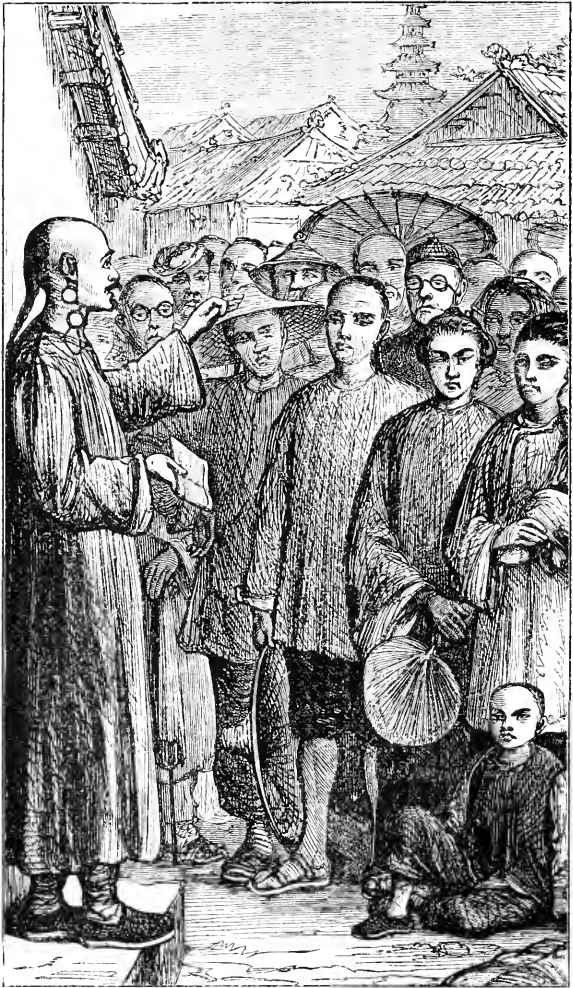


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The Christian Chinese Preacher.

*D. 74
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LENG TSO,

THE CHINESE BIBLE-WOMAN.

A SEQUEL TO

“THE CHINESE SLAVE-GIRL.”

BY THE

REV. J. A. DAVIS,

AUTHOR OF

“THE CHINESE SLAVE-GIRL,” “CHOH LIN,” “TOM BARD,” ETC.



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TO

The Children of Less and More Years

WHO BY LETTER, THROUGH FRIENDS AND FACE TO FACE HAVE ASKED
THE AUTHOR TO TELL MORE ABOUT

“THE CHINESE SLAVE-GIRL,”

THIS BOOK

Is Affectionately Dedicated,

IN THE HOPE THAT THEY, THROUGH INTEREST IN THE SLAVE-GIRL
AND THE BIBLE-WOMAN, MAY BE LED TO DO AND TO PRAY
FOR THE MANY MILLIONS IN CHINA WHO KNOW
NOTHING ABOUT JESUS.

PREFACE.

FEW may agree with the writer that a preface should be at the end rather than at the beginning of a book, but, in point of fact, in the preface the author is supposed to answer the inquiries of his readers after they have read what he has written. For those who may honor the author by reading *Leng Tso* through, he replies to questions which may arise.

This book has been written at the request of readers of *The Chinese Slave-Girl* who wish to know more about Leng Tso. Believing that these readers, and others who may peruse this book, are interested in missions in China, the writer has given glimpses of the mission work—not imaginary, but real. The characters introduced are real persons, though the author has given other than real names to those now living and to several of the more prominent

places. This has been done because the author deems himself unable to do justice to the men and women of whom he writes.

If views have been given that might better have remained hidden, and if others which might well have been made more prominent have been placed in the shade or hidden altogether, the author begs the pardon of all who may be unfairly represented. His purpose has been to give, as far as he was able, a truthful and fair view of both the bright side and the dark side of Chinese mission work. He is not conscious of attempting to gloss over defects, nor yet of trying to make too prominent excellences and successes. For fear that he might be led unduly to honor those missionaries for whom he has the deepest admiration, he has tried to tell the story as far as possible without presenting them at all.

In the hope and prayer that this little book may lead all who read it to do and to be, to pray and to expect, more for missions in China, it is sent forth by the author with a prayer to the Master of missions that he may guide and bless it.

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LENG TSO.

CHAPTER I.

THE BIBLE-WOMAN.

“SOMETHING must be done for the girls and women of our country,” said Leng Tso, the Chinese Bible-woman, as she sat in the little chapel in the village of Thau Pau. “Men may preach; they may open chapels and gather churches; yet, unless they are able to speak more to the women, it will take ten thousand years before the Middle Kingdom becomes the kingdom of Christ.”

“But what more can be done?” asked one of the women, who was listening intently. “The preachers have done all they can, and the work is slowly gaining ground. It may be that the Lord means the Middle King-

dom * to take many years to think about the doctrine, and then he will suddenly startle all into accepting the word."

"That may be," replied the Bible-woman, "but we must not wait in such a hope: we must do all in our power to bring the whole nation to the truth. The Lord can, and perhaps will, do great things, but he expects us to do all we can first. He completes the work his people have carried on as far as they can, but does not take it out of their hands. The Lord does not like lazy people; he expects all to work, and to work as much as they can."

"That is just what our husbands and the teachers are doing," said Liong So. "Why should we find cause to complain if they do not bring the whole nation at once to the Saviour?"

"They are doing their part, and doing it well," responded Khiau So, the wife of the preacher in the Thau Pau chapel, "but what are we, the women, doing? We are sitting with folded hands, and all around us our sisters are perishing."

* The Chinese name for their country.

“That is true,” spoke Liong So, with a sigh, “but what can we do?”

“We can tell them of the Saviour,” said Leng Tso, quietly but decidedly.

“Yes, *you* may,” answered one of the women who had been silent; “you have no home-cares to keep you, no husband nor children to see to: we have both. You can go, but we must stay at home to do the work there.”

“Even if we had no cares nor families, we could not go out among the people in the streets and into the homes of others,” said Liong So, “while we are yet young women. It is against the custom of the Middle Kingdom.”

“So is the worship of the one true God and faith in Jesus as a Saviour against the custom of our country,” replied Khiau So. “Would you for that reason allow your husband, your children, your friends, to die without knowing about the Saviour and believing on him?”

“Our religion and the customs of the nation are very different,” was the answer. “It is not unknown, nor even uncommon,

for men to change their religion, but for men in the Middle Kingdom to change their *customs*—can never be. Some worship as Confucius taught; others, as the Tauists teach; still others, as the Buddhists teach; others yet follow the doctrines of the Mohammedans. And not a few are becoming Roman Catholics, while a great many follow one doctrine or another as best suits them, some taking parts from all. Thus people are changing their religions, but not their customs.”

“Did not we change our customs,” asked the Bible-woman, “when we gave up the worship of our ancestors for the service of the true God? Have we not given up the worship of spirits and of idols? Do we keep the idolatrous feasts any more? Are not we beginning to give up the custom of binding the feet of the girls? Have we not given up the idolatrous and superstitious parts of our marriage and other ceremonies?”

“Giving up the binding of the girls’ feet?” asked a woman, in surprise, after Leng Tso had finished. “Who has given

up that custom, and where? I have never heard of it before."

"Yes," replied the Bible-woman; "the foreign pastors said that in some places the Christian mothers of the Middle Kingdom are not only giving up the practice, but some have torn off the bandages and are allowing their daughters' feet to grow large like those of the large-footed women."

"Well, that is news, and strange news too," cried several. "What will the mandarins say? People will no longer be able to tell the difference between a lady and a common woman. That change of custom may bring trouble."

"Following the custom brings more trouble," spoke Khiau So, decidedly. "It may be a beautiful sign, but it costs too much to carry it. The girls suffer when their feet are bound, and they must always be partly helpless, as I know, and perhaps we all know to our sorrow. A poor woman who has lost her husband and friends and has no property, if she have small feet—and there are many such—must suffer all the rest of her life because her feet unfit her for work. But

let us speak more of what Ban Chim* was just now saying."

"Ban Chim can talk," said Liong So, "for she has no family; she has no husband to stop her, and nothing to hinder. I am glad that she can do the work that she likes, but the rest of us cannot do it, and no one will expect it of us."

"No one but He who knows what we can and what we cannot do," replied the Bible-woman, quietly. "Some day we must meet God; what if he should ask how much we had done to save the women of our country? Would the Almighty be satisfied if we answered that the customs of the Middle Kingdom prevented? We, as Christians, are to obey and serve God first, and our country with its customs afterward."

"I do not see why we should be so strict about everything," spoke up one of the women. "We cannot do all that ought to be done, so we are only to do what we can."

* Ban Chim was the name by which the Bible-woman was known. Ban was her former husband's name, she being a widow. *Chim* is the Chinese term for "Mrs." for an elderly woman, and *So* for a younger married woman.

As we cannot break through the customs of our country, we must obey them until it is possible to change them."

"What good can *we* do?" asked another. "We are unable to read the holy book, and we know so little that we can hardly tell others anything at all about the 'doctrine,' " as the people call the gospel.

"We all know enough about Jesus to believe in him ourselves," replied Khiau So, "and we could tell them as much as we know. If that saves us, it could save them; and that is what we wish."

"That we are unable to read is not our fault," said Leng Tso, "but the fault of those who went before us. If we suffer for what they did, shall we allow those coming after us to suffer on account of our neglect?"

"What do you mean?" asked several women at once.

"Just this," was the reply: "because we were not taught to read, shall the girls of the present time be compelled to grow up in ignorance? Because mothers were not taught, shall girls never be allowed to learn to read the Bible?"

“Girls read!” almost shouted one or two, in amazement. “Who ever heard of such a thing?”

“I was taught to read,” spoke Khiau So, gently, “and it was not uncommon for girls, the daughters of rich men in the Foo city, where I was born and lived most of my life, to be taught to read.”

“Yes,” said Liong So, “but that was before the country was so poor. Few daughters are taught now to read in the Foo city; their fathers and mothers think themselves fortunate if their girls can be kept alive at home, to speak nothing of educating them. Few have been brought up as Khiau So was. None of us can send our daughters to school at all; if we can only keep them until old enough to be married, it is all we ask.”

“Yet something must be done if we are to tell the women of the true God,” persisted Leng Tso. “If mothers cannot educate their daughters at their homes, and if girls cannot go to schools near, why cannot some live in a school, like the students of the large schools? Let teachers be prepared for the future.”

“What! women to teach?” exclaimed two or three of the women at once. “Who ever heard of such a thing?”

“I have heard of it,” replied the Bible-woman. “The foreign pastors say that in their country girls are taught to read and write, and even to teach others. If Christian people do so in other lands, why should not we have girls taught in the Middle Kingdom to teach others?”

“We cannot make this land like outside countries,” was the reply; “it was made better, and so it must always be.”

“It is a good land,” said Khiau So, “yet it did not have the true God nor the right doctrine. What we need is some way to make those known to the women in this country.”

“Yes, and the women of the Middle Kingdom must do it,” added the Bible-woman.

“Well, let them, if any are able,” replied Liong So. “I, for one, am not; I can neither leave my family nor could I read were I able to go about among the women. Ban Chim can go; she has nothing to

hinder, and she can read almost as well as a graduate."

"But she did not learn to read until she was older than some of you," spoke Khiau So.

"What! learned to read after she was married?" asked a young woman, in surprise. "How can that be?"

"If you would like to hear, I will tell you the story of my life," said the Bible-woman, who was always glad to tell her earlier history.

"Yes, tell it," said several at once.

"When I was a very small child," began Leng Tso,* "there came a fearful famine to the village where I was born; no rain fell for a long time, and the water in streams and wells dried up. My parents were poor, and at last, to save my two brothers from starvation,

* Those who would like to read more of the early life of this Bible-woman will find it in *The Chinese Slave-Girl*, published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication. Any who may have read that story will pardon the author for repeating it very briefly here, as some would not understand Leng Tso's later history without a brief sketch of that which took place earlier. Many in Thau Pau were acquainted with her history, but the younger people knew little regarding the life of the Bible-woman.

I, the youngest child, was sold to become the slave-girl of Tiu Hou Kek, who then lived in this village."

"What! were you a slave-girl once? and did you live in this place?" asked two or three of the younger women.

"Yes," was the reply; "I was brought here, and lived in Thau Pau until I was a woman. Then I was sold to become the second wife of a man who was an opium-smoker. He was rich, but lost most of his property; then, with his family, he moved to the great Foo city, where he started business. There he began gambling, and lost all his property. In the madness of gambling, when he had lost all besides, he sold me to get money. I became the property of another man. He was yet young, nor was I old, and he took me as his wife. Children were born to us, but some of them died or were given away; one was stolen from my husband; and finally I was left with only one son."

"Is that the son who lives down the country?" was asked.

"No," replied the Bible-woman; "that is

the one who was stolen from my husband. But I will tell you more about him. When the Tai Ping rebels captured the Foo city, my husband, his mother and our little boy tried at night to escape from the city, but my husband was captured, and I never saw him again. Without doubt he was killed. He was a good man," added she, in a lower voice; "and had he lived, no doubt he would have believed the gospel. But he died without knowing anything about it."

For a few moments the voice of Leng Tso was still as her hands wiped away tears that were steadily falling. The women around looked pityingly at her as they silently waited for her to speak.

"It was an awful time," spoke one of the older women, as the Bible-woman sat in silence, "when those rebels were marching through the country; and when they took the Foo city, it was such a time as I hope none of us will see again. The ruin they caused there remains to this day. The Foo city will never rise from the ruin caused by its capture by those rebels."

"They were not the only ones that caused

that destruction," suggested Liong So, quietly; "the imperial army completed what the long-haired rebels began." *

"Be quiet!" spoke one of the older women; "let her tell the rest of her history."

"I do not know what became of him," continued the Bible-woman. "The next day my husband's mother and our little boy disappeared. I left our home for a few minutes; and when I returned, they had gone. I never either saw or heard of them again. No doubt they were both killed by rebel soldiers. But I believe I shall see my little boy again in the country where mothers do not long for absent ones; it may be that the angels told Ko Chin of Jesus as they took his young spirit to heaven. There he met his baby-sister, and there I shall some day meet my children. Oh, it is a blessed gospel, to tell us that our little children who die may be ours for ever! No religion nor

* The Tai-Ping rebellion (called also by the Chinese the "Long-Haired rebellion," because the rebels wore their hair long instead of shaving the head except the cue) was the most terrible rebellion that the Chinese have had for centuries.

custom of the Middle Kingdom tells us that. Yes, yes! it is the doctrine of the true God."

"It is a good religion," added one of the women, "for it tells us that God loves us all, even the poorest and worst of us."

"And he loved me," broke in the Bible-woman; "he loved me so much that he gave his only begotten Son to die for me. Why should not I love him? There is no one so good, so loving, as our Saviour who died to save us."

"What did you do," asked one of the young women, "when you were left alone? Did you have friends in the Foo city?"

"'Friends'? We had friends nowhere then. None of us knew that we would need friends from one hour to the next. We were in constant fear of being killed. The streets were filled with the dead, and our ears were constantly startled by the shrieks of those who were captured and taken by the soldiers to prison or to death. It was no unusual sound to hear the cry of the dying as they fell beneath a soldier's stroke. But those times and scenes were too fearful

to repeat. I only wonder that a merciful God brought me through them all in safety that I might hear the way of life."

"Where did you first hear the doctrine?" was asked.

"After my husband and family were lost, I was obliged to live as best I could until the city was captured by the imperial army; then they burned my home, with very many others. After that I was indeed in trouble; I had not even a home, and was as poor as a beggar. When the rebels were conquered and driven away, and quiet was restored in the city, I found work. One day, while wandering around through the city, looking for work, I came upon the chapel where one of the foreign pastors was conducting worship. I listened and wondered. I went again and again; at length I found Him who through all these years had been seeking for me."

"What! did you find your husband?" asked a young woman. "I thought you said that you never saw him after the rebels took him. Did not they kill him?"

"No, Un Sia," replied Leng Tso; "it was

not my husband I found, but my Saviour. I found him—rather, he found me and showed himself to me as a loving Saviour; then my heart was glad. I have never been lonely since. There have been longings, but he has partly satisfied them, and I know that I shall be entirely satisfied when I awake in heaven in his likeness. Then, too, I shall meet with the little ones who through those sad years have waited in the good land for me.”

“Tell us how you learned to read,” suggested Khiau So, as the Bible-woman seemed to have finished her story.

“And you promised to tell us about your son,” added another.

