A CHRISTIAN BRIDE AND BRIDEGROOM.

A friend of the family will say to the parents, “In such and such a family there is a girl who I think would do for your son: shall I see about making the arrangements for a betrothal?” If the parents are pleased with the proposition, off goes the ‘match-maker’ (we will call this personage *he*, although a woman often acts in such a matter) to the home of the girl in question. Of course he cannot go to *any* family, or choose *any* girl that might be pleasing to the boy’s

parents. Several very important restrictions have to be remembered by him. Let me tell you some of the rules that must be observed in making a match of this kind.

The girl’s surname must be different to that of the boy. Now as there are not a very great number of surnames in China, a difficulty often arises. For instance, there are thousands of people, each bearing the name of Li or Wang or Chen. Even if two of the name of Li

are not in the remotest degree related, and, if the young couple come from two different provinces, still, being of the same surname, they cannot marry. It is the same with any other surname. Just recently I read of a band of robbers, who lived in an impregnable mountain stronghold, from which they were wont to descend to the villages on the plains and carry off people, holding them to ransom; looting and plundering wherever they went. Now all is changed. And the bandits, who defied Government troops for decades, have become fairly peaceful and law-abiding subjects of the Emperor. How? Not by being subdued by sword or gun. The main factor in their civilization was this: their sons grew up, and having only two or three surnames amongst them, they had to go down to the plains to get wives for their boys; and so gradually they became related to the people all around. Then their secret paths became known to so many people that the old life was gradually given up. In this case the rule regarding surnames was a blessing to all.

The prospective bridegroom ought not to look upon his bride's face until after they are married. And so she ought not to be living in the same village or town; otherwise it would become very inconvenient.

It is not desirable that she should be a girl whose home is in a village *very* far away from that of the bridegroom's, as she would not be able to visit her maternal home; and should her husband ill-treat her and behave cruelly towards her, she would have no relations to take her part and give the bad husband a thrashing if she lived far away.

Perhaps you have heard that all children in this land are regarded as "born under an animal." We used to say much the same thing in England, and believe that children were "born under a star." Even now we use as a proverb the expression "Born under a lucky star," if a man succeeds in life; or the reverse if he should make a failure

of his life's work. But in China the child is born under a certain animal; that is, each year represents an animal, and to be born in the year that represents the Dragon is to be "born under the Dragon." Some of these animals are "opposites." So if *he* were born under the "Dragon" and *she* under the "Tiger" the match could never be arranged!

The first thing the match-maker does is to get the "eight characters" written out. Some scribe gets his writing brush, and slate or stone inkslab, and a stick of ink; he pours a little water on the slab, rubs up a little of the ink, and, after sucking the pen to make it nice and round and pointed, he carefully takes a little of the ink and writes out on a piece of tissue-like paper the year, the month, the day, and the hour of birth of the girl, and then does the same for the boy. Each date consists of two characters, eight in all on each slip of paper. These are given to the parents of the young people; the boy's "eight" going to the girl's parents and vice versa. This ceremony is called "Exchanging the Eight Characters."

Custom may vary as to the details, and each village may have some little custom peculiar to itself. In some places again, the whole thing may be quite different. But as far as I can ascertain the general way of finding out if the "Eight Characters" are or are not favourable is as follows. The "Eight Characters" of the girl are handed over to the boy's parents. The head of the family places them on the family altar, that is before the image of the household god, under the jar in which the incense sticks are burned. This is done to secure the god's decision on the matter. For some three days they are left in this spot, and the household doings carefully watched. Should anything unlucky happen in the house during this time—sickness, death, breaking of crockery, etc.—the sign is received as a token of the god's displeasure, and the attempt to make a match given up.

If this ordeal is safely gone through, the fortune-teller is called

in to decide on the propitiousness or otherwise of the contemplated union. There is no lack of fortune-tellers in China! One has only to go along a street to meet with any number of these "gentry." There they are, seated at their little tables, with little rolls of "fortunes all prepared," or else prepared to dissect any character you may like to choose and from it tell your fortune. One of these gentlemen I came across recently had his table pitched in an angle of the city wall, doing a "roaring trade" with the country-folk coming into market. No wonder they believed in him! His signboard was a little banner stretched out at the back of him, above his head. And this was the inscription on it, "I TELL FORTUNES LIKE A GOD." At any rate he was collecting coin from these credulous people, and deceiving them very very much *like a MAN* who has no regard for truth, nor for the consequences of his clever fraud.

If the fortune-telling man has nothing evil to say against the match (and if the fee is large enough, this can be made all right), the match-maker is able to *begin* his delicate business. Hitherto all has been preliminary: now the real hard work commences. He has to arrange the *price* of the bride. How much money will the parents take as her dowry? (The Chinese speak of it as "buying the bride," and many from our own land take this with a Western meaning, speaking of these little brides as being "sold into slavery." Whatever may be our views on the subject, we must ever remember that a greater part, if not all, of the money given by the parents of the bridegroom goes directly to form her dowry or towards the expenses of the wedding.) In arranging the financial side of the betrothal the match-maker is invaluable. He probably knows to a fraction the available money on the one side, and the "reserve price" on the other side: his business is to so adjust everything that the supply shall equal the demand, and then leave enough over to compensate him for his trouble in the matter.

When all this is settled the exchange of presents takes place : ring, bangles, ear-rings, and the hairpin to the girl, and a piece of silk or cloth to the boy. This ratifies the engagement ; an engagement never to be broken without great loss of " face " and money.



MEMORIAL ARCH TO A WIDOW WHO NEVER RE-MARRIED.

Many and sad are the stories the missionary in China can tell about the good-for-nothing scamp wedded to the bright well-trained girl who has received the best of educations in a mission-school, all because she was betrothed when a tiny tot. Now, rather than bring disgrace upon her parents, she submits to a life-long martyrdom.

Or again, a bright young fellow has been mated to a girl who is half an idiot by unthinking parents who got her "cheap" because she was stupid. He does his best to get her trained a little at the mission-school, but the one who might have been a help-meet is but a drag and a handicap all his days. Sometimes it happens that a missionary is able to set one of these slaves to foolishness free. A case in point is where a little girl lost both her feet through frost-bite and neglect. She was taken to the hospital to be cured, that is to have her legs amputated properly and carefully dressed until the poor stumps were healed. Later on she entered the school, proving an apt and hard-working scholar. I have just been reading the document that set her free from a marriage that would have meant life-long misery to her. Both the parents and the man to whom she was betrothed renounce all claim to her and make her over to the missionaries absolutely. There, in the mission-school, she will find a congenial life, a work she loves and is well fitted to do, and become a great help to the missionary who looks after the school.

But one is tempted to ask, *what is one among so many?* What of the hundreds who do not get their freedom? A sad lot is theirs. I think of one, as I write, who spent years in a mission-school, eventually becoming a teacher in it: a bright, clever, well-read girl who would have made any Chinese pastor a capable and helpful wife. She has now to do needlework to help keep a gambling scamp of a husband who makes her life a misery to her by his cruelty.

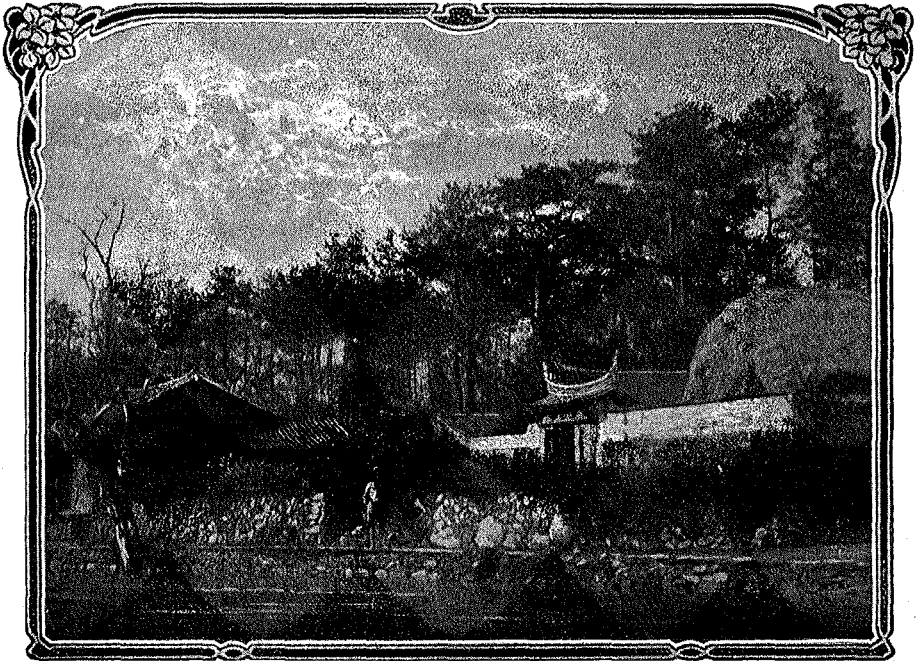
With betrothals arranged so early in life the wedding often takes place years later. If, in the meantime, anything should happen to the bridegroom-elect, it is regarded as a great calamity. You see it cuts at the root of the genealogical tree, especially if he is the eldest son. It is unfortunate for the girl, too, although her plight is by no means as bad as that of the poor little girl-widow of India; for it is always possible for the Chinese girl to eventually marry some one

else. At the same time, there are cases where the girl has resolutely preferred to remain a "widow" all her days. One very strange custom must be mentioned: sometimes the girl chooses to be married to the "spirit" of her betrothed. The ceremony is gone through with the bride grasping the Ancestral Tablet in which the spirit of the departed bridegroom is supposed to reside.

The Rev. E. Bóx, of Shanghai, tells a curious story about this "being married to a spirit." A bride-elect died when quite young. Later on in life, the poor student to whom she had been engaged secured the much-coveted *Hanlin* degree, coming out top of his year in the highest class of the Government examinations. Now it is considered a very great honour indeed to have a *Hanlin* in the family; and although the little girl had been dead many years, and although the young man had since married and was the father of a family, her parents saw an opportunity of securing this much-to-be-coveted honour. To have a *Hanlin* for a son-in-law was worth some sacrifice, they thought, so they arranged to pay him a sum of money for the honour of marrying the spirit of the dead girl to him. He, being like most scholars, without much of this world's goods, gladly consented to the proposed union. So they had a grand wedding: arranging everything as if the whole affair was a real proper marriage. After the ceremony, the girl's coffin was removed to the young *Hanlin's* burying ground; and thus he became the son-in-law of these rich people. All this time he had never left Peking, hundreds of miles away. If he was present at the wedding at all, it was only "in spirit" when the spirit-girl was married to him. But this was all as it should be from the Chinese standpoint. The main thing was, that every one was satisfied. The bridegroom got some money which he was much in need of, and the girl's family secured the much-coveted honour.