“Yes, true,” spoke Leng Tso; “I forgot. When I had become a disciple of Jesus and learned of the Bible and that it was God’s book, I wanted to read it for myself. Although I was forty years old, I asked to be allowed to go to school. It was a hard task, and a long one; but after a while I began to learn one character after another, and to hold them in my mind before they had slipped out of my memory as fish go through

the water. Often my head ached and it seemed a hopeless task; but when I found several characters staying in my memory day after day, I took courage. After a long struggle I learned to read the third chapter of John. That I read several times every day until I knew it almost by heart. I used to read it in the homes of my friends so often that it was called Ban 'Chim's chapter. Little by little I learned other chapters, and thus have continued, until now I can read much of the New Testament and some in the Old. It is a good book, and my heart rests when my soul is reading it. I wish that every woman in the Middle Kingdom could read it. It would take away much of the trouble and sorrow of women's lives. Their souls are hungry and at times almost starving for the Bread of life, and yet they have not the key to the closet that holds the precious food."

"You are right," said Khiau So; "reading the holy book is the key to the closet that contains the Bread of life. I wish that more had the key. I know how sweet the Bread is—far sweeter when we take it our-

selves from the closet than when we take it through the hands of others."

The preacher's wife was educated and could read even better than the Bible-woman. Her parents being among the aristocracy of the Foo city, she had had advantages that few women of China have. When she grew to womanhood, her father died, and by some means his property was lost. Khiau, then a business-man in the Foo city, and rapidly gaining wealth, married her. When the city was taken by rebels, he and his wife were away, and so escaped death. During this absence they heard the gospel and became Christians. After the rebellion, their property having been almost entirely destroyed, he entered the service of the mission, and in time became, as we now find him, a preacher.

"You have not yet told us about your son," suggested one of Leng Tso's listeners. "Where is he, and how did you find him?"

We will not take the reader's time to tell the story of the finding of her son as the Bible-woman told it; suffice it to say that

after she had learned to read she went about among the women in different places, and in one of the Christian chapels met a young man whom she found to be her long-lost son. He had been sold by those who stole him to a rich man, who adopted him into his family. When the boy Lin grew to manhood, he became a Christian. His "adopted father," as the Chinese call it, tried to persuade the young man to give up the worship of the foreign God and return to idols; this the young man refused to do. The father, at length exasperated at what seemed such obstinate wickedness, struck the youth with a heavy instrument and left him on the ground for dead. Christian friends took care of him, and Lin was restored to health, but was disowned by the man who had adopted him. The reader will learn more of Lin farther on.

When she had concluded the story of finding her son, Leng Tso returned again to the subject of learning to read.

"It is not easy," said she, "to learn to read; but no good thing is easy. It is not easy for us to fight the evil one, and it is

only by hard struggles that we can conquer ; but by the grace of God we shall conquer at last. So it will be with those who try to read : they will learn ; it may be slowly, but they must, if they keep on trying, learn to read after a while ; and when they do learn, the first chapter they are able to read will repay them for all the effort. It is worth a year of study to read such passages as these : ‘ For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,’ and ‘ In my Father’s house are many mansions ; if it were not so I would have told you : I go to prepare a place for you ; and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also.’ Ah ! it is a book full of food for the soul ; it is rich pasture for the flock of God, and far better than the dried grass that we must take from the hands of others if unable to read ourselves.” Then, recollecting herself, she added, “ Yet our shepherds, when they read it to us, give of the rich juicy grass that they cut as they go along, but we

must eat what they cut for us, and not choose for ourselves. To be able to read is to run free in the pastures of the Lord, and that is the way to make the flock strong and healthy."

"What difference does it make, Ban Chim," asked one of the women, "if the pastor knows what his flock needs and gives the food as each wants it?"

"Just this," was her reply: "we see some animals going off alone to eat the rich grass by some spring; others like to crop that on the hillside, and others on plains; each has its own choice, because each knows what it needs and craves. So it is with God's flock. Some need the strong food, others that which is more mild; and if each can read, then each can choose what is most needed. If seekers must depend on another, they may often be compelled to take that which they do not like and do not need, or go hungry. Besides, the shepherd cannot always be with the flock, and while he is absent many a one may suffer from hunger; let each one be free to run in the pasture, and none need suffer."

"Ban Chim is right," spoke Khiau So,

“and I hope that before long we shall all learn to read the holy book.”

“We would gladly learn,” replied one, “if it did not take so long; but it requires years of study before one can read even a small portion of the New Testament, and almost a lifetime to be able to read all there is in the holy book.”

“Have you heard there is a new way of reading that the foreign pastors have shown?” asked Leng Tso?

“‘A new way of reading’?” inquired several, in surprise. “What is it? How can there be any other way than that which the Middle Kingdom has used for so many ages?”

“There is, nevertheless, a new way,” said the Bible-woman, decidedly; “I saw women learning when I was down to Ha Bun. It is a very easy way, too—so easy that some learn to read in a little more than a month.”

“‘A little more than a month’?” spoke two or three, half in derision, half in doubt. “Yes, so do people learn in less than a month to read with our way, but how much can they read?”

“That is just where this new way is so strange,” replied the Bible-woman; “when able to read one book, they can read all.”

This statement was greeted with more than doubt. It may not be known to some young readers that the Chinese written language is not spelled or expressed by words made up of single letters; each word has a sign of its own, and to know how to read every book one must know the meaning and sound of each of the more than twenty thousand different word-signs. To learn all these requires not only a marvelous memory, but years of time. It may well be doubted if any one ever learns all the characters in common use in that language, so it may be questioned whether or not any reader is able to read all Chinese books, no matter how learned he may be. He may know nearly all the characters, yet in some book may meet with unknown ones; all his former knowledge of Chinese will not teach him the sound or meaning of those characters: he must learn them as new ones. Each book may have some words, and thus some characters, that he has never seen before; so that

it is by no means certain that a person who can read one book can read another. Indeed, if he be able to read only one ever so well, it is certain that he cannot read another without learning new characters.

“How can they read all books if able to read one?” was asked of the Bible-woman.

“The foreign pastors have shown twenty-three small characters,* each one having a name and sound of its own, and these are put together in a very great many different ways. Each way has its own sound and meaning; but when you know the sound of each of those twenty-three small characters, and are able to put their different sounds together and make the one sound that the characters joined together make, you can read every book written with them.”

The women listened to the description, but did not get the idea that to us is so simple. That any one could learn to read a book in a month or two seemed to them impossible. They did not accuse the Bible-woman of telling an untruth, but they were silent enough to make her see that they did not

* Letters.

believe what she said. Nor would they believe the assertion that it was possible to learn to read at all in so short a time, until Leng Tso's statements were endorsed by Khiau, the preacher.

To others than Chinese it may seem impossible that any woman of ordinary ability should learn to read within a month unless she had some knowledge of letters before. The explanation is simple. There are only twenty-four separate sounds in the dialect of the Fokien province; and of that only, and not of the general written language, is the author now writing. These the missionaries express by seventeen letters of our alphabet, together with seven combinations. The letters and combinations are *a, b, ch, chh, e, g, h, i, j, k, kh, l, m, n, ng, o* (and *o* with an added dot), *p, ph, s, t, th, u* and an added small *n*; with these are used the capital letters as we use them. The language of China is composed of words of one syllable, and most of these words can be written with two and three letters; some, however, require four, five, and even six, while a very few need seven to express their sounds. The number of

words in the spoken language or dialect of the Fokien province is not large. It will be seen from these facts that to learn to read this—which is called the Romanized colloquial—does not require a great deal of study. It is not uncommon for women to learn to read it with some ease in a month.

Many may ask, Why, then, are not all the Chinese taught to read this colloquial?

There are several reasons. This colloquial is spoken by but few comparatively of the people of that country. To give them books in the different dialects would require a great many translations, whereas the regular written language can be read by all who are able to read, no matter what dialect they may speak. Then these dialects are not fixed; the same word may have in places not far separated very different meanings. The dialects gradually change, and one slowly blends into another. The learned look with disdain upon this manner of printing and reading. It is at best but a temporary method of holding the truth before the eyes of the common people, but it is a method that shows the genius and

aptness of the missionaries to meet and to conquer difficulties.

The preacher was believed, but not fully understood; nor did his own explanations, added to those of his wife and the Bible-woman, make the matter clear to the women. They believed, as many do, in witches and in ghosts without knowing anything about them except what they hear others tell.

Leng Tso was not well acquainted with this method of reading. She had not learned to read the colloquial, nor did she feel anxious to do so; the written characters she had learned at a great sacrifice of time and strength, and to have so easy a method made known after she had gained her knowledge by the difficult one was to make her feel less favorable to the new. After she was able to read she began to go about among the women to read the Bible and teach them the way of salvation. At first she was obliged to work to earn her own support; but when she found her son, he and her brother supported her almost entirely, thus allowing her to give most of the time to the work she had chosen.

CHAPTER II.

IN HA BUN.

IN the large city of Ha Bun the Bible-woman had an only brother living; like herself, he was a Christian. When yet a young man, he had come to the city to work at his trade, that of a carpenter. His name was Iau; as he was a carpenter, he was called Iau Sai, or "Iau the mechanic." *Sai* is the honorary or distinctive name of any mechanic; and if it is desired to honor a common workman, *Sai* is added to his name, much as we in common language call a man "boss." Iau came to Ha Bun a poor journeyman carpenter, but at this time he was a master-builder, taking large contracts for building and employing many men. He had become a lumber-dealer as well as a contractor, and was one of the principal business-men in his line in the city. Some time after he moved to Ha Bun he heard the gospel from the

missionaries and became a follower of the Saviour. Iau Sai carried his religion into his business and tried to be all the better carpenter because he was a Christian. He was not the man to endeavor to make money or to gain power and honor from his religion, but was ready to share with his faith all that he gained. He honored God with his substance and had the promise made true to him, "Them that honor me I will honor."

The missionaries, wishing a dwelling built, employed Iau to do it; the work was done so well that other foreigners came to examine the structure. They asked who the builder was, and soon Iau Sai had other houses to build. Doing all of his work as well as he could, and trying to please, not only his employers, but God, he succeeded in so well pleasing those for whom he worked that he never lacked business.

A certain foreigner who cared more for himself than for God or man persuaded Iau Sai to undertake to build a house for him. The building was to be completed within a certain time, the shortest possible. Iau, contrary to the advice of the missionaries,

agreed to build and complete the house within the stipulated time or forfeit a large sum of money. When the building was partly finished, the foreigner said that it was not done according to contract, and forced the contractor to tear down and rebuild. He did it, protesting that he was keeping the terms of the contract, but knew that, as the foreigner was a man of influence and without much principle, it would be useless to refuse. Being a Christian, Iau could hope for little justice, much less sympathy, from the mandarins. It was plain that he could not now complete the building at the time agreed on. The foreigner told him that the forfeit must be paid if the house were not done at the time set, and said that he must work on Sunday. From the time he became a Christian, Iau had refused to work on the Sabbath, and, though he had been obliged to pay his men for seven days each week, though they worked only six, he had steadily refused to labor or to allow those in his employ to work on the Lord's day. The men were very willing to rest one day, as long as they were paid for it, but

refused to be idle and lose a day's wages because of the religion of their employer. Iau had soon found that, while he was ridiculed by many for paying such an enormous price for his religion—seven days' wages for six days of work—he was the gainer rather than the loser: his men after a while did more work in six days, and better work too, than others did in seven. His religion was actually beginning to pay.

When the foreigner told him to work on the Sabbath and thus save the forfeit-money, the carpenter quietly said that he would sooner lose all that money than break God's law. The house was not done when the time was up, and Iau was forced to lose his money. The foreigner showed him no mercy. He afterward complained that the Chinese were the most obstinate people he had ever met. He probably reported, too, after he had reached his native land, that Chinese converts were all hypocrites.

More than once was Iau Sai caught in his bargains with scheming foreigners. One of these—a man who pretended to be a Christian and attended church when sober enough

to be there—made a bargain with Iau, and then deliberately took advantage of the Chinaman's honesty and ignorance and cheated him out of more than a thousand dollars.

Notwithstanding such misfortunes, the builder steadily gained wealth and influence, and amid all lived a faithful Christian life. As wealth came more and more rapidly he was more and more liberal in giving his money for the good of others and for the spread of the truth. If a building for the mission work was needed, he was ready to build whether there was money to pay for it or not. He would build and wait for the money; and if it was not paid, he would feel that it was given to the Lord's cause and would not complain. Missionaries are not inclined to go forward with their work in such a way; and if the offers of the liberal man were declined, it was with the warm gratitude of men who believed that he who made the offers would not have complained had they been accepted and he not received a dollar in payment for his work.

Such a man was Iau Sai, the Christian

carpenter of the city of Ha Bun, and brother of Leng Tso, the Bible-woman. To his home she made frequent visits, and from his purse she drew not a small amount of her support as she went about doing good. In his home she met Christian women of the city, and with them had many a talk about the welfare of the Church. Those talks were not always the wisest, nor did they always accomplish great good; but great movements are started by small powers, and by a multitude of small forces are they kept in motion.

“I think it is time,” said Leng Tso at one of these gatherings in her brother’s home, “to start to unbind the feet. Mothers may be told to bring up their daughters with feet unbound, but who will do so as long as women keep their feet bound? If people teach, they should show by their practice that they believe the teaching to be good.”

“You can talk,” replied one of the women, “for your feet were never bound; it is far otherwise with us. It might do for the younger women and girls to unbind their feet, but it is impossible for us who are old.

It is easy to train a young and growing tree, but the old banian must be let alone."

"We cannot expect the younger ones to do what we say if we are unwilling to try it ourselves," said the Bible-woman. "The old eagle must herself fly if she would have her young try their wings."

"I do not see why we should unbind our feet," spoke one of the women; "it is an old custom that has come to us from our ancestors. Why should we give up everything?"

"We are not to give up everything," replied Leng Tso, "but those things only that are harmful and sinful. This is both. It harms the feet by deforming them; it unfits women to do the work God has for them, and thus by neglect they sin against him. And, further, it is rebelling against Him who made the body; it is saying that he did not know what is the best shape for a woman's foot, and that we can improve on his work."

"Oh yes, it is easy for her to talk," spoke one, in an undertone; "her feet have never been bound. A fox—so the story is told—once lost his tail, and then called all the foxes together that he might persuade them to cut



Small-footed Girl.



off their tails. I, for one, do not mean to unbind my feet, nor to unbind the feet of my girls; all admit that small feet are pretty, and why should we give up beauty that we already possess? If others do not wish to bind the feet of their daughters, that may be well; but let alone those that are bound."

"That is what Ban Chim says," replied one of the women. "Unless we unbind, others will not; and unless we do it, others will bind the feet of their daughters. Some one must start, or nothing will be done."

"Some one has started," came from one of the women. "The wife of one of the pastors has refused to bind the feet of her little daughter."

"What! the wife of Pastor Lo?"

"No, of Pastor Jap. She says that she will never compel her daughters to suffer what she has passed through, no matter how homely large feet may appear. When Jap Sian Si Niu* determines to do a thing, she does it."

"But what will the people of our country say about our girls? They will be called

*The pastor's wife.

large-footed, and will be regarded as of the lower classes. We shall not be able to get them good husbands, and must marry them to poor workmen."

"Workmen become rich and great sometimes," suggested an old lady, "and rich and great become poor and miserable. Better let them be able to help their husbands rise than be a burden to keep the husbands down. A wife who hinders rather than helps her husband deserves to be married to one who cannot rise."

"Cannot we do something to begin unbinding feet?" asked the Bible-woman. "I have large feet, and my advice will not help much. They will say that I want all to be as I am. That is true, but not true for the reason they may give. You must be the ones to begin. The free bird knows not of the evils of a cage. If those who are imprisoned will not escape when the door is open, others will not believe that the cage is an evil."

"It is true as Ban Chim has said," spoke one of the older women. "If we whose feet are bound are unwilling to unbind them, it

will be of little use to advise parents not to bind the feet of their daughters. I am willing, old though I am, to unbind mine. It is what I think the younger women should do. We older ones may find it very difficult to go without bandages, after having worn them for perhaps fifty years."

"I want to think of it longer," responded one. "If it be good to do, it is wise to think about it first. He who starts out on a race without thinking is the one who is liable to stop before it is won."

"I agree with Ban Tun," said one of the younger women. "We may remove the bandages speedily and mourn over our hasty act all the rest of our lives."

The women were talking about the matter, and talk meant thought; so the Bible-woman was content to let time and the teachings of the missionaries and native preachers carry on the work.

She had heard the remark about the fox who had lost his tail. She could see no beauty or excellency in deformed feet; on the contrary, she knew how much better able she was with her unbound feet to go about

and work. But not use so much as custom influenced the women about her. For centuries it had been the custom; that was a powerful argument for continuing it. Binding the feet is an ancient Chinese practice, and was in existence many centuries before China was conquered by the Mantchu Tartars. Because a Chinese and not a Tartar custom, some of the people regard it with the more favor. The Tartars do not bind the feet; indeed, the conquerors of China are opposed to small feet, and try to influence the people to give up the habit. On the contrary, the present method of wearing the hair in a cue or braid hanging down the back is a Tartar custom, and was made compulsory when China was conquered by its present rulers.

It is probably nearly a thousand years since the practice of feet-binding was introduced. How it came about is uncertain. Several causes are given by the people themselves for this cruel practice. The one most commonly told is that about a thousand years ago a woman of the imperial palace—a favorite of the emperor, but not the queen—began binding her feet to add to her supposed

beauty. In time she was imitated by others, and gradually the rule became general. Others who trace the custom back much farther say that between two and three thousand years ago there was an empress, Tak-ki by name, who was so unfortunate as to have club-feet. She was a proud woman and ashamed of her deformity; to hide it she compelled her husband, the emperor, to order all the ladies of the palace to have their feet bandaged. All the women were induced after a time to imitate the ladies of the palace. The men, however, like to tell the story that in early times the women of China were fearful gossips and constantly going about to visit and talk to their neighbors. To stop this the husbands were forced to bind their wives' feet, and so compel them to remain at home. If this be the true reason, it may be added that the expedient was not successful.

A cloth bandage is bound so tightly about the feet of the child that the growth is stopped, the bones are cramped and the shape is changed. The time to begin varies. Some parents commence when the girls

are mere infants; others begin at the age of two; still others wait until the child is several years old, and often the girl may be nearly grown before the bandages are applied. Some girls, it is said, whose parents had neglected to bind their feet for various reasons, begged to have them bound as they grew up toward womanhood. The reason of this is not far to seek. Women in China are not unlike their sisters in other countries. They wish not only to follow the fashions, but to appear beautiful, refined and of good family. Small feet are the sign of gentility and good breeding. Nowhere more than in China is it regarded as a desirable accomplishment for a woman to be able to force a No. 3 foot into a No. 1 shoe.

Leaving out of consideration the wisdom of having small feet, it is not strange that the women of China cling to this custom. What woman is willing to advertise herself as of questionable character or family? If through suffering and privation she can be regarded as wealthy and refined, is it strange that she is willing to undergo the pain and privation? If once there be a number of

the better class of women in any place in China who have large feet, then to do away with the bandages will be comparatively easy. Until that time comes it will require no little resolution to refuse to follow this cruel custom. We may decry and ridicule it, but we cannot easily understand what a woman risks when she takes off the bandages from her feet. It may be said here that the bandages are never permanently removed after the feet have once been bound.

The Bible-woman was anxious to learn all she could, in order to teach others. While she felt that her work was outside of rather than within the city, she was ready to do what she could there also. In a quiet way she used her influence, but at no place did she more delight to be than at the class of Mrs. Minturn.

Mrs. Minturn was the wife of a missionary, and was herself a born missionary. Gentle, quiet, firm and decided, she was a woman who could control others without seeming to exercise any authority. Not specially gifted nor attractive, she won friends slowly, but held all whom she won,

whether natives or foreigners. Those who best knew most respected the quiet, cheerful, kind-hearted woman. Mrs. Minturn seldom spoke of what she did, and to learn her failures or her successes one must ask others than herself. In this lay one of her greatest faults. She forgot that she was a missionary not only of the Lord Jesus Christ, but of his Church, and that his people wished to know what their representative was doing and what success attended their gifts and prayers.

Mrs. Minturn had gathered a class of women, nearly all of them married, whom she had taught to read the Romanized colloquial. She met this class each week to teach them not only to read and study the word of God, but to put into practice what they learned; in a sentence, to become good Christian wives and mothers. When able to be in the city, the Bible-woman was found at this class; here she could ask all the questions she chose, and have most of them satisfactorily answered. Nor was she afraid to express an opinion. Occasionally the questions led to discussions and brought out

from the lips of the teacher lessons that might otherwise not have been given.

“Do you think, teacher,” asked the Bible-woman, one day, “that the women of the Bible, such as Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel and Miriam, bound their feet?”

“‘Bound their feet’!” said the teacher, in surprise. “I never thought of it. No; they probably left their feet as God made them.”

“Then, if the mothers in Israel did not bind their feet, why should the grand-daughters? If the women of old did not think it right or wise to bandage and to torture the feet of their daughters, why should the women of the Church now bandage their daughters’ feet?”

The women of the class at once saw what the Bible-woman meant by the question, and they eagerly waited for the reply. It was no secret to the Chinese that the missionaries were opposed to binding feet, though they did not often speak about it.

“It is not always safe to follow the example of those who lived in Bible times,” answered Mrs. Minturn. “God had not

so fully made known his will to them as he has to us, and they were more liable to go astray for lack of knowledge than are people who have the whole Bible. Sarah, Rebekah and others did not always do right. Sarah did not believe what the angel said, nor did she treat Hagar kindly; Rebekah taught her son Jacob to deceive his father and cheat his brother; Rachel stole the images of her father, and then told an untruth about them; so you see that in everything they are not safe guides for us to follow. But God has given us a better guide than such people could be: he has given his laws and the teaching of his holy book. If we follow that book, we can never go wrong."

"Teacher," asked a woman, "where does it say in the Bible that we must not bind our feet?" The look that followed this question showed that the women felt that for once they had an answer for the teacher and the Bible-woman.

"Where in the Bible are we told that we must not put bandages on our eyes, and so prevent our seeing?" asked the teacher. "Yet who feels the need of such a command? We

must not expect God to treat us as little children who know nothing at all. He has given us judgment and sense, and expects us to use both as wise children, and not as babes. If it be not wise to bind our eyes and thus to compel ourselves to walk in the dark, is there wisdom in binding the feet and thus preventing their use? If one member of the body is to be left unhindered to do the work for which it was created, why not another member? Instead of asking where in the Bible we are told not to bind the feet, let me ask where the Bible commands that they be bound?"

The look of Leng Tso given to the others seemed to say, "Now you have more of an answer than you expected." She, however, was silent. One of the women asked,

"Teacher, does the Bible mean that we are to give up our customs that have been established for many generations? If so, it will make a great deal of trouble."

"Our Saviour said that his coming would make a great deal of trouble, and so it has proved. It always causes trouble to break off old and evil habits and customs. But

the Bible does not teach us to give up any customs that are harmless. It would not forbid our eating with chopsticks nor dressing as you do, because such things harm nobody; but binding the feet does harm those whose feet are bound. It causes no little pain, and it unfits women for active work; and, besides, it weakens and deforms the body that God made to be beautiful."

"Cannot we live as good, faithful Christians with our feet bound," asked one, "as we could if we had large feet?"

"To be a good, faithful, active disciple of Jesus," answered Mrs. Minturn, "one must be a happy one and as free as possible from all hindrances in the Lord's work. Do bound feet aid in making you happy? Do they not cause much pain and sorrow? Besides, do not they prevent your doing much that you might otherwise do?"

"They may cause pain of body," was answered, "but they do not cause pain of spirit, as large feet would. We are not ashamed to have our feet seen; no one will think us large-footed women, but all will suppose us to be of the better class. So they

will think of our daughters if their feet are bound. It is to prevent shame that we bind our feet."

"Yes, shame because of a useless and foolish custom," rejoined the Bible-woman. "But change the custom, and then no one will have cause for shame. Let all be as God made them, and all will feel equally pleased."

"How can such a change be accomplished?" was asked. "If but a few of us change, we shall only be ridiculed. We cannot compel others to do as we wish."

"You may not bring about a change at once," said Mrs. Minturn, "but in time the change would come. All great and good works started from small beginnings. It was only after a few had given themselves to the work that any progress was made."

"Oh, women cannot make the change in the Middle Kingdom," was answered. "Women can do nothing unless all try, and others will not."

"When they try with God's help and because it is right, even in the Middle Kingdom women can do great things," said the teacher.

“If I thought it would do any good,” said Mrs. Lee, “I would unbind my feet.”

“If a small company should agree and begin,” said the Bible-woman, “they might do a great deal. Did not Gideon with only three hundred men put to flight the Midianites? If such a little company could do so great things, what could not a large number of women do?”

“But we are not one-tenth as large a number here as Gideon’s army,” replied one of the women. “We are only women. If the men would begin, we could follow.”

“The men have begun,” said Mrs. Min-turn. “There are not a few men who will do all they can to stop the custom of binding the feet. You know that all the missionaries wish to see the custom given up”

“Why must we give up everything?” murmured a woman, softly.

“If feet-binding be wrong,” spoke Mrs. Lee, “then it is our duty to give it up, no matter what the cost be. We must give up everything for Christ’s sake if it be his will. If Jesus could give his life for us, we should at least give up feet-binding for him.”

Thus did discussions between the women regarding this custom cause them to think. But, like every reform, the effort to change the custom moved slowly. Nor did the missionaries try to force the matter; they knew that in the end a forced change would not be so sure nor so rapid as one begun from conviction. The people needed to talk and think for a long time; and if there be a country where reforms move slowly, it is China. But the reform that once takes hold of that people will be a permanent and a complete one. The Chinese think and act slowly, but they move effectually. If, as a nation and as individuals, they were free to think and to act out their thoughts, we should see far more of the results of Chinese thought; nor would the results be to the discredit of the people. Let the gospel gain control of that nation, let the Chinese become a thoroughly Christian people, and there will be no backward movement. They will never yield their convictions to the demands of a few noisy skeptics.

CHAPTER III.

THE NEW SEMINARY.

“ I HEAR that a new missionary and his wife are coming to preach the doctrine with Pastor Wagner,” said Iau Sai to his sister one day as she was visiting at his home.

“ So Pastor Wagner is coming back, is he ?” was her reply. “ But is he to bring a wife with him ?”

“ I have not heard,” answered her brother ; “ the foreign pastors say little about that. I wish he would bring a wife, as he seems so lonely.”

“ Do you think that he is too poor to buy a wife ?” asked the Bible-woman. “ I thought that all foreigners were rich and had all the money they wished.” Then, correcting herself, she added, “ That is, had all the money we would wish. If they had all they wish, they would not come here to earn more.”

“The foreign pastors do not come here to earn money,” said Iau Sai, “but to teach the people of a Saviour.”

“I did not mean them, but other foreigners,” was the reply. “Do you think that teacher Wagner could not get a wife in his own country? Nearly every other pastor brings one with him?”

“Get one? Why, he could get a hundred if he wanted them,” spoke Iau Sai’s son. “He doesn’t want a wife. But, aunt, men do not buy wives in the foreign countries. Nor do the fathers and mothers get wives for them; each selects his own, and yet some make mistakes. Women are more plenty and far more cheap there than here. Why, a wife does not cost a dollar there. People give their girls away—that is, parents do after they are grown up.”

“Give them away after they are grown up?” said Leng Tso, in surprise. “How strange! And yet most of the foreigners seem to think more of their wives than if they had cost a hundred dollars. But foreigners are strange people. I sometimes see not only the foreign pastors, but the

other foreigners, walking out with their wives just as though they were men. Yes, and much of the time the wives hold to their husbands' arms, as if they were their equals."

"That is what they believe," replied Iau Sai. "They think that a woman is as good as a man."

"Yes, and will you believe it?" said a woman who was present. "The foreigners always at table tell the servants to wait on the women first. They are a strange people; I sometimes wish that I had been born a foreigner."

"So do I," spoke Leng Tso; "and yet we know that the Middle Kingdom has very many things that foreign people do not have."

"They have what we did not have," answered Iau Sai, "and that they have brought to us—the gospel. That is worth more to us than all we have got. I only wish that more would come to teach it to our people. I am very glad to know that Pastor Wagner is coming back, and that he is bringing another teacher and wife with

him. But what we need is more of our own people to preach the gospel to our countrymen."

"Who will preach it?" asked the Bible-woman. "There are very few able to preach who are not now preaching. We need more men to go out into the country and tell the doctrine there, but where are the men?"

"Pastor Minturn told us a few weeks ago," said Mrs. Iau Sai, "that we should educate our children to become preachers. He said that it was not by foreigners, but by our own people, that our country is to learn about the doctrine."

"Yes, and he told the students a few days ago," added Iau Sai's son, "that some day they hoped to have a large school for training young men to preach."

"A large school?" inquired the Bible-woman. "Where will it be? and when will it be begun? Will it be for teaching women to go out and tell the doctrine?"

"No," replied the youth, "but for men only. I have heard that the foreign pastors are thinking of a girls' school too some time,

but not yet. Pastor Minturn said that his home Church had not money for both."

"When are the new pastor and his wife coming?" asked the Bible-woman.

"They may be here at any time," was the answer. "They are in the South now, and waiting for an opportunity to come North."

A few days later the expected party arrived, and was welcomed by Chinese Christians as well as by foreigners. There was a vast deal of talk about the new missionaries.

"Why," said one, "they are only children yet. Are all the men and women in their country unwilling to come, that such young people as these are sent? What can they do? Who will listen to a preacher who is so young as he?"

"They act like children, too," added another; "they both laughed and talked as if they were only a boy and a girl. Why does not he have whiskers, as the other foreigners have?"

"He is too young," answered another. "I think that they have been sent out so young that they may learn with the wise men here how to preach and teach the doctrine."

“Did you see that she has black eyes, as we have?” spoke a woman. “And her face is pretty, too.”

“She may be pretty, but her husband is not,” said one who had listened. “He seems different from the other foreign pastors: he has not a broad, high forehead, as they have, nor does he seem to be learned or wise. I think that the Church in their country sent all its best and wisest men first, and now has sent some of its poorer ones.”

“I am afraid that this man will not prove so good as the others,” spoke an old woman, sorrowfully; “but we must not expect such men in every teacher as we have in those who came first. Why should not the Church at the home of these men send out its best first, to start the work, and, since it is prosperous, send out the men who are not so wise? They must do something with the men who know but little, yet wish to do what good they can.”

The discussion was repeated whenever several persons met, and usually to the disadvantage of the young missionary rather than of his wife. Fortunately, he did not for a while

understand the speakers' words, or he might have been discouraged. When he became able to comprehend their remarks, he had learned as well to discount himself; and, as for his good looks, he had several times gazed at himself in the glass before China was reached, and never was able to convince himself that Nature had done much for him in the way of beauty. He enjoyed as much as any one the remarks regarding himself when he passed along the streets later and heard the opinions of a few regarding what Nature had done for him in the way of beauty.

With the arrival of new missionaries, the question of a theological seminary was seriously discussed in the mission. For years there had been a room set apart in an old mission-house for a schoolroom, and in this were taught the half dozen students preparing for the ministry. But the place was unfit for the work: it was in the crowded city and far away from the homes of the missionaries, and, besides, had other disadvantages better appreciated by those who must meet them than by those who may hear about them.

“Why do not the pastors build a new house

for a school?" was asked by the Chinese Christians. "Has not the Church in their country enough money? Did not teacher Wagner bring money with him?"

"Money with him!" replied Iau Sai one day. "No; they have no money to spare—that is, the society that sends out the pastors. Pastor Wagner told me that the Church in his country is poor. For a time it was uncertain whether or not he could be sent back."

"How, then, could the Church send out another with his wife?" was asked. "Pastor Wagner is worth two new men, and more if they are like the one who came with him. But his wife is a wise woman; that may be the reason why he was sent."

"No; I heard that the new man was not sent out by the society, but by some of his friends," spoke a listener.

"Perhaps they wanted him to go somewhere, and thought, with such pastors as had been sent here, he might do," suggested one.

"Oh, you must not think that he does not know anything," replied Iau Sai. "He is learning our language rapidly. When he came, he at once began to study how to

speaking; and how do you suppose he began? He asked how to ask, 'What do you call this?' and how to say, 'I do not know.' With those two sentences he started out to learn the language of any whom he might meet. He is not a man who studies books very much, but he studies people and everything he sees."

"He always speaks to us when he meets us," suggested one, kindly, as if to say something in favor of the stranger, "but we are not always sure what he means. He says things so differently from the way we speak that we cannot understand."

"He is only learning, remember, and will speak better by and by," spoke Iau Sai.