As you may suppose, the day of the wedding is not fixed by the bride. The bridegroom's family do this for the young people. For

some time beforehand all is bustle and confusion : and great are the preparations, taking up much time and money in both of the homes concerned. Such a making of clothes and embroidering of silk shoes ! Such wholesale sending out of invitations to the wedding feast in large red envelopes about a foot long and five inches broad.



A PICTURESQUE CHINESE FARMSTEAD.

Such a hiring of decorations for the house, to say nothing of the flowery chair in which the bride is to be carried to the house of her husband. But into the details of these preparations we cannot enter. Suffice it to say that when the eventful day arrives, everything that can be done to make the day an "occasion of rejoicing" from a Chinese standpoint, has been done.

All the bride's clothes and possessions have been sent on beforehand to the bridegroom's home. The keys of her boxes are handed to him as a symbol of the young man's authority over his bride. The flowery chair in which she is to ride has been sent off to her home, and guests and bridegroom and all sit down to await her coming.

It must not be supposed that the young people have a new house taken for them in a different part of the town or city to that in which their parents live. Such a thing would not be at all nice from a Chinese standpoint. Setting up house usually means that a separate room is set apart for the use of the young people. As to eating and other domestic arrangements, they will just take their share with the rest of the family. The only difference, as far as household order is concerned, is that the son gets a wife, while the mother-in-law gets a new servant, and often gives her a pretty bad time of it. She herself was a daughter-in-law once, and well remembers the trials of her early married life. Now her turn has come, and she makes the most of it.

Most of the suffering comes to the young girl because of the Chinese woman's ungoverned temper. She has not yet learnt the meaning of self-control or temperance. So long as the parent has the power of life and death over the child, and the child has no one to take up her case, these things must be.

But a new force is working in Old China. There is one great factor in this change that is coming over the thought of the Empire, and that factor is the *newspaper*. Although at present the native Press is neither truthful nor reliable, yet it gives publicity to a good many deeds of darkness ; and when the Press comes to be more the power it is in other civilized lands, public men will be compelled to take up the case of the weak against the strong.

On the last day of the wedding preparations all is bustle at the bride's home, preparing her for her journey. She herself has been almost fasting for the last two or three days, eating hardly anything.

All this is supposed to be through grief at the leaving of the old home. She refuses to be dressed in her wedding clothes, or rather makes a pretence of refusing, all the time weeping copious tears at the prospect of leaving her parents. As a natural consequence she gets very weak, and is scarcely able to stand during the ceremony. If one judges by appearances, she certainly needs the help of her "grannie," an old woman who acts as her "bridesmaid." However, all know this inability to stand up on her feet is the correct thing, and give little heed to the girl, who may have been almost fainting from the long imprisonment in the closely shut-up chair.

But by the time fixed for the departure, the bride is got ready. Her face has been painted and powdered till there is no trace of the original complexion to be seen. The yellow skin has disappeared, and she is now like Snowdrop in the fairy-tale, with lily-white cheeks, ruby-red lips, and tresses as black as ebony.

One interesting part of her dressing is the plucking out of all the short hairs on her forehead. The girlish fringe disappears for ever; and the placid matronly brow takes its place. All the long hair is then drawn back and carefully smoothed down. But in this matter, custom is on the change, and the married woman with a fringe is now to be seen.

When all is ready, the hired wedding dress of gorgeous crimson silk embroidered with gold, is put on her, the "crown" is placed on her head so that the strings of beads and pearls that hang down shall hide her dazzling beauty, and over all is thrown a fine crimson silk veil. This latter is never lifted until she has been duly married to the young man, whose privilege it is to lift it in the bridal apartment. And lastly, amidst a chorus of weeping and lamentation she is placed in her flowery chair and borne on the shoulders of stalwart coolies to her waiting bridegroom.

On a lucky day, numbers of these processions, varying in length

and splendour, more or less tawdry, according to the wealth and position of the bridegroom's family, may be seen wending their way from village to village across the plain. Quite recently, during a short ten miles' ride, I counted ten such bridal escorts.

Generally towards evening the chair reaches its destination. It is carried right into the guest hall of the house, and then when a strip of carpet is laid down, the young bride steps out and walks right into the living room.

If the young people are Christians, the wedding ceremony now takes place, and before God the happy couple pledge themselves to each other and receive a Christian blessing on their union. I have sometimes married them in the Guest Hall itself. Customs may vary in this respect with the locality. In many places the "ring" is coming into fashion, for western ways are being very much copied by the Chinese. Their own custom is a very beautiful and symbolic one. Two cups are brought, joined together with a piece of red cord two or three feet in length, and wine is poured into each. One cup is first handed to the bridegroom, who takes a sip, and hands it back. The other cup is then sipped by the bride in like manner. Then comes the ceremony of mingling the cups, when the wine from the bride's cup is poured into that of the bridegroom, signifying that she is to be merged into his personality, and also conveying the idea of the closeness of the union of man and wife. Both then drink in turn, the bridegroom first.

Such is the case when everything comes off without a hitch. But many and long are the waitings at the house of the bridegroom, and much heart-burning is there at times, because of the tardy arrival of the bride. Last month I was at a wedding feast. We waited a long time, but no bride came. Patience was exhausted, and the feast we were to have partaken of after the ceremony, was in danger of spoiling. It became evident that something had happened to

delay the bride. What was to be done? "Eat the feast!" said the host, the father of the bridegroom. So in a very short time the square tables, each holding eight people, were put in position, prayer was offered for the young couple and the feast commenced. It must have taken us considerably over an hour, perhaps nearly two hours, to discuss the various dishes that were brought in and placed, one at a time in the centre of the table, and into which everybody dived for the luscious dainties that are the correct things to have at a feast, but which taste much nicer than a description of them would sound. Still the bride came not. Finally we had to leave, hoping that the flowery chair with its precious burden would arrive in due course, to report that there had been nothing more serious than the usual delays.

And what are "the usual delays"? In the case above mentioned, it may have been that a contrary wind hindered the boat that was bringing her to the city gate. Or it may have been that the rascals who were carrying her refused more than once to go on unless some more money were given them, even though the price had been already fixed. Sometimes they will get the chair as far as the outside of the Guest Hall, and *then* refuse to carry it over the threshold, unless the extra money is produced. Of course they know the householder will not wish to lose face over the matter, and so count on his wish to keep up appearances, to make him pay the squeeze.

It is after the ceremony that the bride's first ordeal comes. Timid, modest, a stranger in a strange house, unutterably lonely, she has to submit to the cruel performance known as "teasing the bride." All through the inhuman process, no matter what may be said to her or about her, she must remain with closed eyes (what a mercy that she is allowed that privilege!) and make no sign that she is annoyed. At such times every good feeling may be outraged, but she dare make neither retort nor rebuke.

We leave her there ; sitting on the edge of her bed ; hoping that the best of married life, such as it is in China, may be hers.

Writing of this, a far different scene comes to my memory. I see a happy bride, receiving the congratulations of her friends and neighbours after a Christian marriage. True, there is the same "teasing of the bride," but the coarse jokes are entirely absent. All is as full of joy and happiness for her as if she had been a bride in Merry England. She was a girl who had been all her life in a mission-school, was now being married to an earnest Christian Chinese, and at her marriage was surrounded by the maidens who had been her companions in the school, and who, although full of tears because she was leaving them, were yet determined to make her wedding day one to be long remembered with joy. So may all wedding days be hallowed by the presence of the Saviour who giveth joys and addeth no sorrows !

CHAPTER X

DOCTORS AND THEIR PATIENTS

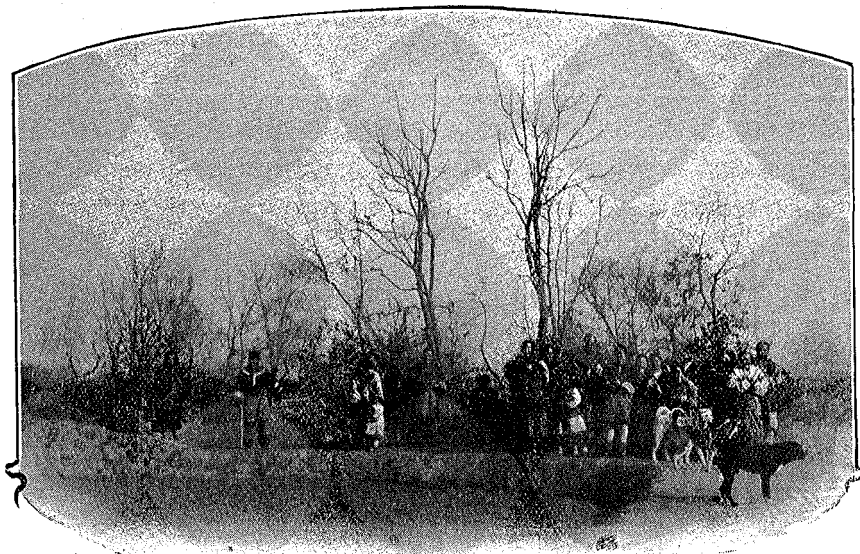
ONE sunny Spring morning in 1899, a Chinese evangelist came to me, telling a long story about a man who, although he had been attending services for a few days only, had that morning at family prayers in the evangelist's house expounded the Scriptures in a truly remarkable manner. As the story was told me, I did what perhaps ninety-nine out of every hundred missionaries would have done—sat and wondered. Wondered if this “ sudden conversion ” was true ; wondered what motive prompted the man to take such a prominent position so soon after confessing Christ ; and wondered if he, like so many others, would be found wanting when the time of testing should come !

The critical moment came some few days later, when a considerable sum of money was offered him, if he would take up some shady *Yamen* case, and he, without having a cash in his pocket at the time, at once refused it, saying, “ Two weeks ago I would have been glad of the opportunity. But now I am a saved man and cannot touch unclean money even though I am in want.”

In the meantime I had met and talked with Mr. Wu, for this was his name, learned something of his life story, and been impressed by his sincerity and humility. He had been a slave to the opium pipe for forty long years, and latterly had required to take such a large amount of the drug to satisfy the craving, that he had been ruined by the habit. Piece by piece the home had been broken up,

more than one of his children had already been sold, and he was on the point of selling his only son to get the necessary opium when one day he felt a strange inclination to enter a house wherein he heard the sound of a man preaching.

For years he had been connected with some *Yamen*, at one time very prominent in any matters that required help in exchange for



"COME AND SEE THE MISSIONARY!"

cash, as is the usual way in Chinese Courts of Justice. He sunk lower and lower in the social scale as the seductive poppy-juice stole away more and more of his energy and morals, until towards the end, while still recognized as a man of ability, none but the shadiest kind of *Yamen* business was ever entrusted to him.

Twenty years ago, when on a journey, a man had met with him and told him about "a God who forgave sins for nothing," and urged

him to pray to this God. In total ignorance of the Gospel message, Mr. Wu determined to say prayers to this unknown God, and for a long time continued his petitions. What was his surprise, on entering the little chapel that day, to hear an evangelist speaking of this very God, all-merciful to forgive, all-powerful to save.

An opium-sot, ruined, with no hope even of getting money wherewith to buy enough of the drug to satisfy the craving within, Mr. Wu was constrained to cry out in agony, "Can He save me from my opium-habit?"

"Yes," was the ready reply, "if you trust Him fully. And not only from that, but from all your other sins."

"I believe it: I *will* trust Him," came the response. Mr. Wu's struggle to rise again had begun.

In the strength of this new-born trust in God, the pangs of the one who tries to escape the opium-habit were triumphantly endured; and it was a happy man who, some little time later, presented me with the sodden evil-smelling opium pipe that was never more to be used save as an illustration of the power of God to save.

In depth of poverty, and in great bodily weakness, Mr. Wu set to work to study the Scriptures and learn of Christ. During this time he was ministered to by Christians almost as poor as himself, who gladly shared their scanty fare with him.

Strength returned after a while. He was ashamed to live on other people, and resolved to set about earning something for himself. After thinking of many things he was shut up to one course—a way must be found of earning money which involved no use of capital to start with. This prevented his either opening a shop, or engaging in business. All suggestions, but one, were found unworkable: this one exception was that he should *become a doctor*. I was consulted, and at once raised the objection that he had received no training. "Oh, that does not matter! He reads the Chinese books well, and

so can find out all about the treatment of diseases." And after that all-inclusive reply what more could be said against it? The only remaining question I could ask was, "What would you like me to do in the matter?" And the answer showed that the course of procedure had been well thought out. "Mr. Wu has the books, and has a pair of spectacles (large ones, with tortoise-shell rims, too), but has neither coat nor gown nor respectable hat. Does the pastor see his way to help him?"

The pastor had these very garments, as the Christians who asked well knew; and the next day saw Mr. Wu, arrayed in these "borrowed plumes," beginning his career as a doctor. He did well, and has become a preacher-healer, and won for Christ many who were such as he himself had been in the days when he was a hopeless opium sot.

Now I am sure you will see the point of the story. It has introduced the reader to the easy way in which a Chinese may become a doctor. Truly it may be well said in this land that "a doctor is *born*, and not made," either by college education or hospital training. So, needless to say, "quacks" abound on every hand. Every medical missionary is very well acquainted with the poor woman who had spent all that she had, and who, after suffering many things of many physicians, is worse rather than better.

Of surgery little, if anything, is known; of antiseptic treatment, absolutely nothing. A fully qualified Chinese doctor who had been well trained in a recognized college, when speaking to me of his country's need, told the following incident: One day a man was brought into hospital with an awful leg. A nurse was set to work to clean it up a little previous to the doctor's inspection. Much black filth was removed—stuff that had been plastered on to cover up the abscess; and then, firmly embedded in the leg, was discovered a *brass* drainage tube, pointed at both ends! On making inquiries, they found that originally the man had gone with a small abscess in the leg to a native

practitioner. This man must have read about foreign methods of treatment, for after lancing with a (probably) dirty knife, he inserted a piece of brass tubing to drain the cavity. The result may be imagined. It led to the total loss of the leg.

The use of various drugs is well known to the Chinese, and these, together with all kinds of abominable things we cannot tell children about, constitute the Chinese doctor's stock in trade. Some of their ways of healing are amusing, others as revolting. Here is a cutting from the daily press of a few days ago :—

“CURIOUS MEDICINE.”

“At the instance of a Chinese gentleman, said to be a brother of one of the magistrates, a shop-keeper was charged at the Mixed Court (in Shanghai) yesterday with selling a cake unfit for human consumption. The cake was produced in Court, and contained quite an entomological collection, including several cockroaches, two or three centipedes, and a beetle. A servant of the complainant gave evidence of buying the cake. Accused apologized for the mistake. He had prepared the cake *as medicine for himself!* His assistant had sold it to the servant by mistake.”

His story was very probably true, for centipedes are very often used as medicine. My house boy caught one last week on the stairs, and when I said to him, “You had better dry that and keep it for me,” he smilingly replied, “Why, I can get ten cents for it at the chemist's!”

Every man who keeps a little medicine shop is a “doctor,” but every “doctor” does not keep a shop. He may have a few drugs, but the general custom is for the patient to buy the prescription from the medical man, and then go to the medicine shop to have the dose prepared. And a very big and nasty dose it usually is.

You will readily understand that medical missionaries, almost from the first, were gladly welcomed to the homes of many of the Chinese people. Of course they had to live down all sorts of horrid slanders. The people, addicted to all kinds of cruel practices them-

selves, readily believed that the foreigners (who came with the love of Christ in their hearts to try and alleviate suffering and save the lives of the people) had really come to get hold of the little children, gouge out their eyes and tear out their hearts, and then make these into medicine for their own diseases!

We laugh at the absurdity of it. But the idea is one very readily accepted by the people whose highest officials can drink the blood warm from the body of a beheaded criminal, and whose soldiery can savagely tear out and devour the hearts of slaughtered rebels after the battle with them is over! These dreadful things did not happen long ago in the dark ages, but *within the last year*, the first in Canton province, and the second series of horrors in Hunan. In March of this year, in an adjoining province, one of those cruel tragedies occurred which show how often unpremeditated and sudden passion may have been the cause of some of the cruel doing to death of missionaries in this land. A young man and his mother quarrelled over some trivial matter. Both losing their tempers and using bad language to each other only served to intensify the quarrel. In the end the son struck his mother, an action which is punishable with death according to the Chinese penal code. The mother, white with passion, went to the village tea-shop and appealed to the village bully, the scoundrel of the district, who happened to have a grudge against the young man. In his virtuous (!) indignation that worthy cried out against the unfilial conduct. "Unrighteous wretch! Burn him! Burn him." In her mad fury the mother took up the cry. A bystander bought ten cents worth of paraffin oil, and the whole village turned on the unfortunate young man. He was caught and tied to a tree. Not realizing the gravity of the situation, he defied the crowd. Then the oil was poured over him, and a match put into the mother's hand. She struck it, put out her hand to light the oil-soaked clothing of her son, but—then remembered, and cast the lighted splinter

away. Some one, however, took advantage of the confusion that followed her attempt, and actually did set light to the young fellow. In a few minutes all was over. Then fuel was piled round the lifeless body and all was consumed except the extremities, and these were purposely thrown to the dogs.¹

With passions so easily aroused and so blindly followed, it is no wonder that riots occur on the most trivial incidents. For a long time the medical missionaries' path was strewn with difficulties, not to say dangers; but now the love of Christ, as manifested in these self-denying men and women, has conquered, and people bring their dearest and put them into the medical missionary's hands, knowing that what devotion and skill can do will be done for their sick.

I shall never forget a poor old man coming to the dispensary on one occasion, carrying his little boy on his back. It was a hot summer's day, and the father was nearly exhausted, but the smile of hope was on his face when he at last came into the waiting-room. The missionary carefully examined the boy, and moved almost to tears with the pathos of it all, had to tell the father as gently as he could that nothing could be done; the disease, now in its last stages, was incurable. Poor man! The faith in the foreigner's power had been so complete that the only difficulty ever presented to his mind was how to get the sick boy to the foreigner; there never had been a doubt as to the curability of the disease. For a time sobs convulsed him: then trying bravely to smile through his tears, he thanked the foreigner for his sympathy, saying he knew that what had been told him was the truth, and that if there had been a possibility of saving his child the missionary would have done it. Surely a testimony worth having, though it cut the heart to the quick to hear it said.

In Central China the London Mission has two hospitals for women and five for men, with a sixth one soon to be built at Hwangpi. As

¹ See *North China Daily News*, March 18, 1907.

we shall want by and by to see the men's hospital in Hankow, let us first go across the river to Wuchang for our glimpse at the work among women.

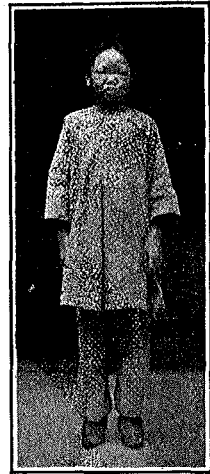
Just under the north wall of Wuchang city nestles a cluster of foreign buildings : quite a beehive of missionary activity. Perhaps the least conspicuous, but busy as any, is our Women's Hospital. When Dr. Massey came out there was no hospital building, and work had to be begun in a part of the Girls' School. This was six year ago. Then came the welcome gift from a friend of Missions at home, and first the hospital was built. Then through the gift of a missionary in the field, a much needed ward was added, and last of all the new convenient dispensary and waiting-room was erected.

Just as the building has grown, so too has the work of the doctor and her devoted assistant, Miss Calvert. Begun in a very humble way in the dispensary of the Men's Hospital, and carried on for a time in a native house, the work has now won for itself the confidence of the women of Wuchang ; and not of Wuchang only, as the number of those coming to the hospital from a distance testifies.

When I went to the hospital a few weeks ago, I was fortunate enough to get Dr. Massey to take me over the building. The doctor was busy in the operating theatre when I arrived, and later on, when free to see me, was full of apologies for the delay. Her reason not only would satisfy any one, but would give an insight to the medical missionary's strenuous life : " We were out all night ; seeing a patient until three o'clock this morning. We did not intend having any operations to-day ; but there were the cases, and we just *had* to have them."

First we went into the large ward, where there were ten beds fully occupied, and also three couches that had been squeezed into odd corners to accommodate some who *could* not be turned away even though the hospital was full up. Then I peeped into a small ward

with two beds ; these also had their suffering tenants. This is the private ward, where patients can secure special privacy for the sum of 2s. per day. Sometimes it is a semi-private ward with three beds in it ; then the patients each pay 1s. a day for the privilege. This morning I found the nurses busy with a poor little baby who was suffering with broncho-pneumonia. His grandfather was employed in the Viceroy's *yamen*, the doctor told me, and was by no means dealing tenderly with his household in their distress. The baby was so ill that it was thought best to prepare the young mother for the worst. Of course when she found out that her baby-boy was not likely to live she was very much upset. But what seemed to make the cup of her grief full to overflowing was the order sent by the grandfather, " If the baby is going to die, come away home, all of you." He was not going to have his daughter-in-law made ill by nursing a hopeless case. When I went in, the nurse and doctor had by no means given up hope of a recovery, but the two old nurse-women sent from the *yamen* to watch the baby were busily employed stitching away at its grave-clothes ; and the ground in which baby was to be buried had already been bought !