"I heard one of the chair-bearers who took his wife out for a ride—the one walking alongside the chair—tell the others the other day that when they were on the road the new preacher told him to pray. He said, 'Come, now we will pray.' The chair-bearers did not worship God, so they did not want to pray; they had been hired only to carry the chair. When they would not pray, then he told them that they would go home. The

chair-bearer said he would have waited to let the teacher pray if he wanted to, but would not himself pray."

"Oh," said Iau Sai, "the teacher told them, 'Now we will pray,'* when he meant to say, 'Now we will go home.' † He probably turned the word around, that is all. He would not ask chair-bearers to pray on the road, especially if they were not Christians."

"Will the pastors build the new school, do you think?" asked the Bible-woman. "It is needed, especially if we are to have more students; Mrs. Minturn said the other day that she hoped more would soon determine to give themselves to this work."

"I do not know," answered Iau Sai, "but I know that they wish very much to build a good large school for the preaching students. I offered to build one and take my money when the Church at the home of the pastors could pay, but none would allow me. I told them that the Lord would take care of those who care for his cause."

"So he will," responded Leng Tso, warmly. "He has taken care of you,

* Ki-to.

† To-khi.

brother, and he says that he will never leave nor forsake you."

"I know he will not," spoke Iau Sai; "but the pastors say that the Lord hath given us wisdom and judgment, and these are to be used as well as faith. We might go on and build schools and chapels everywhere through the Middle Kingdom because they are needed, and then say that we will trust the Lord to pay for them. But the men to teach and preach in them are not here; the Lord has not yet sent them, and we must wait until he does."

"But he has sent the students," said Leng Tso; "they are here. Why not build a school for them?"

"Ah!" said the carpenter; "that is what I asked Pastor Minturn, but he told me that he and the other pastors are the servants of the Church in their country, and they cannot do what the Church will not permit."

"Will it not permit them to build the school?" asked one.

"It will not send the money," was the reply; "so they cannot build. We must wait patiently and pray the Lord to send

the money, Pastor Minturn said. I wish that they would let me build the school; it would soon be ready. What if I do not get the money? I am no longer poor; I can afford to lose it for the Lord's cause. I have lost money in working for those who are not the Lord's people; why should I fear to work for him and his cause?"

"Did you tell Pastor Minturn that?" asked Mrs. Iau Sai.

"Yes," said he, "but he told me that after a while the Church would need for other things all the help and money I can give."

Not more anxiously was the question of a new theological seminary discussed by the Chinese Christians than it was by the missionaries. Many a time did the little band stand in the door of the mission home and, looking toward the spot chosen for the future school, try to plan ways and means for building. Letters urgent and earnest were sent to the home Church pleading for the money, but in vain. There was a debt on the mission society, and not a dollar beyond the appropriation could be given to the mission. When these tidings came,

the missionaries were desponding, but not despairing. They had not forgotten to place the matter at the mercy-seat as well as before the home Church, but prayer was more importunate now that human help had failed.

The newly-arrived missionary had been entrusted with the correspondence of the mission with the home society. After visiting the fields and as well as he could taking a survey of all the work before them, he wrote a full sketch to the home Church and boldly appealed for help and not a little addition to the money already appropriated. Not content with that, the young man wrote letters to pastors of a number of churches telling the needs of the work. The letter to the mission society was published without comment. A reply was sent to it by the secretary, saying kindly but decidedly, "Not one dollar beyond your appropriation."

The reception of that letter did not mark a season of tears—for these missionaries were not of the kind that stopped to weep if they could do something better—but it did mark a season of prayer. That season

was not a short one. When they had prayed over the matter until they were drawn near the Lord and nearer to their work than ever, they began to think if they could not do something more themselves.

“We must have that building,” said Mr. Minturn. “The Church will see the necessity of it some day and send the money, but we cannot wait. We are losing time, and we are losing men too. We must have a place not only suitable, but large enough for more men.”

“But what can we do?” inquired Mr. Wagner. “The Church will not send the money; we have none in the mission to spare. Every dollar will be needed, and more too, before the year ends, and I see nothing but simply waiting the action of the Church.”

“I have some money,” said Mr. Minturn, “that the foreigners gave me some years ago for the work I did; it has been kept for my invalid child when it becomes older and needs it more. I am willing to advance that.”

“But, Mr. Minturn, what if the Church never sees fit to repay?” suggested Mr.

Wagner. "Your child will need the money some day; is it right to risk its interests for the sake of the Church?"

"My child will not suffer," was the quiet response. "This will only be lent to the Lord, and in due time he will repay it. I can trust him, and I believe that I can trust the Church too. I am ready to hand that money over to the mission at once. Yet that will not be enough."

"If you think it wise, I yield to your judgment," said Mr. Wagner. "If you are ready to offer your money, I am ready to give mine. I have a little sum that I have saved, and that I am willing to give for the school; yet even with yours that will not be enough to build a school such as we need. I have thought over this more than I have dared speak, and, had the money sufficient to build been in my hands, it should have been given. I have thought of offering the little sum I have, but knew it would not be enough, so said nothing. But if the mission will take it, the money is at the service of the Church. I am a bachelor and don't need to care for a family as Mr. Minturn should."

“I am not rich,” said the young missionary, “but I think that if necessary I can furnish in time what will be needed beyond what Mr. Minturn and Mr. Wagner lend. I will raise the money somehow, for we must have the school. It is plain even to me that the work of the mission demands the school, and we, as the representatives of the Church at home, should take the responsibility and build the school. I say let us do it. If you two brethren are willing to lend what you can, I will see that the rest is provided.”

The wife of the young man gave him a look that was more a question than a reproof, but it was a question that he felt could wait. Some questions are better answered later and when the work is done.

“How much will the school cost?” asked Mr. Wagner.

“I can hardly say,” replied Mr. Minturn. “We must ask Iau Sai to give us an estimate.”

“Such a school as we should have would in our own country cost a good deal,” suggested the young missionary; “I doubt if it

could be built for ten thousand dollars. But I have not the faintest idea what it costs to build in China."

"'Ten thousand dollars'!" repeated Mr. Minturn. "Work and materials are cheap here; besides, the Chinese students do not need rooms such as you were used to in college and seminary. I don't believe that it would cost one thousand dollars to build such a house as we require; we can put up a small building and enlarge it as our wants increase."

"We will need a chapel and a lecture-room, as well as a schoolroom for study, on the first floor, and sleeping-rooms on the second, I suppose," said Mr. Wagner. "I think, Mr. Minturn, that is what you proposed?"

"Yes," said the senior missionary; "we will need two rooms below, besides a kitchen for cooking and eating. Really, there should be two rooms for the work of the young men aside from their study-room and the chapel. I think, by making eight sleeping-rooms on the second story and dividing the first into two larger rooms and one small one, we can make a suitable and useful building. Then

we can add a kitchen at the end for cooking. A room for study and lectures to hold twenty students will be large enough."

"'Twenty students'?" was asked, in surprise. "Why, we have only six now on whom we can count, with a prospect of one, or possibly two, more within a year. Where will the other twelve come from, and how can you put twenty students in eight sleeping-rooms?"

"It is probable," replied Mr. Minturn, "that we shall have the theological students of one of the other missions to recite and study with ours. It will save the time of teachers and enable one of us to give more time to a certain line of teaching, and another to a different line of instruction. We must lay our plans for a larger institution, and one that will take in the other missions in our vicinity."

"But will they all stay and sleep here?"

"No; only study and recite. The other missions have no better accommodations than we for their young men; and if we start this school, it may be the means of drawing us all together in our work."

“You said three rooms besides a kitchen on the first floor,” spoke the young missionary; “what would the rooms be for?”

“One for a chapel, another for study and regular schoolroom, and the third for a dining-room. We cannot make both chapel and schoolroom serve the same purpose, for the desks used in writing would hinder in chapel service and work. We must have a chapel not only for service with the students, but as a preaching-place to which others can be invited. Our school must be made useful not only for training, but for practical mission work.”

“We should make it as comfortable and convenient as possible,” added Mr. Wagner. “I think that the young men should be taught to live like men, and men who are to become future leaders among their people. Do not make them foreigners in customs or manner of living, but refined Chinese Christian leaders. They are the men who are to form the China of the future in this part of the country. If this country is to become Christian, as I believe it is, then it will become so through the preachers. They, of all men,

should be so taught and trained that they may be elevating leaders to the people whom they teach."

"You will find it a difficult task to elevate those born and brought up in heathenism and among the lower classes," replied Mr. Minturn. "A Chinaman is a slow-moving body when in the line of progress. Yet I agree with Mr. Wagner, and it is on that principle our mission has acted. But for us to build a theological seminary here after the model of those at home, and then put the young men in with the expectation of making them like those who graduate from our own seminaries, would be to attempt what would certainly prove a failure. A seminary on the home model may be a thing of the future, but it is not for the present here."

"How large shall the building be?" asked the young missionary, who was eager to have the work begin at once.

"I have thought over the matter," replied Mr. Minturn, "and don't see how we can make a building do that is less than twenty-four by thirty-six feet inside the walls. The rooms for the young men should be eight

feet by ten, and there should be a hallway four feet wide, with four rooms on each side. Then a small space will be needed for stairway. Below, of course, the dining-room will be next the kitchen and have the stairway in it; then I think it will be well to have the schoolroom next, and the chapel or worship-room farthest from the dining-room."

With some modifications this plan was agreed upon, and Iau Sai was soon informed of the wish of the mission. The good man was very glad to give the estimate and take charge of the erection.

"Husband," said the wife of the young missionary when they were in their rooms, "how can you give money for that school? Have you money to give? You know we are living here on a small salary, and, as far as I know, we have nothing else to depend on. We must not only buy what we need, but our wants may be greater before long, as we may not all live in one mission-house as we do now, and in one family."

"Oh, you just wait until my ship comes in," replied the husband, "and you will see

what money I have. We shall be rich then—at least, rich enough to do our part in building this school, or seminary, as I like to call it.”

“I have not heard that our ship has set out yet,” replied the wife. “What if it be wrecked and never come in? You have heard of wrecks, I suppose?”

“Well, yes, I think history records two or three; but then my ship is all right yet. You wait; we’ll see.”

“I would rather we could use the present tense in this case. But seriously, Avon, why did you promise to give money, when you have none to give?”

“Winnie, we are living by faith, and I have a supply of that commodity—not a commodity, perhaps, but a possession. What is the use of storing your faith for a rainy day? Use it now is my motto.”

“Oh, Avon, I wish you would speak seriously. I want you to do all you can, but I don’t wish you to promise what you cannot fulfill. That money will be needed when the building is done, and we must pay our share. Where will the money be?”

“Now, Winnie, I will talk seriously, but don't expect me to tell you what a prophet might keep secret because he lacked the information. I see what it costs to live here as we are living now, and we can save some of our salary. Good friends gave us a stock of clothing to last for several years; besides, they gave us a large supply of other things that we shall need. Now, I propose that, if necessary, we appropriate from our salary what such things would cost for, say, three years, and ask the mission to advance some of our salary for the remainder of the year and appropriate it to the building. Are you willing to go partner with me in this work?”

“You need not ask me, Avon; I am ready to do all I can, but am not ready to promise what we cannot fulfill. I see now that we can do something, but, I fear, not our full share—at least, not when needed.”

“It is wise, Winnie, to look ahead, but it is awfully straining to the eyes, and not less so to faith. We can see ahead a few months; let us rest our eyes a little until a month or two go by. But let me say that I have

another resource that has not yet been tried. When I was a student, I wrote occasionally for papers and magazines, and made some money by such contributions. When I came to China, editors asked me to become correspondent for their papers. I declined, as it seemed my duty to give all my time to the mission work; but if necessary, I will write a letter now and then, and may get a few odd and some even dollars by the correspondence. This will be given to the mission, and so, after all, will be doing mission work; besides, it may interest the home people in this godless nation."

The young man did not write letters to papers at once; but when the time came to write the mission letter, he broke the rule of the mission that no letter should be sent to the home society without first being read to the whole mission. He told the story of the proposed building and how the two missionaries had agreed to give what little money they had toward the work. He said nothing of his own purpose, because he thought that might not be carried out. At its close the writer asked if the Church

would not be able in some way to save the two missionaries giving for this work what little means they possessed. The answer soon came. The society directed that the school be built at once, and credited the mission with an additional appropriation to cover the cost. The building was well on the way to completion when the permission to build came; and when the money was needed, the missionaries were not called on for gifts or loans.

The building was a humble one, but a fine edifice it appeared to the Chinese. Its plain brick sides and tile roof, as well as the tile floors within, were not attractive, but the building was meant for use rather than for ornament, and well it suited its purpose. Never before had the eight students who occupied its rooms enjoyed such school privileges and conveniences. The neatly-plastered walls were decorated with maps and pictures; while the chair, the bed and the table, together with a small shelf of books, made each room seem more than homelike to the occupants. The doors at either end of the lower story, and a window at the end of the hall over each

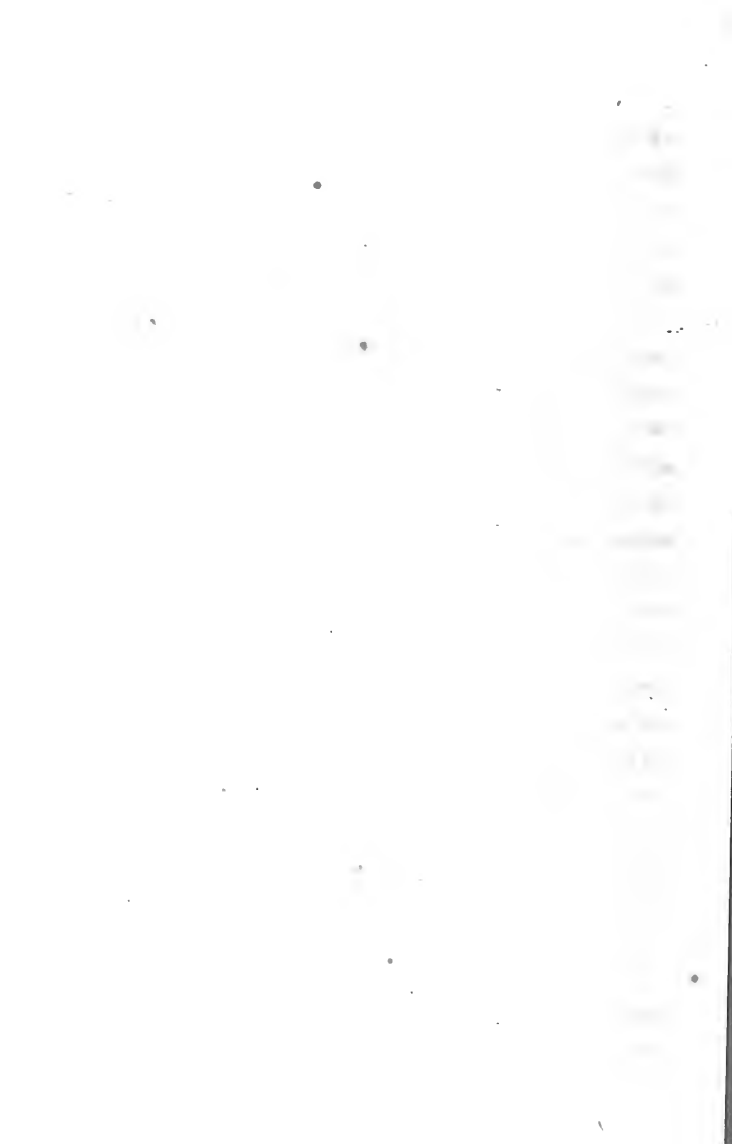
door in the upper story, gave air, while two double windows, one on each side, above and below, gave light as well as air to all the rooms. Proud were the Chinese Christians as they passed through the building, but none felt so satisfied as the missionaries. It had been the hope of years. Yet that building cost less than a thousand dollars, the ground included. They built in faith. It was a tiny seed that they planted; they have already seen it spring up and bear fruit. It is becoming an institution of which those very men—for they are all alive at the time the author writes—have reason to be proud. The little building has already given place to a larger, and, instead of being the seminary of one, it has become that of all the missions in that vicinity. Already has it sent forth a number of men as pastors of Christian churches in China, and a much larger number as evangelists to preach to those yet in heathen darkness.

CHAPTER IV.

TOA AW.

OVER the mountain from Thau Pau was a small village called Toa Aw. Like Thau Pau, it was built near the mountain, and, like it, was what the Chinese call a *lau*. It was a large, circular two-story building with all the windows and doors on the inside, except the single door on the ground floor by which the people entered and passed out of the building and the inner court. Within the house—for such is a Chinese *lau*—there are two sets of rooms, those on the first and those on the second floor, the lower used rather for pigs, buffaloes, poultry and as store-rooms than for dwellings for human beings. A large court or yard, forming a kind of commons, is left inside of the inner wall. This court is, of course, smaller in the lesser *laus*, but each has this inner court. Here the goats and children play, the men,





after their work, sit and smoke and talk, and the women meet to gossip.