A LITTLE LEPPER
GIRL.

In one room at the back of the hospital was a little leper girl. When showing her to me the doctor told me what an awful little thief she was. At prayer times, when all the nurses would be in the ward, she would steal out of her room, and go into the kitchen to steal food. As she would pull all the food about with her leprous hands it caused no little anxiety to the ones in charge of the hospital. She would go, too, into the nurses' rooms and steal their money and anything else she could get hold of.

Hers is a very sad story. It was three years ago when the doctor first saw her. She was brought to the hospital one day with her arms badly burnt. Knowing the cruel way in which these little slave-girls are handled, the missionaries thought she had been burnt on purpose by her mistress. When they found that she was black and blue all over the body as well, they felt pretty well sure of the cause of it all. For some six or seven weeks she was in there, but no one detected any sign of leprosy at the time. Last year she came in again for treatment—once again it was burning. This time she said she might have burnt herself, but had never felt it. This at once led to careful examination, and she was found to be suffering from the anæsthetic form of leprosy, and other signs of the disease were noted. There was an opportunity of sending her down to the nearest leper home for women at Hangchow; but her people came and took her away, for the master had given her to one of his servants who had sold her to a native doctor who “knew all about everything and could easily cure her!” Dr. Massey made an attempt to get her back from this man, but without success. Then some six months passed away. One Wednesday afternoon, when on the way to the week-day service, she was met tearing along as hard as she could run in the direction of the hospital. She had run away from her owner and came back to the only place on earth where she had received kindly treatment. For finding that her case was hopeless she had been turned out to beg—out into the pitiless streets.

At the time of the visit Dr. Massey was in a great dilemma. By this time the disease was so far advanced, that it would be difficult to get her taken on board a steamer to be sent to Hangchow: on the other hand it was impossible to keep her much longer in the hospital, for fear of contagion. Since then, the difficulties have been overcome, and she has started on her 800 miles journey to the Women's Leper Home, where good Dr. Main will not only seek to take every care of her

poor leprous body, but seek to prepare her for that longer journey still that she will have to take in a few years' time. Pray for her, that she may soon learn to love Jesus Christ, and be received without "spot or blemish or any such thing" into one of the mansions He has prepared for all who love Him.

In one of the beds in the large ward I found two little children. One was a particularly pathetic case. Through neglect both her feet had been frost-bitten, and had to be amputated. In addition to this she had an awful squint and appeared to be mentally deficient. Dr. Massey hoped to be able to get her taken into the Shanghai slave home. When I asked her age I was told, "She is ten years old, her people say, but she looks barely five."

Her hospital name was *Jemima*. Possibly the quaint old name was given her because she looked so very quaint and old-fashioned. She was just one of China's waifs and strays.



GETTING BETTER.

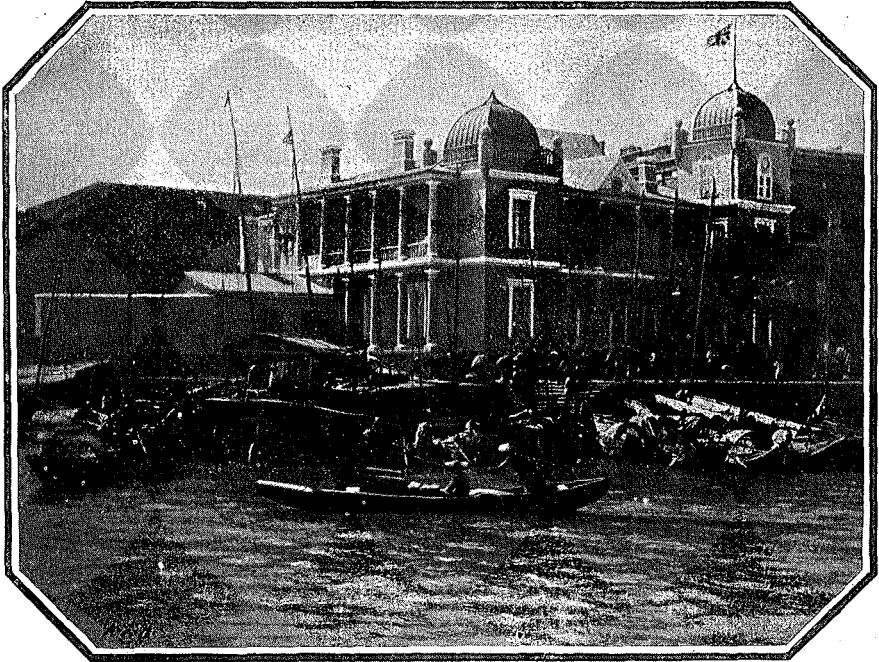
Her parents being dead, she had fallen into the hands of her relative, an aunt, who had promptly made her over to somebody as a daughter-in-law.

The other girlie was a merry little mortal, and evidently one of the ward pets. She, too, had suffered from frostbite during the first cold in November, last year. After more or less neglect, the mother brought her to hospital for treatment. When the doctor told her the foot must be taken off she refused to allow it to be done, saying that the child could feel no pain in the foot, and all she needed was some medicine. After a while she consented to have the operation performed; but changing her mind when all preparations had been made, wrapped the child up in her dirty clothes and took her away. Not until the dead foot dropped off would the mother let the doctor do what was necessary to save the rest of her leg. Evidently the fear of a "mother-in-law" to whom she had been "given" (for a consideration) was the reason for her hoping that the leg would heal without the loss of any part of it, for when the foot came off she wrapped it up in a piece of oiled paper and took it away for the mother-in-law to see! When I saw her the stump had been properly dressed, and although the four-year-old girlie had lost one foot, and all the toes of her other foot, she was playing away quite happily with a foreign handkerchief.

Dr. Massey and Miss Calvert could tell you of many such cases, where the missionaries have been able to save lives and heal diseases; in some instances taking the ill-treated children into a new kind of life, where, let us hope, the awful experiences of their early years are soon forgotten. Very many cases that come to the hospital for treatment are the results of accident, or ignorant treatment of disease. All are welcomed, and all have the doctor's skilful attention and the nurse's care, whether their stay be one of days or of weeks.

Each Tuesday and Friday is an out-patient day, when all who are not ill enough to need hospital treatment, come to have their

wounds dressed or to get medicines for their ailments. In busy times as many as eighty or a hundred will come to the dispensary. On these days Mrs. Foster and the Bible-woman hold a service, trying to give these casual visitors some idea of the Gospel story, telling them of the Great Physician who is able to heal all the diseases of their souls,



HANKOW. THE FIRST JETTY, WITH BRITISH MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS.

(The L.M.S. Mission Compound is two minutes' walk from here.)

and save them for His Kingdom. After the service is over the seeing of the patients begins.

You do not need to be told that the dispensing of medicines and dressing of wounds and patching up of bodies is not all the work that is done in our hospitals. This is but a means to an end. The

missionary is there because Christ has sent him to preach the glad tidings to the sick and suffering, as well as to bind up their wounds. Every morning, Mrs. Foster has prayers with the patients in the ward. In the evening Dr. Massey and Miss Calvert take turns, one week teaching the Christians and another week seeking to impart the knowledge of life to the heathen patients. Sometimes, if the missionaries are called away, the nurses lead the ward service. Then every morning the Bible-woman comes, sits down by the sides of the beds, and speaks to the patients about Jesus; and the nurses themselves as they go about their work do a good deal of teaching. A service is held in the ward every Sunday afternoon. But I think that what the patients enjoy most of all is the Song Service the Christian Endeavourers from the Girls' School sometimes hold. Some of the best singers will go and sing in the ward for half an hour: singing the hymns you know so well, but which you would scarcely recognize in their Chinese dress were it not for the tunes. Unfortunately this term the girls have not been able to do much in this way; for first came measles, and then came mumps, and the poor girls had to stay away either because they were sick themselves or through fear lest they should infect others.

In chatting about the work I found that, just like other missionaries in other departments, Dr. Massey and Miss Calvert had plenty of disappointments in their work. The missionary works for the saving of the people, body and soul. Yet how often does it appear that these people seem to care nothing for anything but their bodies! Many of them are grateful for the kindness received, and that is something; but it is only the few who respond to the attempt to win them to higher things. As far as can be ascertained, work among the out-patients is more productive of results than among those who stay in for treatment. Perhaps this is partly owing to our idea of "results," partly owing to the fact that in-patients mostly

come from homes far away and are seldom heard of after their return to the native place, and partly, too, because of the greater number of the out-patients.

Sometimes, however, a letter comes from a home away in Hunan, where lives a family that will ever gratefully remember the lady doctor and her fellow-worker. The wife of an official, her daughter, and a little boy all came to the hospital for treatment. The girl was suffering with tubercular disease of the ankle joint, yet after a long time of treatment the leg was saved, although the foot was lost. Now in her Hunan home she is well and happy, and wears a false foot stuffed with cotton-wool, so that only her friends know of her loss. As she stayed in the hospital for six months, and the little boy five months longer, they learned a good deal of scripture, and, better still, were taught to pray to God. Long before the boy was well the funds were used up, as the father not only had a small income, but was an opium-smoker as well. Before going home the mother asked the "Doctrine Sister" to kneel down in the Guest Hall with her and pray; and then when the parting came told them that she knew they had done all they could, and now in their far-away home they would continue to pray to God that the boy might be healed.

What a number of homes in Central China must bless the day when Christians in England began to think of their sisters in China, and determined to send them lady doctors and nurses! What a story will be told some day; and what a rejoicing there will be when doctors and patients and those who have prayed for the workers and supported the hospitals meet in that City where there is no more pain!

CHAPTER XI

ANOTHER HOSPITAL, AND A VISIT TO THE LEPERS

IN a busy place like Hankow, where there are so many factories, and where so many ships are loaded and unloaded without the help of cranes or other lifting machinery, the number of coolies employed is enormous, and the number of serious accidents correspondingly great. As you know, the London Mission Hospital in Hankow has been established for many years, and the fame of its doctors spread far and wide. So no matter when the visitor calls at the hospital in T'ai-p'ing Road he will find both doctors and nurses with as much as they can do to attend to the patients. In spring and autumn, when the weather is good for travelling, some of the patients come very long distances indeed to get cured : a journey of 500 miles, in spite of the very primitive method of travel, is thought little of.