Whether or not there be these queer homes in other parts of China the writer does not know, but in that part of the country they are slowly going to decay. No new ones, probably, are built, and the old ones have mostly outlasted their usefulness and purpose. They are a relic of past ages—times when the country was less under the control of law than now, and when small communities were forced to depend on themselves for protection from enemies. These laus are fortified villages—the outer wall being a fortification—and were probably built centuries ago, when clan wars and party feuds were far more common than now. They are very different from the small square forts or watch-towers that one so often meets in some parts of China. The latter usually stand a short distance from a village and are meant to hold a guard or sentinels, who protect the village from enemies or watch for their approach.

In later years, as the country has become more peaceful and law-observing, and as the room in the laus has been overcrowded by

the increase of inhabitants, additions outside of the circular building have been made, and people have put up their little cottages near the greater buildings. So, as the old home goes to decay, new and much smaller as well as separate ones are taking its place.

To protect not only from human, but from other, enemies were these strange homes erected. In the mountains are tigers, their number much larger, probably, in former years, but none too small yet, and to leave buffaloes, goats and poultry out of doors at night, or even for human beings to sleep unprotected by walls, was, and in some parts of China even now is, to risk an attack by tigers.

A number of years before our story begins a rebellion broke out in China, known as the Tai Ping rebellion. It came near overthrowing the present dynasty, and would probably have succeeded had not foreigners taken sides with the imperial government and aided in putting down the rebels.

Those familiar with Chinese history need not be told that the present rulers of that country are not Chinese, but Mantchu Tar-

tars, who more than two hundred and fifty years ago conquered the people and have since ruled over them. This rule has not been of the gentlest, and has often brought about rebellions here and there throughout the empire, but probably none so great or so nearly successful as that of the Tai Pings. A large portion of the people sympathized with the rebels and would have been glad had they succeeded. During the war, and even after its close, bands of insurgents went about the country robbing and murdering, but it is to be feared that much of the murder and destruction caused by the rebellion was the work of the soldiers of the government. In many cases they acted as much like robbers and murderers as did any rebel bands, and, as for cruelty, the Tai Pings, with all their barbaric heartlessness toward their enemies, were not guilty of crimes so great as those perpetrated by the imperial troops.

The people of Toa Aw had been told again and again that the Tai Pings were coming to destroy their village and kill the people, and perhaps as often they had been

warned that the government soldiers were coming to kill all who sympathized with rebels. A guard was stationed at some distance from the place to watch for the approach of the enemy, whether imperial or rebel soldiers—for all soldiers who came to Toa Aw would be regarded as enemies—and to warn the people of the approach of a hostile force. Arrangements were made to leave the village and hide in the neighboring mountains on the approach of a large body of troops. The people knew that, while they might by closing the gate of the lau successfully resist a small army, such resistance would but bring a larger force. If captured after resistance, the captives must die. In the end it would be a question between losing property and losing lives, and they decided to save their lives at the risk of home and possessions.

One day a sentinel rushed into the place shouting,

“The rebels are coming! Run! Don’t wait! They are near! Run for life!”

The man’s face denoted even more than his words, and the people needed no urging

to hasten to prepare for flight. It was the work of but a few minutes for the villagers, men, women and children, to be ready to hurry from the gate of the fortified home. Mothers with their children, fathers with their delicate little ones, old people trembling as they clung to their staves, each carrying, leading, driving away, what in their haste they were able to reach first,—all hurried from the place. Scarcely had they passed out of the gate when a sentinel who had remained to watch the approach of the soldiers came running and shouting:

“Run! Run for life! The rebels are near—only just out of sight! Soon they will see you, and then it will be too late to escape!”

Terrified, the fugitives ran with all their might, some soon taking the lead, while the old and the weak came straggling on behind. There were, however, not wanting strong and noble men to stay by those who lagged behind; among these was Soe, or, as he was called, “Soe Hia.” While generously helping others on he in some way cut his foot so badly that he was compelled to be among

the last of the flying ones. While all were running rapidly some one called out,

“They are coming! The rebels are coming close behind! Run! Run, or they will catch you!”

Tired and exhausted though some of the weak ones were, they started anew; fear seemed to lend them strength. They needed not to look back to prove to themselves that the rebels were in sight, for the shout of the pursuers was heard, though at a long distance behind. After chasing the fugitives for a short time the soldiers turned back to the open gate of the lau, probably thinking that the village had more of value in it than the people were carrying away. They were more intent on plunder than on capturing prisoners or taking life; indeed, the rebels were careful to spare the lives of all whom they did not think friends of the Tartar government.

Learning that they were not pursued, the frightened people stopped for a few minutes to take breath and hold a council as to their safety, but it was only for a few minutes that they waited.

“The rebels will come as soon as they have plundered our village,” said one, “and then will kill us all, to prevent our telling of their deeds. Let us go on and hide where they cannot find us.”

This counsel was taken, and as swiftly as possible the whole company hurried to the mountains, where a place of hiding was found. There they made themselves as comfortable as they could, but the comfort was not great. It was enough for them, however, to know, as hour after hour went by, that the rebels had not found them. They could even dare tigers if no worse enemies came.

That first night was a gloomy one. Without shelter other than that which the trees and rocks gave, with little to keep off tigers should any attack—they hardly dared build fires lest these betray to the rebels their retreat—with but a small stock of food and not knowing how long they might be compelled to stay away from a supply, and not knowing whether they had anything else in the world than they had brought with them, the poor fugitives waited for

morning. When morning came, it removed to a great degree their fear of tigers, but brought a fear of being discovered by worse enemies. Many were the prayers offered during that night and the next day by the women and by some of the men to the spirits of the gods and of the dead to preserve them from their enemies. The women lamented that they had no temple to go to nor incense to offer to the gods to pay for taking care of them. Some of the men after a day or two ridiculed this devotion to the idols, but at first said nothing to oppose the worship of those who chose to pray.

As the day after their first night of exile passed and no rebels were seen, the fugitives began to feel more secure and hoped that their hiding-place would not be discovered. For several days they remained hidden, none daring to leave their retreat lest the rebels should learn, by seeing any who might go, the place where the others were hiding.

When several days had gone by and there was no sound nor appearance of soldiers, scouts were sent out to look for signs of the enemy. These cautiously and slowly ap-

proached their home, but neither heard nor saw anything of rebels until Toa Aw was reached. Very cautiously they entered the lau lest rebels might be hiding in ambush or in the building, ready to capture the first who returned from the hiding-place. No one appearing, the men began to believe that no enemy was hidden. But what a sight met their eyes as they looked around! If no rebels were there now, there was proof enough that enemies had been there. Part of the wall was broken down, and the whole place was little better than a ruin. As the men went from room to room of the great house they saw what terrible destruction had been made. Walls were broken, doors were torn from their fastenings, furniture was scattered about, broken and crushed beyond repair, while the more valuable articles were altogether missing. Hurriedly they looked around, and then, fearing that the rebels might return, hastened away to their friends in the mountains. The sad news of destruction was not unexpected; the people were only too glad to know that anything was left of their home. Bitter, however, were the

denunciations of the destroying rebels; even those favorable to the cause of the Tai Pings were now willing to wish ruin to everything pertaining to the rebellion.

A council was held to decide what should be done. Some advised returning at once to the village, while others insisted that the enemy was waiting in ambush to capture all when they came back. These said that the rebels, if they had disappeared now, would doubtless be back again soon with a larger force, to carry away what could not be taken the first time. To the villagers the little place and its small amount of property seemed marvelous for wealth, and to them it had been a wonder that the rebels had not long before come to capture such riches. After a long discussion it was determined to send some of the boldest ones back not only to the village, but to search the country around and learn what had become of the rebels.

The searching band found the village as the first scouts had described it, nor did they see any marks that showed the presence of rebels anywhere near. Growing bolder, they went to the nearest village, and there

met men who had seen the band of marauders leave Toa Aw several days before. Indeed, it became evident that the rebels had stayed but a few hours in Toa Aw and were now nowhere near the village. They had probably been on some expedition, and, coming upon Toa Aw and other villages on the way, had stopped for a while at each to plunder and destroy, but were not inclined to take much pains to capture or kill the people; nor would they be likely to harm any who appeared friendly to the cause of the rebellion. Because some in Toa Aw were supposed to be unfriendly to the Tai Pings the village had suffered.

With the information they had gained, the men returned to their friends in the mountains. Some were ready to start at once; others were not so ready to believe that the rebels had left the neighborhood, and urged delay. They preferred starving in the mountains to being killed by enemies in their homes. But the majority of the exiles believed that it was safe to return to the village, and all were compelled to abide by the decision of the greater number or remain in

the mountains and starve, as the provisions were about gone.

Before starting for the lau the women offered earnest prayers to the gods that rebels might be kept from harming them, and promised to offer sacrifices and other rewards to the idols in their own village home. There were not wanting men to look with scorn on these devout ones, and to ask where the gods were, that the rebels had not been kept from Toa Aw. The very men who were ready to pray most earnestly when the rebels were coming were as willing to ridicule idols since the rebels had left.

The return was a slower and less fearful journey than the one to the mountains, yet the more timid clung closely together as they marched along, and listened with no little fear to every strange sound they heard. Some who ran the fastest for the mountains were leaders now, since they were convinced that the rebels were away. All the world over may be found those whose bravery is remarkable when danger is at a distance.

As the fugitives reached their home and saw what ruin had been made there the bit-

ter words against the rebels were many, but some were too sad to be bitter. Women could best show their grief in tears as they saw the desolation of their homes and the ruin of their property. Not only had part of the walls of the lau been destroyed, but food and cattle that had been left had been either taken away or rendered worthless. Fortunately, the crops in the fields had been left, and the villagers were able to get food from other places not far away.

But the mauraders had done a deed that to some of the people gave great pain and to others none at all. The idols had all been destroyed, and nothing was left to show what gods were worshiped in Toa Aw. This was in keeping with the course of the Tai Pings: wherever they went, they destroyed all the idol-temples and every indication of idolatry. One of their principles was opposition to the old idolatry of China.

“Where are your gods now?” asked a man of one of the devout women. “Not only could they not help you, but they were unable to help themselves. That is a poor kind of a god to worship.”

“Ah!” replied the woman, sorrowfully; “the gods were so eager to help us that they forgot to care for themselves, and while they were leading us safely to a place of hiding the rebels destroyed them and their temple.”

“Such gods are in need of friends to care for them,” suggested the man.

“And we will care for them,” was the reply. “If they think of us more than themselves, then we should see that they have a new home and a new form in which their spirits shall dwell.”

“You may build; and when the rebels come again, they will tear down the temple that you set up,” was the remark of one who stood by.

“No fear of the return of rebels,” said a man noted for his courage after battles were over. “We will see that they do not trouble us again.”

“Why did you not see that they did not trouble us the first time?” was asked.

“We had not time to prepare,” was his answer. “The long-haired thieves* came

*The term “long-haired thieves” was given to the Tai Pings on account of their wearing the hair long rather

too suddenly, and it was better to try them and see what they would do at their first visit. At their next we will show what we can do."

"What will you do?" was asked.

"I will show you," was the answer; "and if all will do as I say, you need not fear the rebels. I know about fighting: I was a soldier once, and not a rebel, either, but belonged to the imperial army. True soldiers never run from the enemy. Unless," added he, recollecting his own haste in making for the mountain-retreat a few days since—"unless they have business that calls them away."

"Then you had business calling you to the mountains the time we all ran from Toa Aw?" suggested one of his listeners.

"Yes, I had," replied he, unblushingly: "it was my duty then to find a safe place for the weak and the feeble. I hurried on ahead to select the best and safest spot, and found it, too, or none of you would have been here to-day alive and safe."

than the most of it shaven and the rest braided in a cue. The cue is the Mantchu Tartar custom, and not the Chinese before the country was conquered by its present rulers.

“Well did you lead us,” said one; “only we could hardly keep up with you to know where you meant to take us.”

The people repaired as best they could the walls of their home, but were unable to make the place as strong as it had been. Sentinels were stationed, as before, to keep watch and to warn the people of the approach of enemies.

Before many weeks a sentinel came running in and reported that a band of men—rebels, he said—were approaching the place. Boasters were at once wanting, but fugitives were plenty, and the people hurried away to the mountains. But, as there was no pursuit made by the supposed soldiers, the flying villagers stopped, and some were sent back to see whether the report of the sentinel was true. No enemy was seen in or about the lau, and it was made clear that either the supposed rebels had been seen by the imagination of the sentinel or else they had gone by without disturbing Toa Aw. The people came back to the village, and a few to their boasting. But the man who had promised to do great things had little to say. When he was asked why he did not tell the people

what to do, he replied that he had told them and all had obeyed. His purpose was to get the old and the feeble out of the way first, that the strong and the brave might have nothing to hinder when they undertook to punish the rebels as they deserved.

“But why not stand and fight for the old and the feeble while they were escaping, instead of compelling them to hasten to the mountains first?” was asked. “Why not let them see how brave some of their friends are, and how able to fight for them?”

“It is the place of the brave first to care for the weak,” was the answer. “When that is done, then the soldier can fight with more freedom.”

“But why did not you come back the other time after you had led others to a place of safety? Then you could have fought with freedom.”

“Why should I?” asked he. “The rebels would have been away; they remained only a few hours.”

“But you might have turned back as soon as you saw that we were approaching a place of safety.”

“Ah!” said the man, after a moment’s thought; “brave men will not throw away the lives their friends soon may need. My life is the property of those whom I must protect. It may be a pleasure for me to meet and destroy an enemy, but by so doing I might be injured and unable to protect others when most needed. I must care for myself in order to take care of others.”

The people enjoyed hearing this man talk, and he probably fancied that they believed him. He never proved himself very brave, though he had excellent opportunities, for the village was attacked by rebels more than once.

At the end of the rebellion, Toa Aw, like many other places in the line taken by rebel or imperial troops, was little better than a ruin. The people, however, escaped capture, if they did lose most of their property. The town was rebuilt in part, but the old lau-form was not completely restored. The people, like most others in China, were glad of peace, caring little on which side victory rested. The Chinese are not, as a rule, loyal to their nation and their government; nor is this

strange: they have not much worth their loyalty.

The wound Soe received when he with the others first escaped from pursuers did not heal readily. The remedies were not of the best, and the wound was a peculiar one. His foot became permanently lame, and always had, as it still has, a running sore, reminding him of the time he ran for his life from the rebels.

This Soe, when the rebels attacked Toa Aw, was yet a young man and one of the wealthiest men in the village. Of a generous nature, he was always doing kindly acts to others, and had won the good-will and love of nearly, if not quite, all in the place. His very name—*Hia*, or “brother”—given to him by the people, proved the respect and love they had for him. They were willing to listen to his advice and accept his counsel when the advice and counsel of older men were ignored. A noble-hearted man, and as liberal as he was noble, it is not strange that Soe became the leading man of Toa Aw.

Soe had friends and relatives in the village of Thau Pau, and a number of years

after the close of the rebellion, when he was visiting his friends there, he was surprised to hear his friend Liong tell of the new foreign religion, of which Liong had learned in the city of Ha Bun. Soe listened to the story, and wondered. That it was a new religion he did not deny, nor did he deny that it was a good one for foreigners, but he was unwilling to accept it as his own.

Liong told how he and Gan had gone to the city to be healed of disease, and there had heard the new and strange doctrine. He told, too, of its wonderful effects on men—how it went right to the heart, and how it seemed like medicine to heal and make the heart pure.

Soe listened, but shook his head. It might be good for foreigners, but hardly for Chinese, who for so many centuries had worshiped other gods. How could he give up the worship of his ancestors? How would he dare desert their spirits in the unseen world and leave them to suffer and starve, without an earthly friend to care for their wants? No; he would not do as Liong had done—give up the religion of his fathers for that

of foreigners. In vain did Liong press the truth on him; Soe determined not to listen—or, at least, not to heed. But those were strange stories about the great God so loving the world as to give his only-begotten Son to die for sinners, and about that Saviour coming to the world and living among men that he might teach them and lead them back to God, the true God. But were not the gods of China true gods? He had been taught so. Must he unlearn all the lessons of childhood? No; he would not. The old religion that had been good enough for his fathers was good enough for him. It is true it had not such evidences of love on the part of the gods to men, but it was the religion of his native land, of his fathers, and he would cling to it.