It is during these busier months of the year that Dr. Gillison and his fellow-workers find that the old-fashioned hospital, which has been added to little by little to meet increasing needs, is now not only too small for the demands upon it, but unsuitable in many ways. Ere long the doctors hope to see their dreams come to pass, and with new and more extensive premises be able to do a greater work than they have yet thought possible.

On a recent visit to the hospital in search of photographs, Dr. Cormack, who is there while Dr. McAll is on furlough, showed me over the building, and I was struck with the difference between the appearance of the large ward upstairs on this occasion and condition of

things when I first went to it at the end of a busy spring day. When my camera went to look at the various parts of the hospital it was on a hot summer's morning, and while there were patients in nearly all the beds there was no impression of overcrowding. Everything looked most orderly and hospital-like. But the visit I paid in the spring-time has remained a haunting picture in my mind ever since. Not only was every bed filled, but all other available floor-space also. But what can the doctor do? A man has come a long distance to

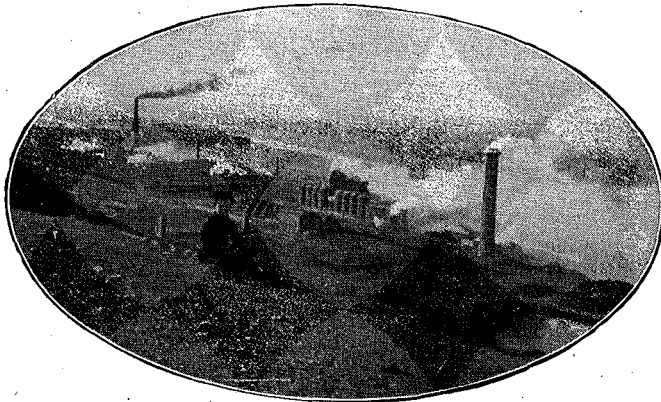


Photo by]

[A. J. McFARLANE.

"A BUSY PLACE LIKE HANKOW."

have an operation performed, having heard of the marvellous cures wrought by the foreigner in Hankow. Somehow he gets faith to come and money to pay the expenses of the journey. After days of painful travelling, he arrives one morning at the hospital door to find that it is the "busy time," and the chances of his being admitted are doubtful. The doctor sees him; realizes that if the operation is not performed, the man will die. But what can he do? Every bed is occupied, to say nothing of the improvised sleeping places in all sorts of unorthodox positions. Hygiene, hospital laws, and

everything but the doctor's brotherly heart, say at once: "The place is too full already; it is not right to take in another single patient. Poor fellow! we are sorry for him, but until the good folk at home send us the money wherewith to build a larger hospital such things must be every year. Speak kindly to him, give him some physic, and send him home."

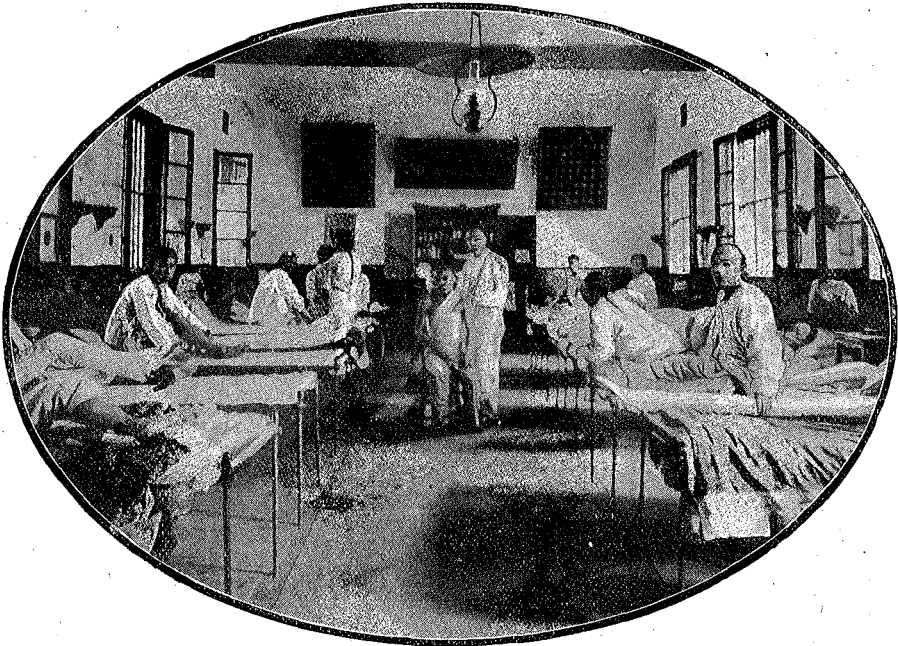
But the doctor is just human. The place *is* very much overcrowded, it is true. He *ought* not to be taken in. But—then a rough calculation of the beds and couches in the ward is quickly made, and the resolve is taken. There is no room *on* a bed; yet for *this once* we will put him on the floor between two beds, and he can take his turn when an empty bed comes. Before the busy season comes to an end the "this once" occurs a good many times; and after the rush is over, the doctor resolves never to do it again. And he will not . . . until next time! For somehow the patients treated in this fashion do not die, but get better in a marvellous manner, and there are many in this land to-day who are well and strong, and have a knowledge of the love of God in their hearts, and a very grateful recollection of the time spent in our London Hospital, because the doctor said in their case, "*only this once.*"

This is not as it should be, however; and a work so famous as the London Mission Hospital in Central China deserves to have better accommodation in the near future.

With but two main wards, and a few more or less private rooms for the use of better class patients, or for those whose diseases require isolation or some special treatment, it is astonishing what a number of cures are effected in the course of a single year.

Some years ago, Dr. Gillison came to the conclusion that it would be better to devote less time to the out-patient department and give more attention to those coming into the hospital for more lengthy treatment. So the days on which sick folk could be seen were finally

reduced to two a week. Even with this reduction no less than **3,942** new patients were seen last year, and altogether **6,500** visits were paid by those who came for medicine or dressing only. Inside the hospital **837** patients were treated : the greatest number that have yet passed through the wards in the course of a single year.



IN THE WARDS OF OUR HANKOW HOSPITAL.

Last year a little boy of twelve years old was brought to the hospital. Ever since he was three he had been suffering severely with a chronic complaint. Sometimes the pain never ceased from morn till eve. When his father brought him in, and the strange-looking foreigner came to examine him, the little fellow began to cry. Trying to comfort his little son the father said : " Hush, don't cry ; the *god* has come to cure you." He meant the missionary, all the time.

The boy soon got over his fear of the missionary, and when after an operation he found that the pain did not come back, and he began to get strong, a bright smile came instead of his tears whenever the doctor came to his bedside. In a month from the time of his operation he was running about quite merrily ; quite another wee mannie. The day came when he had to leave the hospital : he rolled up his bedding, put on his own clothes, and prepared to leave with the two men who had come to take him away. " Where is his father ? " the missionary asked, thinking of the strong-looking countryman who had brought the boy in a month ago. " O, he's dead," was the laconic answer, " he died a few days since. Something was the matter with his throat." It was only too true. The weak little son had been cured, while the strong man had died suddenly. Poor little chappie ! How he sobbed, and how helpless the doctor was to comfort him. Some scripture text-cards that some kind friend had sent from home, and a few cash with which to buy sweets, made his eyes sparkle for a little, as he forgot the intensity of his grief in his new possessions. The old evangelist had found him an apt pupil whilst in bed, listening readily to the gospel stories, and very pleased to have some cards given him. Let us hope and pray that he will not only remember the place where he was freed from his burden of suffering, but also the truths that were taught him by old Mr. T'ang about God who is love, and Whose greatest love-gift to us is Jesus Christ our Lord.

In the lower ward I found a little boy lying flat on his back in one of the beds. To look at his face one would not think there was anything the matter with him. The day before he had been playing with some companions ; and, while running about with an open pair of scissors in his hand, had fallen down and run the sharp blades of the open scissors into his little stomach. When brought in much that ought to have been *inside* of him was on the outside of the wound, and the doctor had to put him right and stitch him up. Very comical

was his cheerful remark to the doctor, " You must look for two holes in me, doctor, as the scissors were open when I fell on them ! " There he lay, smiling happily, not a bit afraid of being in the strange place. In place of lingering on in pain, and perhaps dying of blood-poisoning or some such thing, as would have been the case had there been no foreigner to help him, he is running about happily by this time, quite well and strong, with a new idea of foreigners in his little mind, and no little knowledge of the Gospel as well.

It would be quite easy to tell a hundred stories a year about the patients who lie in the wards : pathetic stories, humorous stories, stories that make one shudder at the awful amount of wickedness that goes on in this land, stories that tell of much that is good and brave, and stories too that will let the friends of mission work know how near to the hearts of the Chinese the medical missionary gets, and how often he but heals their bodies as a preliminary to bringing them to Christ for the saving of their souls. Just now one of the best ways of bringing the Chinese to Christ is by means of medical work done by consecrated men and women. Here is an open door indeed ; a door that is never shut through fear of political intrigue ; a door that the missionary can enter at once, finding endless opportunities of serving and preaching the Lord Christ. For not only do the " common people " trust our doctors, an ever increasing number of those better-class and more cultured people who never will come to our churches to hear the Gospel, seek the doctor in their distress and receive from him the help they need and see in him the Gospel as he writes it day by day in his merciful work.

There is just one other side to the medical work of the London Mission in Central China, and this must have more than a passing glance bestowed upon it. Not until the missionary reaches this Oriental land does he understand the meaning of the word " beggars " You remember the nursery rhyme—

"Hark! hark! the dogs do bark:
The beggars are coming to town;
Some in rags, and some in tags,
And some in silken gowns."



AN OLD BEGGAR.

In China it is really astonishing to note the way in which the dogs scent the beggars from afar. Recently I saw a most amusing episode illustrating this nursery jingle. Going along a road that passed through several hamlets not very far apart, was a dirty man, who was strong and well, and ought to have been at work. But he was a professional beggar. As he entered the first village after I saw him, the chief watch-dog seemed to much resent the presence of this man who was getting his living by eating what other people earned. "*Bow-wow-wow-wow*," he said, "here's a lazy good-for-nothing. Come along, all you merry dogs. Don't let him steal or beg anything in our honourable village. *Bow-wow-wow!*"

So all the village dogs came running out at the first bark of alarm; snapped at the beggar's heels, barked at him with all their might,

never giving him a moment's peace. He tried to drive them off with stones and a stick: but the dogs ever avoided his blows, and kept up a hot attack. They drove him out of their village, and escorted him to the confines of the next hamlet, where a fresh relay of

dogs were waiting to give him a warm reception. And they did !