Not often did the two meet and have an opportunity to speak of the new religion before persecution began in Thau Pau. The opponents of the new doctrine tried to prevent those interested in it from worshiping the foreign God in the village, and compelled them to go out into the fields on the Sabbath to hold meetings. Later the

hatred to the Christians became so great that they were driven altogether from the village, and were forced to seek safety in the distant Foo city, where there were a number of Christians and a church.

Soe had tried to prevent the persecution by pleading both with the Christians to give up outward worship of the foreign God and with the persecutors to allow the Christians to believe and obey a doctrine that was harmless to all but themselves. His efforts with both parties had been in vain; the Christians became exiles, and their property was taken by those who had driven them away.

When Soe beheld the sacrifice made by the Christians for their faith, he was moved; it was a new revelation to him. To see men and women for a new religion—and that a foreign one, too—give up home, friends, all they possessed, and go out penniless, homeless and friendless, was something of which Soe had never heard. He could not understand it. Something more than he had ever felt or known impelled them to this sacrifice. He knew that it was not a mere fancy that led Liong to forsake all, whatever might

have prompted the others. Liong, like himself, was one of the leading men of his village, was the owner of much of the property in and around Thau Pau, and, more than that, Liong was a man who liked honor and wished to be a leader. He was proud and haughty—far more so than Soe—and for Liong to forsake all and become an exile on account of a new religion was more than Soe could understand. Nor could others understand the obstinacy, as they called it, of the Christians.

“It is strange,” said Soe to some of his friends in Toa Aw one day as he told of the persecution and the exile of the Christians. “Why they could not let the people who harmed no one but themselves remain and worship whom they would I cannot understand. If men desert the worship of the gods, that is a matter for the gods to attend to, and not for men to punish. They who turn away from the gods must expect to lose the gods’ favor, and that should be punishment enough, without others of their own kind turning against and robbing those whom the gods have given over to evil.”

“You must not forget,” said the other,

“that the gods may allow evil to come upon those who turn from them, and that that same evil may reach and harm the faithful. True worshipers must let the gods see that they are faithful by allowing no enemies of the idols to remain in the place. No town is safe with an enemy in it. At any time such an enemy may turn the whole place over to those who might ruin it. It was right to drive the enemies of the gods from Thau Pau.”

“Perhaps it was,” sighed Soe, “but I would have let them remain a while to see whether injury came to the place through them. It was cruel to drive from home and rob of all they possessed men who merely worshiped what they believe to be the true God.”

The exile of his friends and their patience while in exile, their willingness to give up all rather than the new doctrine and the foreign God, had an effect on Soe not only, but on others as well; and that impression did not pass away.

CHAPTER V.

THE GIRLS' SCHOOL.

WHEN the seminary was completed, there was a thought in the minds of missionaries as well as of Christian Chinese about a school for girls. The education of girls was anything but a Chinese idea, yet the entrance of the gospel proved it to be a necessity if China is to become a Christian nation. Missionaries soon became convinced of this, and following them in opinion were not a few of the more thoughtful native Christians. The difficulty seemed to be to know *how* to educate and how best *to use* such education. Merely to have girls go to school and then marry, not using their education for the good of others, was not what was desired. In China nearly every girl is married or engaged before she is twenty years of age. A single woman on the shady side of twenty-five with no prospects of a husband

is almost unknown there. Even widows are not plenty, as they have more chances of marrying than have the same class in America. The simple fact is that in China there are not enough maidens to go round. Bachelors are plenty, old maids almost unknown. For this there are two reasons: many female infants are killed to save the trouble and cost of bringing them up; boy-babies are never killed for this reason, and many of the wealthier men have more than one wife. Thus a woman who can devote her life to the welfare and training of others is seldom found.

We may sneer at those whom we call "old maids," but we little think what our country would be without them. Nobler women than some of the unmarried ladies of America never blessed a nation. Devoted to the welfare of others rather than of themselves, they are willing to do the work that others cannot or will not do. In China a woman's mission is supposed to be that of a wife and mother only; too often it is the life of a mere slave. Never to have been married would have been a far greater

blessing than to have had a husband. But that is something that Americans need not be told. Why teach people lessons from other nations that they may learn at home?

For a young woman in that land of strange customs to go to school as a teacher might be to disgrace herself. A young lady must not be seen in the streets, nor is it quite respectable for her to engage in any other than household duties, embroidery, and the like. True, she might take a few pupils to her home, if girls; yet none but small girls, according to custom, are allowed to go on the streets. Nor is this merely a custom: it is a matter of safety.

Difficulties more than need here be presented are in the way of the education of women in China, but they are difficulties that must be, and in time will be, overcome. To have the wives of preachers educated and able to teach in their homes, their husbands receiving salary enough to afford household help, would be an aid; to have elderly women become teachers and have schools for girls and women would be a still greater aid; but some must go against

Chinese custom and opinion: some women must devote their lives to educating their own sex, and go about among the women at their homes to teach them to read and to proclaim to them the gospel. Chinese custom shuts woman within her home; that custom must be broken, or the Christianizing of the people cannot be accomplished. The younger women may not meet together, and are unable to hear the truth from the preacher except in the immediate vicinity of the chapel. Until the wives and mothers are converted the conversion of China must be done over again with each new generation. The husbands may be led to the Saviour as they grow to manhood, yet the heathen mothers will see that the children grow up in idolatry.

“What is the use of teaching women to read?” asked a woman of Leng Tso one day as several of them were gathered in a Christian family in Ha Bun. “It will not help them to cook their husbands’ food better or take better care of the children. It is only a waste of time.”

“Not to teach women makes them little

better than buffaloes," replied the Bible-woman. "We keep those animals fastened by a rope and by a ring in the nose and lead them as we choose. We tie them to a stake where we will or lead them to such water as we choose, and allow them no choice at all as to food or drink. If we neglect them, they must thirst and starve. So it is with those who cannot read the truth itself: they are like tied buffaloes, and are led by the nose where the preacher will; and if he neglect, they must suffer. If he give wrong food, if he teach what is not truth, they cannot tell that it is false, because they cannot go to God's book and see."

"But we must trust to the preachers who are taught how to teach us. They study the holy book; and if they do not tell what it teaches, the foreign pastors will find it out and stop them."

"How will the foreign pastors who do not once in a hundred times hear what these teach know unless we tell? and how shall we know but that it is all truth if we have not read the Bible?" asked Leng Tso.

"Our husbands will tell us," was the

reply. "They hear, and many of them can read somewhat."

"Many men cannot read, and very few can read enough to be able to read all the Bible," said the Bible-woman. "And what are those women to do whose husbands are not believers? What shall be done for the many thousands of our nation whose husbands do not hear the gospel or do not care to believe it? Shall such be left to perish? Many of them, if they could hear, no doubt would believe; the doctrine is just what they need. They are sad, and their hearts long for something; that something is the truth of God's book. They never come to hear the doctrine because they know nothing about it, and no one goes to tell them. Our Saviour says, 'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature;' and here, right at our homes, are the thousands who have never heard one of us say a word about the true God."

"We cannot help that," answered the woman. "We tell our friends, and cannot go all through the land to tell strangers. God does not expect us to leave our families

to suffer that we may preach the gospel to all. Besides, it would not be wise nor right for a woman—unless one like yourself—to do it.”

“That may be,” responded Leng Tso, “and just such ones as I am should go. Yet where are such? There are a few women who might, but they have not been taught; they cannot read, and how could they teach others and read God’s message to them? We must have schools to teach such. Then we need to have the pastors’ wives and the preachers’ wives able to read to the women and teach them.”

“What! and leave their families,” spoke another woman, in surprise, “while they went around teaching?”

“They need not leave their families,” answered the Bible-woman. “Women often visit the wives of pastors and preachers; why could not they visit to hear the truth?”

“Who would teach such women?” was asked. “It will not do to have men teach, and there are no women who know enough to do so.”

“Why not have some old man to teach?”

spoke Leng Tso. "It is indeed a sad fact that we have very few women who are able to teach; but fit some women to do it, and then we shall not need men to do the work. We must not think that our customs are perfect. If custom says it is wrong to allow a woman to learn to read when a man is the teacher, let us see if the custom itself be right. When we became Christians, we became the servants of God, not of customs. I serve God rather than custom."

"How can the girls and the women come to school?" was asked. "It is not safe for them to go through the streets each day. How can there be such a school? If custom does not forbid, bad men may hinder."

"I do not know how that can be managed," replied the Bible-woman, "but the foreign pastors no doubt will know."

"Where will the school be, if one is opened?" inquired a woman. "Will a new house like the young men's school be put up?"

"That I cannot tell," said Leng Tso. "I have heard Mrs. Minturn speak about it to the women, but she did not say. She asked the wife of one of the pastors if the old

school where the young men studied could not be used for a while."

"What! that building?" inquired a young woman. "Why, that is not far from the homes of several girls who might go to school each day without going into the streets at all."

"I do not know where it will be or when it will be opened," said Leng Tso; "but I believe that the foreign pastors mean to begin such a school soon. Mrs. Minturn said so a few days ago; and when she said it, she shut her lips so closely that I knew she meant it."

"That is true," added one who had quietly listened. "When Mrs. Minturn speaks in that way, something follows soon after. Mrs. Minturn is not like Middle-Kingdom women: what she says she always means."

There was ground for the rumor among the native Christians that a girls' school was soon to be started, for the mission had already taken measures for opening such a school.

Few plans on mission ground are carried out before there has been much deliberation. First the missionaries deliberate before they

ask for the money, and then the society at home takes a full amount of deliberation before the money is granted. Happy is the society, and twice happy the mission, if Christian people have not been so deliberate in giving that the money is wanting when it is decided to grant it.

It was this lack of money that made the mission in Ha Bun hesitate about beginning a girls' school. Appeals and arguments many and urgent had been sent to the Church at home, but the dollars needed did not come; promises of dollars in the future did not come. The home Church may have regarded a girls' school as a fancy of the brain of missionaries with peculiar notions. But the mission was not to be checked in what it deemed a work of almost vital interest.

“If we could start the seminary, why can we not start this school?” asked Mrs. Par-
ton, the wife of the young missionary. “I am sure the society would send on the money in time.”

“Yes, but when would that time come?” inquired her husband. “It will not do to wait until the millennium.”

“Oh, you know that I don't mean after many years, but before many months,” responded the wife. “I wish I were rich: I would build the school myself.”

“I wish you were rich, for then we would build it together,” spoke the husband.

“What do you mean?” inquired Mrs. Parton.

“Are not we one? and would not your riches be mine? Did not you promise to share with me all you are and have?” asked he.

“I am willing to share all; yes, and I am ready to give you the largest half of the mosquitoes and the roaches. Those, I suppose, are part of my lot here, and to three-fourths of that lot you are welcome. But they seem to let you alone and vent their ill-will on me.”

“Perhaps they know that you and I are one, and, as you are the one that suits them, they may regard me a nonentity. But seriously, Winnie, it will not do for the mission to undertake building a girls' school now. The home society is already in debt, and we dare not ask for more money. Cannot you think

of some plan by which the old seminary building may be of service?"

"What! that wretched old set of rooms and stairways and cuddy-holes? I suppose we might make it do. But we will need money to carry on the work after it is begun. Will the mission allow us that?"

"I am afraid there is none to spare. Since I have been made treasurer I have tried to see if some money from the appropriations could not be saved in different ways, but have yet to find where a single dollar can be kept back. If I know nothing else, I know about economy; for I was professor of it during my four years in college and three in seminary. I see no way in which the treasury can let one dollar go for anything new without making some other work suffer."

"What can we do?" asked the young wife, almost desponding.

"I suppose we can whistle," replied the husband; "that is what we boys used to do when we wanted to keep up our courage."

"And we girls prayed," said the wife, with a twinkle in her eye.

“You are right, Winnie. We can, and we should, pray more than we have about this school. We prayed about the other, and it came.”

“Yes, after all did what they could.”

“That is what we will do now. But when the load cannot be lifted, why tug at it?”

“Stand by it, and call for help.”

“Right again. We will stand by that girls' school and— No, I won't say it. We will stand by it and ask the Lord as we have never prayed before to help us to lift it from the ground by sending along some strong friend to lend a shoulder. I agree with you and Mrs. Minturn—so do the rest of the mission—that the girls' school must come next, but let us have a little breathing-spell before we go at it.”

“Yet while breathing you can talk and help plan, can you not?”

“‘Talk’? Why, I am ready for that any time; it is the *work* that troubles me. I can talk now almost as easily as a woman.”

“I wish you were able to say as well too.”

“I do not wish to speak of my good qual-

ities, but expect you to notice them without my speaking of them."

"Because I did not find that good quality, I wished to remind you as gently as possible of its absence. But pardon me: I wish now to lay aside joking and talk seriously. Is there nothing we can do to get money with which to begin the school?"

"I can at present think of no way to raise the money. But there is another consideration: if we begin, we must go on. To begin the school will require a steady outlay. Money to begin it is not enough. Where is the money to come from after we have begun, if the home society does not adopt it?"

"Will not they adopt it if we begin and show how necessary it is? But if they will not, I believe we can find the money some way. Only let us start, and I am sure we can continue."

"That is good faith, Winnie, but poor business."

"Are not we to work by faith and to use our faith constantly?"

"Yes, but you will find that faith fails

when the dollars do not come. Dollars help faith wonderfully even in mission work."

"The dollars will come, I believe, and when we need them."

"I am glad to hear you say so. I think they are needed just now, and as soon as they come, or the first installment comes, I, for one, am ready to say, 'Let us begin.'"

"They will come; see if they do not," said the wife, with a determined look. "But let us not forget to pray while we wait."

A few days after, the young missionary was disturbed in his study by his wife entering with a paper, which she handed to him:

"There! I've tried and tried to write a letter about that school, and cannot succeed. If that will do, I mean to send it; if it will not, I don't know what to do."

Mr. Parton, taking the paper, saw that it was a note to a Scotch merchant, and a warm friend of the Partons, living in the place. In the note Mrs. Parton told in a few words her anxiety about a girls' school and her inability to begin it through lack of means, and then asked the merchant if he would help in any way.

After reading the letter the husband said, "That sounds all right, but had you not better consult Mrs. Minturn first? Her judgment is better than ours—than mine, at least."

"I have talked with her," was the reply, "and she is ready for anything of the kind; but I don't wish to show this to her. I am afraid to let her see what I write; she could do it so much better."

"Then why not let her do it?"

"She told me to try because Mr. Brown is so warm a friend of ours. She said that a note from me would have more effect than if it came from her."

"How humble you ladies are! But don't send that note yet; take a day or two to think over it."

"Why should I think over what I have decided to do?"

"One of the reasons I would suggest is that Mr. Brown is away and will not be back for a week or two. The note will keep as well here as in his office. Some one else might read it there, or, seeing your handwriting, might say that you are corresponding with other gentlemen."

“Well, what of it? That is what I am doing, after letting you see what I write. I am not ashamed of the object of the note. But excuse me, Avon, for replying harshly: I have bothered my head so over this that it aches and I am tired.”

“Then just lay away the note for a few days and rest your mind. You have started your part; you have done what you can thus far. Wait until you can do more.”

Mrs. Parton did not leave the matter with the note. She had another Scotch friend, also a merchant, whose wife was a very warm and confidential friend of Mrs. Parton. Both had come to the country at the same time, and both were young, so were specially drawn together. To this friend, Mrs. Campbell, Mrs. Parton told her story, and soon interested the good Scotch lady in the work almost as much as was the young missionary herself. Both spoke to Mr. Campbell and urged him to aid the enterprise with money. He promised to think of it and, if able, to give something.

While this anxiety was at its height, but before a dollar had been given, a steamer was

seen entering the port. Soon after she came to anchor word was sent around to the foreign community that there was a sick lady on board who would like to come ashore and remain in some home while her husband went farther with the steamer to attend to business. When it was told that this lady was the wife of Mr. Smith, the publisher of one of the most prominent papers in China, no one called on the vessel to invite either him or his wife to share the hospitality of the homes on shore. This man was the most bitter foreign opponent of missions in China. His paper was always open to assaults upon missionaries and ready to publish the most absurd stories about them, but anything in their favor was left out of the paper. Even replies to attacks upon missionaries could with difficulty find a place in its columns. Mr. Smith was disliked for other reasons, and for those reasons none of the foreign community called to invite him and his wife to their homes while the vessel was in the port. Though the steamer remained in the harbor nearly three days, Mr. Smith and his wife stayed on board until the day

before sailing. Then, when it was evident that others did not intend inviting Mrs. Smith ashore, Mr. Minturn proposed that she be invited to share the mission-home. It was just like Mrs. Minturn to prompt such a suggestion, and the mission was ready to have it carried out.

“I will give up my room,” said Mr. Wagner; “it is larger than the spare-room, and will be lighter and more cool and airy.”

“If she is half so warm in her hatred of missionaries as is her husband, she will need plenty of cool air,” suggested Mr. Parton. “I will feel like borrowing a couple of large punkahs* from some of the merchants to keep me cool.”

“All wives are not like their husbands,” spoke Mrs. Parton, gently.

“As we have personal proof here,” replied her husband as he gave his wife’s arm a sly pinch.

“No, they do not pinch. But I wish, if pinching is a necessity to you, that you would by way of variety try your own flesh.”

* Immense fans suspended from the ceiling and worked by servants.

“Did not the minister—and he your own pastor, too—say that we are one flesh? Am I not trying the pinching on my own flesh, then, as you suggest?”

“There are times when one and one make two. I suppose we will hardly dare speak of mission work when Mrs. Smith is here.”

“I shall not trouble her with anything relating to our work,” spoke Mrs. Minturn, “but will not refrain from speaking about it to any member of the mission. It may do her good to hear about the work.”

“Perhaps she will become interested in it, too,” suggested Mr. Wagner. “But it will seem strange to have here in a mission family the wife of the most bitter enemy of missions in China. Who will go to invite Mrs. Smith?—I think, Mr. Minturn, that you, being the senior member, are the one who should do so.”

“I suppose I should go,” replied Mr. Minturn; “and I have thought it would be well to ask Mr. Smith to come with his wife. We might invite them to tea, and he will then have an opportunity to see where his wife is and what she is likely to have to eat.”

“What if they decline to accept the offer of hospitality?” asked Mr. Parton. “I would hesitate before accepting an invitation to have my wife stay with those I had steadily abused.”

“Perhaps Mr. Smith’s paper is bitter against missions because it pays best to be so,” suggested Mrs. Minturn. “He may find his paper read mostly by those who hate Christianity, and to keep their patronage opposes missions.”

“That is a charitable way of looking at it, but it shows a lack of principle in him, and, more than that, it shows that there are in China a large number of people from Christian countries who are enemies to religion,” said Mr. Parton.

“Why is it so, do you suppose?” asked the young missionary.

“I fear it is because such people are angry to find the same truths and the same gospel and the same restraints pressing upon them here as at home. It does seem that some men come here to get free from all religious restraint, and are enraged when they cannot find such freedom.”

Mr. Minturn went on board the vessel, and his invitation was gladly accepted by both Mr. and Mrs. Smith. The lady was not very ill, but had been suffering from seasickness.

Both Mr. Smith and his wife accompanied Mr. Minturn, and at once became guests at the mission-home. That the newspaper-man was timid none who knew him would have suspected until he appeared in that mission family. He did not know what to say or to do except sit still. He did that, but he looked around; and if any object in the room escaped his notice, it was certainly very small.

When the youngest missionary began talking to the publisher about newspapers, the stranger was at home, but seemed to wonder who that young man was and what he did at a mission-house. And when the conversation drifted to science and the young missionary told him of some late discoveries in the scientific world, Mr. Smith began to obtain a new revelation; he had insisted that missionaries knew nothing of science—indeed, nothing outside of their work. But when Mr. Minturn pointed out the tendency

of certain movements in the political world of China and spoke of the effect of such movements, Mr. Smith admitted that such seemed to be the tendency, though he had not thought of it before. Gradually he became talkative, and proved himself a pleasant guest. What were his opinions of the missionaries may never be known, but all that afternoon and evening he seemed to be receiving new revelations about them.

Mrs. Smith proved to be a genial guest. She accompanied the two mission ladies to their work, and seemed to take a real interest in all they did. She learned to talk intelligently and earnestly of their plans. In about two weeks her husband returned, and was again for a few hours a guest at the mission-home. As the steamer left the same day of her entering port, his stay was short, and with its close Mrs. Smith departed. When Mr. Smith's offer of money to pay for his wife's entertainment was politely but decidedly refused, the man found a large addition to the revelation concerning missionaries. He had in his paper insisted that they cared for money only, and here they

had actually refused to accept what was fairly and honestly due them. He was too polite to insist on payment, and left the mission-home saying that he would be glad if he could in any way return the most acceptable and unexpected favors of the missionaries. Soon after his return twenty-five dollars were sent to Mrs. Minturn and Mrs. Parton by Mrs. Smith to use for starting the girls' school, or for any other work connected with the mission that they might select. Thus the first money had come, but from an unexpected source.

When Mrs. Parton showed her husband the money and told whence it came, he was surprised, but said,

“So the Lord has begun to hear your prayers; yet who would have thought that he would get the first twenty-five dollars out of the pocketbook of the worst enemy of missions in China?”

“Not the worst enemy now, I am sure,” spoke the wife, “for I believe that Mrs. Smith is a friend to missions and will influence her husband. But we have the first money, and it has come without our asking,

except from the Lord. Did not I tell you that the dollars would come?" added she, triumphantly. "Here is the first installment, and you will soon see another."

"Give me a woman's faith, after all, and a man's work to back it," added Mr. Parton. "I am glad that your faith has begun to reap its reward. You and Mrs. Minturn have believed the money would come, and I did too, only I was all the time afraid it wouldn't. And now that you have twenty-five dollars, what do you propose doing?"

"Keeping you and the rest of the mission to your word. You, at least, said that as soon as the first money came you would say 'Begin.' Now say it."

"Begin. There! I've said it. Now what next?"

"Oh, but you meant more than that: you meant that you would advise opening the school."

"But see how the matter stands. You have twenty-five dollars. You will need to hire a teacher, furnish rooms, and probably be obliged to board some of the girls. How far will twenty-five dollars go toward that?"

“Far enough to enable us to start, and that is what we wish.”

“Yes, but how long can you keep on?”

“Until another installment comes.”

“Faith again. Oh, a man has no answer to a woman’s faith, and he may as well give up or turn the matter over to the mission, as I must do; for really, Winnie, I cannot give money out of the treasury unless all agree.”

“Wait, Mr. Treasurer, until we call on you for money. The Lord has sent us this twenty-five dollars; and if the mission can’t spare it, he will send us more as we need it.”

The money of Mrs. Smith surprised the mission and compelled a new discussion of the question of the school. The arguments of the treasurer were regarded as sound by all but the two ladies, and these saw no reason why the first steps should not be taken toward opening the girls’ school. Mrs. Minturn was not as sanguine as Mrs. Parton that money would soon come, but the note had been sent to Mr. Brown and Mr. and Mrs. Campbell had been visited again, with more encouragement.

Before the mission had decided, a note from

Mr. Brown came to Mrs. Parton, and in it were twenty-five dollars.

“There!” said she to her husband as she entered his study holding the money in one hand and the note in the other; “here is the second installment, and unless you men decide soon the third will be received. We have fifty dollars already; why not begin?”

“That does look more like it,” responded Mr. Parton. “Fifty dollars, with more to come soon, as you believe—and will soon compel me to believe, too—makes me think of saying to you ladies, ‘Go on.’”

A day or two later a note from Mrs. Campbell was received saying that her husband would in a short time give twenty-five dollars for the girls' school, but just at present could not spare the money.

“Now we have the third installment,” said Mrs. Parton—“at least, it is promised, and as good as received. What will you gentlemen say?”

“I say, ‘Begin the school,’” spoke Mr. Wagner. “We can begin it on a small scale, and enlarge as able. You may have my Chinese teacher for a while, as I am going

away to visit the stations in the country and shall be away a considerable time. So there will be no salary of teacher to pay. Then I will pay for putting up seats and desks in the girls' schoolroom."

"Oh, Mr. Wagner, if you can spare your teacher for a while, it will be exactly what we need," spoke Mrs. Minturn. "He is a Christian, and an elderly man and an excellent teacher. But we would like to know if the mission will allow us the use of the old building once used as a boys' school. I suppose the people who occupy part of it will be willing to give it up, as they have its use only until it is needed."

With one consent the building was appropriated to the purposes of the girls' school, with all of the furniture that could be found in it belonging to the mission. After no little consultation, the plans were laid and arrangements made for opening the school as soon as the place could be put in order. In due season it was opened with several day-scholars and some boarders who lived too far away to come each day. Thus the school was started, and the first money had been given

by a man who had been for years the most determined and outspoken enemy of missions, perhaps, in the whole of China.

It may not be amiss to say here that Mr. Smith's paper experienced a wonderful change after its owner returned with his wife from his business-trip, in the kindly spirit shown to missionaries.

CHAPTER VI.

WORK IN THE GIRLS' SCHOOL.

WHEN the school was started in the old building, many of the older women of the city, especially those who were Christians, visited the house to take a look and have a bit of gossip with the matron, and with the girls themselves. All were inquisitive to see what kind of an affair a school for girls was. Among the earlier visitors was, of course, the Bible-woman. She, however, came not so much from curiosity as to see the carrying into reality of the hope and prayer of her heart. As she met the teacher and matron and saw the girls in their room, and saw all there was to see of the school, she was thankful that it had so good a beginning. Many were the kind words the girls received from the warm-hearted woman, and not a few were the bits of advice she

gave. The girls were glad to welcome Leng Tso, for she was one who had not forgotten girls' feelings, who could enter into sympathy with all their likes and dislikes, and who was ready to give a word of encouragement or of caution when needed.

"Let me see your sleeping-room," said she, on her first visit to the school; and when she saw the neatly-kept beds and the clean room, she said, "Ah! how much nicer this is than it might be if you had only a ground floor under your feet, and not even a bed on which to lie! The foreign teachers give you better than very many of our people have in their homes. Learn to keep the beds and the room nice and neat, and thus show that you can take care of what is given to your charge. Let the foreign ladies see, too, that girls of the Middle Kingdom can keep rooms as clean as *they* can. But who takes care of the sweeping and the beds? Perhaps you do not."

"The matron sweeps most of the time," was the answer, "but each of us takes care of her own bed. Mrs. Minturn says some day we are to have a new house for the

school and it will be much better than this, and every two girls—or, at most, four girls—will have a room to themselves. Will not that be nice? She says that then we will be expected to take care of our rooms altogether. I will be glad to have a room to myself or with some friend; that will be like the young men in the large school. Have you ever been in their rooms?"

"No," answered the Bible-woman, "though I have visited their school. But they take care of their rooms themselves, and I am told that some of the young men keep them very neat. You girls must not let the young men prove neater than you."

"I wish I could see their rooms and the school when they are away," spoke a little miss; "I would like to see how the school-room looks."

"Who does your cooking?" asked Leng Tso. "Does the matron do it all?"

"Oh no," was the reply; "we must help her and learn ourselves to cook. Mrs. Min-turn says that part of the work of the school is to learn to take care of a home and show others how to do it. The matron said that

we may be teachers or wives of teachers and preachers; then the women would come in to see how well we kept our homes, and would learn from us. But I don't like to cook; I would rather study."

"So would I," spoke up another of the girls. "I wish the matron would do the cooking and let us do the reading; she is too old to read much, and we are too young to do much work."

"But you are to learn," suggested the Bible-woman, "and this is the place in which to learn. The matron is a good cook and knows how to teach you. Some day you will be women and may have homes of your own; then you will wish to know how to cook well."

"I will get a husband who can cook for himself," said one of the girls. "Many men do cooking; why cannot all? It would be such an easy thing then to keep house."

"And who would work and earn the money?" asked Leng Tso.

"Oh, I mean to marry a rich man who will not need to work," came the answer.

"What! would you live in idleness all your

life and do nothing for the good of others?" asked the Bible-woman. "Is that what you are here for?"

"What *are* we here for, I should like to know?" said a quiet young girl. "My mother and father said that, as the foreign teachers want to begin a school for girls, I might go, and so I came; and that is all I know. I came here because they said so. I study and do the work they tell me to do, but I did not know that I was here for anything special."

"As you grow older you will learn what is needed, and then will see, I hope, what you can do and what you are here for. Our people need teachers and women to tell them of the doctrine; if women do not do it, no one can, for you know that the foreign teachers cannot visit your homes. Even preachers of the Middle Kingdom cannot go into your homes and tell your mothers and sisters of the doctrine, so we must have women to do it. Besides, we need women to teach the women of our country how to take better care of their homes, and how to cook and sew and make home happier."

“Are not our homes happy and good?” asked a girl, in amazement.

“Not as happy and good as they may be made, and as we hope your homes will be. It is partly for this that you are here. Then, too, you are to learn about the true God, and be able to tell other women whom you meet about him, and try to bring them to Jesus that they may become his disciples.”

“I mean to be his disciple,” said one of the girls, cheerfully; “I told my mother so, and she said that I might. I mean to go to the inquiry-meetings soon; I am waiting until I can answer the questions better. I mean to be a Christian as soon as I know enough to keep the commands and obey the doctrine.”

“Well, that is one of the things you are here for,” responded the Bible-woman. “The teacher will teach you not only to read, but to read the Bible, and he will teach you how to become a disciple of Jesus. Then you are to learn to teach others.”

“Will you stay to worship to-night?” asked one of the girls as Leng Tso was about leaving them. “We all sing, and

those who can read follow what is read ; and then the teacher, or sometimes the pastor of the church, comes in and prays with us. We like the singing, and all the rest too. You will like it if you stay. Teacher Lee is so kind, and prays as if we were all his children. Will you stay ?”

“ Perhaps so,” replied Leng Tso as she started to have a talk with the matron.

“ If you do not come to worship, you must come see us again,” said one of the girls ; “ we want to see you and have you talk to us. And will you please ask the matron if she will cook and let us study ?”

To this last request Leng Tso made no reply, but she promised to visit them again.

The matron and Leng Tso were well acquainted, and the Bible-woman was glad to see her friend there.

“ How many girls have you all together ?” asked she. “ In the school I see only nine. Do not some come and go home each day ?”

“ Yes,” replied the matron ; “ there are nine that do not stay here to sleep. We have eighteen in all, and shall probably have two or three more before long. We

cannot take many more, as there is not enough room."

"I wish we had a large building," spoke the Bible-woman, "to take all who come. I wish we could have a school for a hundred girls."

"'A hundred'!" cried the matron, dropping her work. "What would we do with them all? Who would take care of them? When all eighteen are together, they make noise enough; I do not know how it would be with a hundred. I could not cook for half that number; it seems that I have now more than I can do. But I shall get used to it, I suppose, only it does not seem the place for me."

"Not the place for you? Why, you are the very one to be here. Who will attend to such work if you and I do not? Here you are teaching the women who a few years later will be teaching many others, and they in turn others still, and thus your work will go on long after you are gone."

"Teaching others—yes; but what? I am only teaching them to make beds and to cook and wash and do housework. If I

were teaching them the doctrine, that would be of some account; but this is nothing."

"Why, do you think that the gospel is for the soul alone?" asked Leng Tso, in surprise. "Indeed, it is meant to make the body as well as the soul happier and better. Has it not done that for you and me? And shall we not try to make it have even more effect on others?"

"I did not think of that," replied the matron; "but it does not seem to me that I am doing much. I want to see these girls become disciples of the Lord, but what am I doing? What can I do to help that? I am here to teach them to cook and take care of household affairs."

"That is not all: you are here to show them what a Christian woman is and what she should do. You are to be an example for these girls and show them by your life what their lives should be. They will watch and imitate you; of that you may be certain. None of them are disciples of Christ, are they?"

"None yet, though two or three have spoken as if they wish to be. I hope all

will soon become believers in the Lord. But do you think that they will watch and imitate me?"

"Surely they will, and by walking aright you may lead them in the way to the Saviour. Then, too, by speaking a word now and then, you may lead them to think of the Lord."

"That is true, and I have done that, but it is so little to do that it seemed nothing."

"Remember that Jesus said of the woman, 'She hath done what she could;' and that is all he expects you to do. If you do what you can, you will bring some—it may be all—of these girls to the Lord. What a blessing that will be!"

"If I might bring but one, I should be thankful. Yet it is difficult to work so as to please them."

"Better think of making them good and faithful women. It is well not to have their ill-will; but if you try too hard to please, you may fail. Think rather of pleasing God and working for their good."