Little as we can pity the average beggar in China, there is one section of them that always appeals to us. I mean the lepers. Just such pitiable objects as our Lord saw when he walked about the sunny land of Palestine. In reading about the little leper girl in the Wuchang Hospital, you discovered that there was no Leper Home for women in Central China. But at Hsiao Kan, forty-five miles from Hankow, Dr. Fowler is doing all he can for the leper men. Let us pay him a visit.

First a train ride of some two hours' duration, and then a tramp through the fields or a ride in a

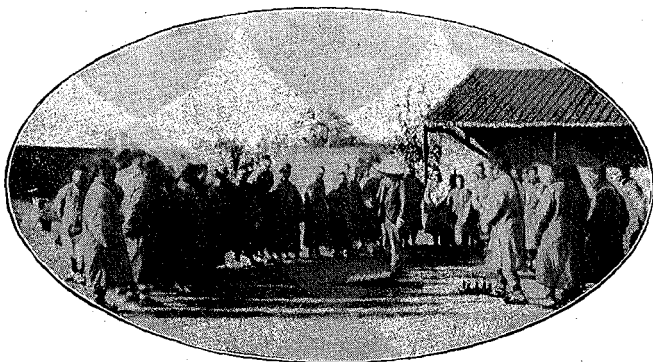


A CONTORTIONIST BEGGAR.

sedan chair for three miles, and the Home is reached. Dr. Fowler is always glad to receive a "call" from any one interested in his work ; for he knows that a sight of it will but deepen that interest : a sight of the lepers must soon lead to compassion for them in their misery, and active sympathy with those who are stretching out to them the helping hand.

So many acres of ground surrounded by a brick wall ; so many wards ; so many rooms ; a church ; a dispensary ; kitchens ; a bowl-

ing green ; and the tour is made, and the buildings seen. But *the* sight is to see the lepers. Some of them are busy at work, making hair-nets and fishing-nets. These find a ready sale after being thoroughly disinfected. There they sit, on the ground, or on the verandah, netting away as fast as they can and until their perishing fingers compel them to give up this work. This keeps them in pocket money, for each is allowed to keep what he earns ; it also keeps them employed and prevents them always thinking of their misery. We may see them, too, at play, and join them in their games if we like. When I was



THE LEPERS AT PLAY WITH DR. FOWLER.

there some new games had just been sent out from Home—quoits, and bull-board—and keen were they to be initiated into the mysteries of the game. It did one's heart good to hear their merry laughter and watch their real child-like abandonment to the joys of the games ! As I stood by them, a miracle seemed to be performed on that grassy sward inside the leper compound : *there* was Misery smiling, while her twin-sister Wretchedness was laughing for very joy of heart. Thanks be to God for the work that brings about such results.

Another sight of sights is to see the lepers in church. The singing is evidently greatly enjoyed by all. Out here, in most places, we

are thankful if the congregation will only sing *in time*, and all do their best to try and sing the same tune : but at Hsiao Kan you will be surprised at the heartiness and tunefulness of the leper music. The doctor is fond of singing himself, and has evidently done a lot of work in teaching these poor things to sing praises unto the Most High.

Some one may say, " Surely *lepers* have little to be thankful for ! " You just ask them and see ! Or better still, listen to this story of one of them, and then try and think of some good Christian man in England who shows by his life that he loves his Saviour *more* than did this afflicted Son of Han.

He was the son of a fairly well-to-do boatman, but his mother was a leper. They were heathen, and so far as their light went they seemed to have trained their sons well, sending all four of them to school. As they grew up they all followed in their father's footsteps and became apprenticed to the oar. Perhaps to save the boys from being visited by the evil spirits with their mother's disease, she called them all very low-sounding names. The eldest one was named " First Dog," the second being of course " Second Dog," and the others " Third " and " Fourth Dog " respectively. After a while the mother died of this terrible disease. Yet the plan to " deceive the spirits " was not successful, for " First Dog " followed his mother to a leper's grave, then " second Dog " took the disease, and last of all " Third Dog " was stricken with it also.

Before " Third Dog " came to Dr. Fowler his baby-name had been changed for one which means " Leader," and truly did he show the leader's spirit all the time he was in the Home. Quite early in life, at his village, he heard of the foreign religion, and soon understood the principles of Christianity. But not until he had been for a time in the Home did he *know* Jesus Christ his Saviour. He was soon put in charge of one of the big wards, and never was a post more

worthily filled. The men in his ward were the most peaceful and contented of the inmates, and the ward itself the neatest and cleanest. Dr. Fowler says he was a man of real sympathy and true sincerity. He not only acknowledged his fault when in the wrong, but honestly and humbly sought to overcome where he had been defeated in the Christian fight.

At length he became a leader in spiritual matters also. In the daily prayer meetings his ability was manifested as he opened up the Scriptures to his fellow-lepers. And then the end came. Consumption set in. A nasty ulcer ate away the sight of one eye. Yet ever in pain and weariness, he was calm and brave in his Saviour. When he heard that his days on earth were numbered, he desired to go back to his native village and bear one last testimony to the sufficiency of Jesus Christ. He returned after three weeks, with only a few hours to live on this earth. The doctor was with him almost to the end, when he crossed the cold river and made a triumphal entrance into the Eternal City. The poor thin, disease-ravaged face was turned towards heaven, and he seemed to see the heavens opened and to be holding converse with his Saviour. At dead of night, surrounded by his comrades, he put off the leprous garments of his flesh, and went in to see the King whom he had long loved and served in the days of his affliction.

Whilst sitting in the Church, listening to the carefully followed sermon, or whilst joining with the lepers in their songs of praise, it was impossible to keep from a continual giving of thanks to the marvellous Giver of all good things, Who is able to touch the leper and enable him to respond to the divine call to discipleship. How strange it seemed to hear the shrill boyish treble mingling with the gruffer bass! Leprosy seems to add years to a man's life, and to make the boy appear like a little old man, but it never touches the voice: that is spared to the sufferer. Then, as all rose and joined

audibly in the "Our Father, Who art in Heaven," the low reverent voices seemed to say, "Yes, we may be awful looking lepers, but He is our Father, and when His Kingdom comes we shall be as we are now, serving Him in His temple, but with new bodies and robes washed white in the Blood of the Lamb." You will not be surprised to hear that although some of the lepers stay but a short time in the Home, fully fifty per cent. give evidence of a change of heart ere the Great Call comes.

A visit to the hospital store-room shows what it means to be the provider for such a large family. Sixty mouths to be fed daily; sixty bodies to be clothed; to say nothing of the drugs and medical stores required for the treatment of sixty bodies and dressing of their sores. Some twenty, too, are laid to rest each year in the little leper graveyard. But there is always a candidate for the empty bed! Feeding, clothing, dressing, medical treatment, and then the expenses of the last sad rites—all provided out of contributions sent by those whose heart the Lord has touched!

How great the need for such a Home, and for a larger Home too! Well may we thank God that ever a Griffith John was moved to conceive such a work, and that a Dr. Fowler is there to develop and carry it on.

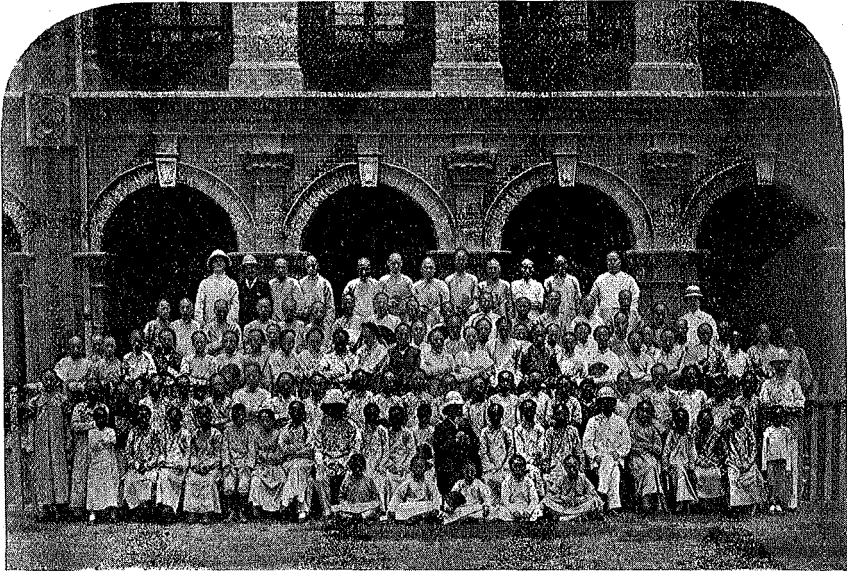
CHAPTER XII

THE REVIVAL OF LEARNING

TEN years ago the District Committee of the London Mission in Central China realized that the time had come for a new departure to be taken. A great church had been established. In connexion with this church were a great many children of Christian parents, who had no possible way of being educated other than in a purely native and heathen school. Amongst these boys we ought to look for our future teachers and pastors ; but what if we let them alone while they are young, and make no effort to train them up in the knowledge of the Bible and of Christ ? True, there were a few elementary schools, run in almost purely Chinese ways by untrained teachers ; and in Hankow itself there was some amount of personal instruction given by the missionary in the schools already started. But this was felt to be totally inadequate. " A school with a heathen schoolmaster is worse for the Christian church than no school at all," is the verdict of some of the ablest missionaries in China. And any missionary who has had the oversight of schools with a heathen teacher moulding the minds of the boys, and also had charge of a school in which there was a Christian atmosphere, will have no two opinions on the matter.

Not only was there a need for Christian schools, but for schools of different grades and for different classes of people. Although there was lack of both men and money the step was taken in faith. The existing primary schools were put on a new basis which would ensure a standard education being given in each. An old tea-box

factory was bought, altered, patched up, and made to look resplendent in its coat of new paint. Here was commenced the High School, with Rev. A. J. McFarlane as head master: a school that aimed at securing for the boys of the wealthier and higher classes of Hankow Chinese society an education under Christian influence. Due provision was of course made for the promising sons of Christians, who would



SCHOLARS AND TEACHERS OF THE COLLEGE, WITH DR. JOHN IN CENTRE.

need help in securing a better education than could be obtained in the day schools. The curriculum was not a very comprehensive one perhaps, but it was all that the hard-working Chinese boy could manage, coming to such studies in blissful ignorance of their very rudiments even at the age of sixteen or seventeen. The scholar was to study his Chinese books, Scripture, mathematics, geography, elementary Science, History, and the English language."

The girls were not forgotten. In addition to primary schools there was to be a Boarding School for them, and we shall soon see what a splendid work Mrs. Foster has done in this connexion.

But there were three other classes of schools that there was immediate need for. Teachers were wanted for the day schools in city and country: there must, therefore, be a NORMAL SCHOOL where these might be trained. Men who were called of God to preach the Gospel to their countrymen needed a special course of instruction, fitting them mentally for their great work. Hence a THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE was required. MEDICAL WORK in a land of quacks was of paramount importance: and so preparations had to be made for the work of training medical students who would eventually become the doctors, well qualified and much trusted, of their fellows. Bible women were also needed; so the WOMEN'S TRAINING HOME came into existence under the care of Mrs. Gillison, who is ably seconded in her good work by Mrs. Lewis Jones of the China Inland Mission.

Ten years ago such was the dream of the missionaries. To-day the visitor is taken round to see the fruits of these ten years of toil and prayer. All hopes have not been realized. But in each department the missionaries are seeing the day of realization drawing near.

Across the river in Wuchang, by the side of the Women's Hospital, is the GIRL'S BOARDING SCHOOL. Started just before the terrible "Boxer" insurrection, it has these past years been a centre of educational activity in the best sense of the word. To give a thorough Christian education to each girl is the aim of the lady in charge, and in this she will be heartily seconded by Miss Light, who has come out specially for this work.

The school is divided into three sections, upper, middle and lower. In the upper school were twenty-four girls this last term, divided into two classes. In most schools of this kind the instruction is not confined to mental work only, and Mrs. Foster's school is no exception

to the rule. There is a good deal of the housework left to the girls, while needlework is of course one of the principal subjects taught. I found that these girls could do arithmetic as far as cube root, the extraction of which some of us may have forgotten. They were very carefully taught in Scripture, and a flourishing Endeavour Society gave them an opportunity of learning how to teach others; thus preparing the way for the time when they will be leaders amongst the Christian women of their town or village. The other subjects being taught are Chinese reading and writing, geography, astronomy, natural history and Chinese history. And when one realizes that the average Chinese woman is absolutely untaught, one begins to think of the great power these girls will wield when they grow up and are able to teach their own children as well as those of other people.

Some of these elder girls have been in the school from the very beginning. Having once got into the upper school they grow as fond of the old class-room and as devoted to their school as do their sister students in the home country. Real and lasting friendships are formed here, and when the time comes to say good-bye to the school-days it is quite a grief to those who go as well as to those who remain.

But the first-term girl, coming as she does quite undisciplined, invariably gives much trouble; especially so if she comes "grown up." In one of the class-rooms a girl of eight summers was ahead of another, whose years were more than twice as many! Some of the girls are soon to be married, and have been sent by their future husbands that they may be taught at least to read! Small wonder that some of these find the life irksome, and not one to be enjoyed. On the other hand, some of the girls are little, and get homesick. This last term one of the deacons sent his little girl to the school, together with a friend about her own age. There were many applicants for the few

vacant places ; but wishing to help the Christians, Mrs. Foster took these two girls instead of other, perhaps more promising, ones. At the mid-term holidays they went home for a few days, and did not come back. After a while I saw the father and wanted to know why they were thus breaking rules. They had been homesick, he said,



A WRITING LESSON.

but would go back "to-morrow." Later on in the day, however, he told me that the children were very unwilling to go back, saying they would throw themselves into the river if they were sent across. They had always been used to having their own way at home and did not like the school-life at all. One of their greatest trials was

having to take a bath! Once or twice it was promised that they should go back. But now the term is over, and probably owing to a foolish mother and weak father these two girls were allowed to remain at home playing about the house, and may never have another opportunity of being properly educated.

Many a sidelight on Chinese life does a teacher get in a boarding school. One girl in this school was engaged to be married to a boy named John. She was twelve and he ten years old. John's grandmother got her engaged to the Christian's boy so that she might be saved. So she was sent to the Mission School. When, in the Scripture classes, she came to the word "John," nothing could make her say the word, even when repeating her lesson. The woman must never say her husband's name in China, you know. So she would giggle, and then the other girls would giggle, much to the teacher's amazement and annoyance until the reason of it all was found out. Frequently, in school, the cause of a quarrel between two scholars is the one calling out the name of the other's father. This is forbidden by Chinese rules, and is very much resented as an insult. "She spoke my father's name," was the angry cry of a fierce little Miss who wished to do all sorts of things to her little school-fellow.

One of the schoolgirls is the daughter of a small official, who out of love for his little girl taught her to read and write. She is only thirteen years old now, but before she came into the school at all she was out as a governess, teaching a pupil considerably older than herself. She was in the hospital suffering with hip joint disease when Mrs. Foster got to know her; later on she came into the school, eager to learn, although the securing of the cash to pay the necessary fees caused her father no little difficulty. In one month she mastered the first four rules of arithmetic, and if she can stay in the school long enough she will become a very clever scholar. But money is scarce in that home. The first month they somehow managed to raise the

3,000 cash (about six shillings). But latterly, Mrs. Foster has reduced it to 2,000 cash, as she was quite unable to pay more. This does not much more than cover the cost of her food, which for each girl averages three-halfpence a day. But as they make their own shoes and stock-



MISS WEI GIVING A BLACKBOARD LESSON.

ings, and many other articles, wash all their own clothes, and wash the floors as well, there are not many "extras."

Mrs. Foster can tell ever so many stories about these girls of hers. Some have left school and are married. Yet they never forget the

old "home," ever and again returning to show their babies, and enjoy a peep into their beloved school-life once more. One of these lives far away in Hunan, her desire for her babies being that as soon as they grow up, they may come to this school where their mother spent such happy years. Another "old girl" is a teacher in a government school, and gets thirty cents an hour (more than a workman gets for a day of toil) for teaching arithmetic. And, moreover, she only knows the first four rules!

The visitor leaves the school with the impression that whether as teachers or as mothers the girls who are being trained to be good and true women, to love and know their Bibles, and to serve God in their homes, will be of great value to China in the years that are to come, when men who have been cradled in goodness and truth will be required as the teachers and leaders of the Empire.

Just inside the native Hankow city, on the other side of a narrow, dirty street, called by some people "Pig Lane" because of the numerous piggeries all round about, is the Educational Compound. Here is the old transformed "Tea-box Factory," where Mr. MacFarlane and his helpers have laid the foundations of the LONDON MISSION COLLEGE. This year all the class-rooms have been full of hard-working students, and for the first time in the school history over a hundred sat for the summer examinations. The dormitories have been crowded; too much so to be nice; and we are thankful that the hottest part of the school year has been passed through without there being any serious illness among the boys.

Work in the school is very much like work in any school at home, with the exception that Chinese is the mother-tongue of the scholars, and English takes the place of Latin and Greek. In the lower forms nearly all of the curriculum is in Chinese, mathematics, geography, history, etc., being taught the boys in their own language. English is taught them from the very first: so, boys that come to school

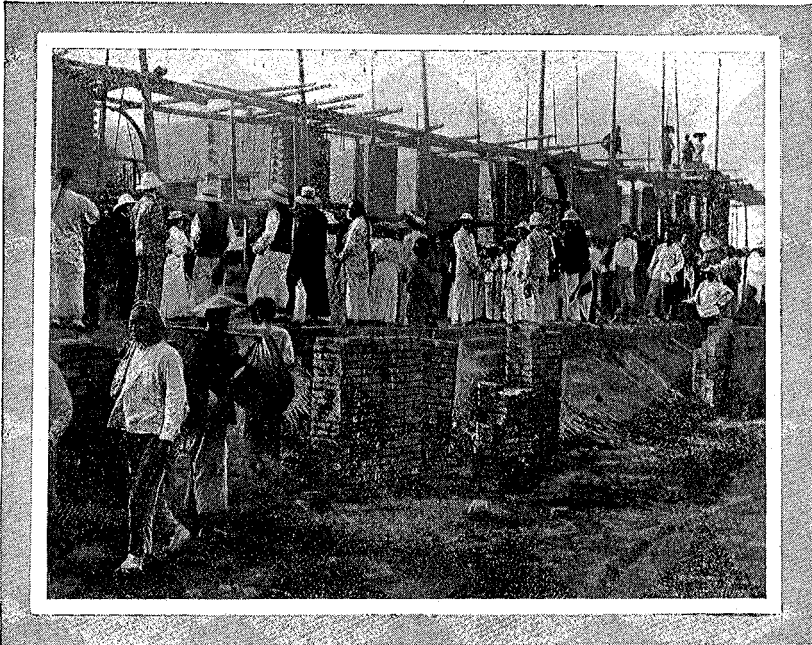
without any previous knowledge of that tongue have to enter Form I, no matter what may be their age. It is amusing to see one of nine years of age by the side of a young man of nineteen, each spelling his way through the intricate mazes of the Primer! While the older boys get promotion to a higher form more quickly than their younger companions do, these latter naturally acquire a much better accent.

By the time the Sixth Form is reached, the boys are able to read and write English fairly well; although as they *think* in Chinese, some of their composition exercises are curious productions. If the boys sometimes have a good laugh at the funny way in which their English masters speak Chinese, the masters get their times of amusement when correcting their pupils' exercises. Some boys do remarkably well in their studies. One who is now a junior master in the school, often had not a single mistake in his dictation. One day, on seeing a faultless examination paper, an English merchant who was in Hankow at the time said, "Why I could not have spelled some of those words myself!"

While shorter than the hours of the students in purely native schools, the time daily given to study by the boys in our College is fairly long. Starting with Chinese "Prep" before breakfast, they do not get through their day's work until "Prayers" at 8.30 p.m. After Morning Prayers at 9 o'clock, at present held in the Divinity Hall, the boys go to their first class. At 12.30 comes the lunch hour, after which they play games until 2 o'clock. The afternoon classes are over at four, when the evening meal is partaken of. After this comes the recreation of the day, and football, cricket practice at the net, photography, and the pursuit of other hobbies, are well taken up by the boys according to their tastes and ability. Prior to the Athletic Field days, they go into training: at such times the visitor may find the youth aspiring for honours, hard at work practising his running, or jumping, or pole-vaulting, while some whose strong point is not

perhaps swiftness of foot are busily putting the weight, or throwing the cricket ball.

The boys have their own Y.M.C.A. and an English-speaking Club, which meets every Saturday evening after the play of the half-holiday is over. This latter is very popular with them.



LAYING THE FOUNDATION STONES OF THE NEW COLLEGE.

Six miles to the west of Hankow, by the side of the river Han, the new college is now being built. Great is the excitement of the boys as they look forward to commencing the work of 1908 in this first block of the permanent home of the London Mission College.

And what becomes of them all when they leave school? Some lads go to other schools to "finish." One of the most promising of last

year's fifth Form came to see me the other day, and told me about his life in a military college near Shanghai. Once, last year, I asked him about his future work: half shyly, and yet with a look of boyish pride, he said, "I am going to serve my country. She needs help just now; and I hope to go to Japan to study military tactics."

Last week I went to the General Post Office to enquire about a parcel. The young man who came to attend to me was our last year's Athletic Champion who won the Clark Shield. Later on in the day, when posting a registered letter, the one who took it from me was one of my old Sixth Form boys. I asked "How many of our school are in the post office now?" "Eleven, I think, sir," was the answer. Some boys are away in other parts of the country either in Government employ or teaching in schools. Others again are in business houses. There is always employment for the young man who speaks English. But some few, and we are proud of these, prefer to remain with us: prefer helping in the work rather than take double or treble the salary elsewhere.

We laughed a great deal when, a year or two ago, an advertisement appeared in a certain newspaper saying that a Chinese teacher was prepared to teach "English, as far as the letter 'G.'" Yesterday a college professor told me of the laziest of his students, one who could not say a single sentence of English either correctly or intelligently, and yet had been engaged as English interpreter to a great Chinese official. When asked how he managed to hold such a position he airily said, "O, I knew a little English, and they knew nothing at all about it. So it was quite easy!"

China will very soon find out that the kind of master she has in her schools cannot teach if he himself has not been properly taught. He may know a little of Western learning: a little arithmetic, a little geography, and perhaps a smattering of science as well; so, being better than the man who knows nothing of these things, he

gets a situation ; but this kind of man only meets a passing need. There are many Chinese scholars who are well-trained and well taught, and have the ability to teach others : but the cry is for thousands of these, and there are so few in the land.

Just now it seems as if China would give all she has in exchange for education. But she wants it in a hurry : something to use at once. Some of her scholars even speak as if, having a few foreign textbooks translated into their mother-tongue, they have all they need ; not realizing that the teacher himself is the great factor in education. " There are the books : what more is required ? Let the students learn," seems to be their thought.

Once a Chinese pastor came to know if his somewhat stupid nephew could not learn to become a photographer. I pointed out to him that a photographer's outfit cost money, and he was a poor man. Besides, in his native town there was no photographer, so the boy would have great difficulty in learning how to take and make pictures. The ready reply was, " Well, sir ; you see, a man on our street has a book that tells all about it, and he is willing to teach any one for the fee of \$1 (2s.)."

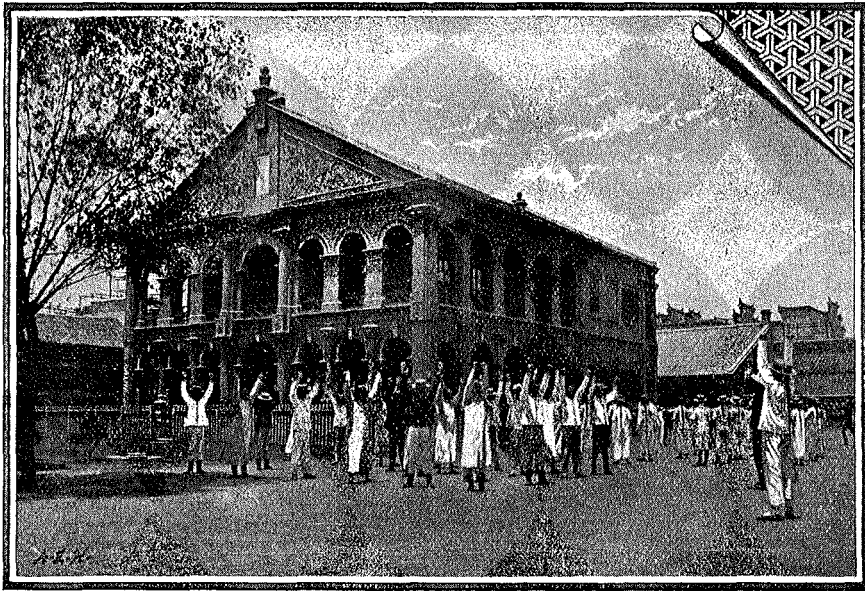
" Can the man take photographs himself ? " I asked.

" No, sir, he is a dyer ; but he has a book, and he can teach photography, watch-making and soap-making, all without tools."

The truth is that for centuries the book has taken the place of the teacher. The boy repeats his lessons, so many lines a day until he has learnt the book off by heart. If he can repeat it all, he is a good scholar. If not, so much beating and so much scolding have to be given, until the lesson is knocked into his head.

The boys who have passed through our school have a commercial value. And, no doubt, there is a danger that they will be attracted by the offer of a high salary rather than by the opportunity to do a work for the Church and for their fellows where there are no such

inducements. But many of these will still be true to the Christian teaching they have received and the high ideals of life that have been planted in their hearts. Some will prove to be failures, as in every other school. But one success counts for more than many failures; and the successes we have seen inspire us to increased effort and prayer to win the young mind for Christ. And we remember, too,



THE THEOLOGICAL HALL, WITH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AT DRILL.

that we are often sowing for a harvest that will not be reaped till after many days

In this same Educational Compound is the THEOLOGICAL HALL, which Dr. Griffith John gave to the Mission a few years ago. Just now, besides the men who are to be our future ministers, those who are learning to be schoolmasters are also in this building. It will serve this double purpose until the Normal School is built.

In the Men's Hospital, the other side of "Pig Lane," is the temporary quarters of the MEDICAL SCHOOL : the first of its kind in Central China. Here, under Drs. Gillison and McAll, eighteen young men are being trained as doctors, and from it we hope that many will go forth with knowledge and skill to heal diseases, and with a fixed desire to work for the Master.

With this new departure in mission methods the work of the missionary in Hankow is changing. He sees a new China growing up all around him : the result of fifty years of teaching and preaching. It may not be so romantic to read of classes and class-rooms as it is to peruse the diary of a missionary who is often face to face with all sorts of dangers from wild beasts or wild men, living in a dark land and deadly climate ; but it is a work that is becoming more and more necessary in this land where the Cross has been uplifted these hundred years. The cry in China to-day is for the *trained man*. He is wanted in our churches and schools, where the well-equipped Chinese will increasingly take the place of the foreign missionary in the work of teaching the young and feeding the flock of Christ. For the future of the Chinese Church is in the hands of the Chinese helpers. She will be largely what they make her by the grace of God. And they will be largely what the missionary makes them, or rather what the missionary *is*, for they will reproduce him, faults and all. This work of training our helpers has now been properly taken in hand. It is but a beginning ; but all who are in touch with it, know it to be a work rich with the promise of great things to come.

And what of the possibilities of Christian work in China ? There is only one answer that can be given, and that in the words of the great missionary apostle : it is "*above all that we can ask or think.*" A glance at the following comparisons will show what may be reasonably expected. Three great Missionary Conferences have been held in China ; at each of these, in 1877, in 1890, and at the one held

this year, various returns were made as to the numbers of missionaries in the field, the number of converts, and so on. Arranging these figures side by side we not only find out what has been done these past few years, but see that Christian influence is pouring into this land in a mighty flood.

Remember the beginnings of mission work in this Empire : those days when Morrison and his successors seemed to be hopelessly trying to cleave a rock in their efforts to bring the Gospel into the homes of the Sons of Han ; then with thankful hearts read the story of the past thirty years, as it is told in the following table :—

	1876.	1889.	1906.
Number of Societies at work in China	29	41	82
Missionaries	473	1,896	3,833
Mission stations	91	—	632
Mission sub-stations (in charge of Chinese)	511	—	5,102
Ordained Chinese preachers	73	211	345
Unordained ditto	511	1,266	5,722
Bible women	90	180	894
Members in full Communion	13,035	37,387	178,351
Members on probation	—	—	78,528
Pupils in Mission Schools	4,909	16,836	57,683

As far as figures are able to, these statistics show the way the leaven of Christianity is working. Perhaps the boys and girls who read this will like to do the following sum : “ *If the increase of the Chinese Church is eightfold in seventeen years, how long will it be before the 400,000,000 people of China are won for Christ ?* ”

As will be seen, there has been a strongly marked progress in educational work. Not only has the number of pupils in the schools trebled during the seventeen years that elapsed between the two Conferences, but no less than 15,137 were in high schools and colleges receiving a thoroughly good education. But the greatest increase of all is in the direct Church work. For not only has the number

of converts increased, the self-help of the Native Church has grown in like proportion.

	1876.	1889.	1906
Church Contributions	£1,030	£4,096	£33,462

Then in addition to the great numbers who must be constantly hearing the Gospel preached, it is estimated that the 300 fully qualified medical missionaries treat at least 2,000,000 patients each year; and these all have the Gospel message declared unto them.

What a great army the Church of God in China is! Would that our greatest hope of all might be realized, and the Holy Spirit come in quickening power, ushering in the time of a great revival in this land of many sorrows! Even now the moving of the Spirit is being felt in the Empire: let us believe that the day of blessing for Central China is at hand.

PRAY FOR US.

THE STORY OF OUR SHIPS.

THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY was founded in 1795. In the following year its first party of missionaries sailed for the South Seas in the *Duff*. After the loss of this historic ship communication between the South Sea Missions was kept up by means of various small vessels until the year 1838, when the *Camden* was purchased.

In 1844 the boys and girls of our Sunday Schools collected money with which to purchase the first *John Williams*, so named in memory of the great missionary who had met his death on the island of Erromanga in 1839. Since then the "Mission fleet" has been the special charge of the Sunday scholars, who have collected annually, since 1859, by means of the "New Year's Offering Collecting Cards," the whole amount necessary for its maintenance, a total sum of nearly £250,000. The amount collected last year (January, 1905) was £8,185.

The present *John Williams*, the fourth of that name, and the first *steamship*, was launched in March, 1894. A brief description of her work may be of interest.

The L.M.S. has missionaries working on six different islands and groups of islands in the Pacific; and some of these groups contain large and important islands with missionaries living on each of them. Altogether we have twenty-six missionaries at work in this part of the mission-field, with about 800 native preachers and teachers under their charge. These missionaries have all to be taken to and from their stations; food and clothing and other necessaries of life have to be taken to them every year, together with building material for schools and chapels and houses; Bibles and other books have to be sent out; native teachers have to be moved from one island to another; and as there is no regular service of ships between these islands, it is absolutely necessary that the Missionary Society should have a vessel of its own for this work.

Thus there can be no question as to the value of the *John Williams* and the importance of maintaining her in good condition from year to year. The South Seas have witnessed some of the most glorious triumphs of the Gospel in the history of the world. Islands, which, half a century ago, were given over to cannibalism and idolatry, are to-day Christian lands. Whole nations have been brought into God's Kingdom. And in this great work the "Children's Ship" has played her part for more than sixty years.