"They want me to do all the cooking and sweeping; they say that they are here to

study, and I to work. Now, I would gladly do all the work if I could, and I am strong; but Mrs. Minturn and Mrs. Parton say that the girls must do some of the cooking, and that they must make their own beds and take turns in sweeping the rooms. The girls do not want me to make them do it; they coax me and promise many things if I will listen. When I tell them what the teachers have said, they say that the teachers will not know unless I tell them, and that I must not tell. Now, what should I do? I wish to do what will please all, and I wish to do right."

"Do right," said Leng Tso, decidedly. "Do what Mrs. Minturn says. She wishes the girls to become fitted to take care of their own homes. No matter what they may ask and promise, you are to do what Mrs. Minturn says. What would she think if she should come in unexpectedly and find that you not only take charge of the work, but do it all? You could not tell her a lie."

"That is what I have thought. I do not wish to deceive her, and yet I do not wish to displease the girls. No, I will not tell a lie, for I have not forgotten what the pastor told

us about Ananias and Sapphira. I do not want to drop down dead."

"But it is not from fear that we are to do our duty; instead, we are to do it because we love God. Don't forget to teach the girls how wicked it would be for you to deceive Mrs. Minturn. Tell them that God would see and know, and some day would ask you to give an account of your deceiving Mrs. Minturn."

"We must teach them constantly, and hope to see them improve slowly. I have been with the girls only a short time, yet have seen an improvement in them."

"Are not all of them from Christian families?"

"No; though the parents of nearly all of them go to the worship in the chapels, yet some go only occasionally and are far from being followers of Christ. Some have only for a few months heard the doctrine, and such can have given their children little instruction. Some of the girls have no parents, and one of them has been taken by friends and placed here because she had no home."

“Who pays for the food and clothing of such?”

“The foreign pastors. There are several others whose parents cannot afford to give them food here; such the foreign teachers support. Of course those who live at home are here only part of the day, and those who can pay for their dinner here. They do not bring their food along, but all take dinner together, that all may seem alike.”

“Do those who stay only part of the day help at the housework and cooking?”

“Yes; all are taught the same lessons, and they must do the same kind of work. The girls are to learn to become good housekeepers as well as teachers, and all are taught what will best help fit them for such work.”

“Who teaches them to sew, and such kind of work?”

“Mrs. Minturn and Mrs. Parton come in the afternoon and teach what I cannot show them. Mrs. May, who has just returned, will teach them also.”

“But do not they teach other things?”

“Oh yes, many other things. They teach them to read books made by foreign teachers

which use their own characters and our words. Those books are very easy; I can read in them."

"I would rather read our own writing," said Leng Tso, quietly. "But do not you teach the girls to sew and do other things besides cooking and housework?"

"Yes, I help teach them to sew; though, as I said, the foreign teachers teach them. But they also teach the girls to write the foreign characters and to learn the things taught in foreign schools. Then they teach them from the holy book and teach them to sing. Some of the girls are pretty singers."

While the two were talking the gong sounded for evening worship, and the women went to the schoolroom, where the girls had already gathered. Hardly had they seated themselves when the old teacher entered. He was a venerable, fatherly man with a face that made each one like him at first sight.

A brief description of the old teacher may not be amiss here.

Hap Liong was one of the old preachers of the mission. When the school was decided on, it was thought best to get a teacher

who could give the most of his time to the school. This it was certain Mr. Wagner's teacher could not do; for when the missionary returned, he would need his teacher again, so it was deemed best to select at once the man who should remain. None appeared so suited to the position as the old preacher. He was a man of fair education and able to read quite well; besides, he was a man of noble character and principle. He had been a Christian for many years—indeed, was one of the earliest converts of that part of China. Soon after he became a Christian he showed his earnestness by giving all the time he could spare from business to preaching. He was anxious to learn more about the truth, and was a careful student of the Bible and a close observer of the missionaries. This old man had now become too feeble from age and hard work to spend much of his time in going about preaching. To let him feel that he was doing something for the cause he loved, the missionaries had given him the work of holding a daily preaching service in the city, near his home. When the girls' school was opened and the old man

placed there as teacher-in-chief, he was happy. He could yet preach, and in addition to that work might help train the girls for future work in the great cause. More than that, he would to a certain extent be their pastor. It raised the school in the estimation of many to have this venerable man as teacher. In China age is always respected; nowhere is it more so than in the teacher and the guide of youth.

When all were seated and each had a hymn-book, the old man arose and said,

“Now, great family, let us praise God by singing.”

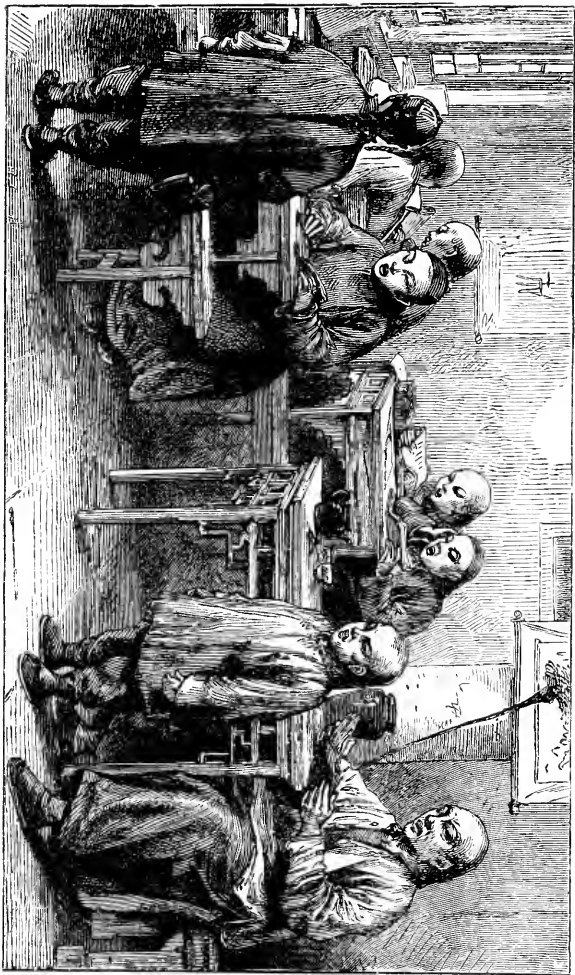
Then the hymn was read. After the reading he sat down, and Hap Liong's voice broke forth in song. The voice was weak and had lost its steadiness, but the other voices soon hid its defects, and a grand chorus of song swelled in the air and went out into the street. Some of the voices were sweet and pure, and some were otherwise; some sang as the tune was, and others as they supposed it might be. All sang. In a Chinese audience of Christians all sing. That all sing the same tune cannot

be asserted, but all love to sing, and sing as well as they can. If they do not all sing on the same key, if some are a half octave too high and others as much too low, most of them seem to care very little for such variety, and enjoy the hymn.

With the close of the song the teacher read a portion of Scripture, and then, in a prayer that seemed like a father's committing his children to God for the night, the old man presented the needs of all at the mercy-seat.

When worship—which often did not close without an additional song or two—was over, the girls, at their leisure, started for their room, and the work for the day was ended.

After breakfast the duties of the day were begun with worship. After a time of work to clean the rooms and part of the building used for the school, all but one of the girls began to study in the schoolroom. One remained away; it was her duty for the week to aid in the tasks about the house and in cooking. Thus each took a week of work instead of giving time entirely to study. To the girls this week of household duty



Chinese School-Room.

The text on this page is extremely faint and illegible. It appears to be a standard page of prose, possibly a chapter or section from a book, but the characters and words cannot be discerned. The page is otherwise blank with some minor scanning artifacts.

was dreaded, and she who could escape deemed herself fortunate.

With this glimpse within the school, we take the reader to the mission-home again. Now that the school was so successfully begun, half the anxiety of the ladies was over; but it would be doing them an injustice to say that they gave no thought about the money needed for the future. While they were carefully devising plans and attempting new measures for making the school more useful they gave the money-question no little thought. When the necessary furniture for schoolroom and household use had been paid for, there was yet something left of the seventy-five dollars for paying the current expenses. But what were a few dollars for carrying on a boarding-school with nine boarders and as many more day-pupils who were partial boarders?

“Now that the school is started, how do you propose keeping it running?” asked Mr. Parton of his wife. “It is not a perpetual-motion machine, I suppose, that when once started will run of itself until worn out.”

“I do not know how we shall get money,” was the answer; “I know we must have it, and before long too. If we pay out all before more comes in, will you lend us for a while from the treasury until we can get money to repay?”

“What security can you give? This firm does not loan money to every business that may ask for the favor.”

“The security is the best possible—the Lord who says, ‘Ask, and ye shall receive.’”

“Well, then, why not apply to your security direct?”

“We have done that, and the money will come, but may not be here on time. I am sure that we shall get it.”

“What is your reason for such assurance?”

“I have told you: we have prayed for it. That is what we did for the money with which to start. It came, did it not?”

“Yes, but, as my memory goes, you did two kinds of asking. First you interested Mrs. Smith in your work, and then declined to take pay for her stay here; then you asked Mr. Campbell, and wrote to Mr. Brown before the money came. In other

words, you used all the methods you could, and asked the Lord to bless them."

"Well, as we have done what we could and got the first three installments, we are waiting for the next three."

"From whom?"

"I don't know. The Lord will show."

"But I think that you should do more than you have done."

"What can we do further?"

"Write to the Church at home."

"Who?"

"You or Mrs. Minturn."

"What! I write to the Church? I could not. How must it be done?"

"If you say you cannot do it before you know how, that is reasonable; but how will it do to learn, and then try to do it?"

"What can I do? I have done all I can."

"You have not written to the Church at home and to the papers, stating your case, telling the story and asking help. That, I believe, will be the way the Lord will answer your prayers: he will direct people to send the money after they know where and for what it is needed."

“What! I write for the papers? Never! I have never done such a thing in my life. How would it look to see my name in print?”

“When I asked you to come to China with me, the same objection might have been offered—your name would get in print and people would talk about you, and all that kind of thing; but you did not hesitate when you saw it to be a duty.”

“Oh, that was different; I meant to go where you did. I did not think of the papers then.”

“So you were willing to do and endure all for the sake of a homely, harum-scarum scamp like myself, and are not you willing to do this for the sake of this school on which you have set your heart, and for the people for whom you are so anxious? Yes,” and the voice was soft and tender—“and for Jesus, who for your sake and mine was willing to be mocked and killed? Winnie, it will be hard to do it, but remember it is for the cause to which we have given our lives and for Him who gave his life for us. You can do it, I know.”

“Oh dear! I cannot. What will my old friends say?”

“Can't say, I am sure. We will put cotton in our ears if they speak loud enough to be heard across the ocean. I hardly imagine we shall need the cotton.”

After thinking for a long time Mrs. Par-ton came to her husband's study, whither he had gone to his work, and, wiping away the tears that were yet coming, she said,

“I will try it; but oh, if you knew how hard it is, you would do it for me. How shall I begin?”

“Tell the story as if to friends whom you would move to think as you do; imagine that you are writing to people who do nothing because they know nothing about that which interests you. Write simply to give them facts as clearly and briefly as possible, and ask them to aid in the Lord's work.”

“Oh, how can I do all that? I don't know how to begin, nor how to write after I have begun, nor how to finish. I wish so much that you would only for this once write the letter.”

“It will be useless if I do, for the Church

will not listen. You received the money from Mr. Campbell and from Mr. Brown; what would I have gotten had I written? Not one *cash*. That will be the way at home."

"But your letter brought the money for the seminary."

"No, but Mr. Minturn and Mr. Wagner pledging their savings for it did the work."

"Why not do the same now?"

"It will not do to go begging on too many errands with the same infant in one's arms, Winnie. The Church would say after a while, 'There is that little-savings story carried around again.' No, that will not do. I can think of no other way to get money than for you or Mrs. Minturn to write to the secretary, and through him appeal to the Church direct. You can do it, and the money will come; see if it does not. My faith is rising now; and when your letter is published, my faith will be up to the high-water mark."

Mrs. Parton went to her room, and after hours of thought and tears, writing meanwhile, she returned with a long letter, which she showed to her husband.

"There!" said she; "I cannot do better. My head aches so now that I can't think nor write another word."

"Then don't. Put the paper here and let us go out for a walk; it will do us both good. And let not a word be said about the letter or the girls' school until to-morrow."

"Why not?"

"Because you have done enough for one day and are tired."

"But I want you to correct and put the letter in shape."

"All right; I will help. But it is past my study-hour now, and I need rest and air; so do you. Come, put on your hat and let us go out."

The two started for a walk; but if Mr. Parton expected that nothing would be said about the girls' school, he missed his expectation. The talk and the fresh air agreed better together than he thought; and when he met a little China boy and asked him gravely if he thought it likely that he would be emperor some day if he went to school each day and studied as hard as possible, the little fellow replied that he did not want to

be an emperor, but wished a kite like his big brother's.

Then Mrs. Parton forgot all about the school.

“What did you ask him such a question for?” inquired she. “I am glad that he gave you such an answer.”

“Why, I thought he ought to be treated about as I was when a boy. People used to tell me to study hard and go to school regularly every day, so that some time I might become President.”

“Well, did you study harder for it?”

“No; why should I? What I wanted was a boat with a sail; that was worth more to me than to be all the Presidents, from George Washington down. I didn't want to be President, for then I would have to stand stiff and starched up like a stick, with lots of people looking on to see how still I could stand or sit; that is what I thought a President was for. But to have a boat—that I knew was worth having, for I could take off shoes and stockings and wade into the water to sail it. There was fun in that.”

Mrs. Parton almost forgot the school before

the walk was half over, and came back rested and willing to wait with the letter for a whole night. The next morning she urged her husband to look over it and correct it. This was done, and in due season the letter was copied ready for the mail. And so it was sent on its way.

The prayers that went with that letter are not recorded on earth, but earnest and anxious were the petitions presented at the throne of grace that the letter, or something, might bring the needed money.

With the next mail came an order for Mr. Parton to draw on the mission for fifty dollars that had been paid into the treasury by one of his friends at home, to be used—so the secretary stated—to buy butter with.

“Well, of all things!” said Mrs. Parton. “What does this mean?”

For a moment the husband thought, and then began laughing as he explained to his wife and the mission; for the arrival of the home mail was a time of gathering of all the members together:

“I wrote to good Mr. Wayland, my dear old friend— But here is a letter from him;

I will read and see if it adds to the explanation."

The letter was read, and the young man continued:

"Yes, it is as I supposed. I wrote to Mr. Wayland that the Chinese did not make butter and all the butter we could buy was at a dollar a pound, and then it was not at all dear—indeed, sometimes had a dollar and a half worth of strength in it. Mrs. Wayland, who is as kind and good as her husband, sends this fifty dollars that we may have good butter to eat."

"But where will you get the good butter in China?" inquired Mr. Wagner.

"I don't know," was the reply, "but the fifty dollars have been sent, and are to my credit, the secretary says. I suppose I will have to buy a churn and milk-pans and then get a cow for Mrs. Parton to make butter from."

"You will milk the cow, of course?" spoke Mrs. Parton.

"Oh no," was her husband's reply. "I will furnish the stock and let you run it for the half. That is the way farmers do, only

I make a little better offer than many give. But we don't need that money, and it has been given to the mission; for if it went for butter, Mrs. Wayland would never forgive us if we did not share it with all. So we may think at our leisure what to do with it."

"You will not need much leisure to think," quickly spoke Mrs. Parton, "as long as the girls' school needs money. I believe that is the fourth installment, Avon. It is double the first three because the school has begun."

"No," said Mrs. Minturn, "that money was given to you, and it would not be fair to your kind friend to hand it over to the mission, even for the school."

"If it be ours, then I suppose we may do what we choose with it," said Mr. Parton, with a twinkle in his eye.

"Certainly," replied both Mr. Minturn and Mr. Wagner.

"Very well. Then, for the sake of peace, I will hand it over to Mrs. Minturn and Mrs. Parton for the girls' school. I may as well do it first as last, or my slumbers will be disturbed by other than dreams."

"I don't care what you say," responded

Mrs. Parton, "if we get the fifty dollars for the school. I know that you want it to go there as much as we do."

So the fifty dollars were given for the use of the school, and a letter of thanks was sent to Mrs. Wayland, with an explanation of the use to which the money was put. And as soon as a reply could come from her another fifty dollars for the school was sent.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Parton's letter reached home and had a different effect from what similar requests from the male members of the mission had had. The letter was published with warm commendation from the secretary. The fact that for less than twenty dollars a girl could be supported and educated in China startled many, and the question was asked by not a few who had now and then a score of dollars a year to give to a good cause, "Why cannot I pay for the support of a girl in China?" Classes in Sabbath-schools considered the matter, and wondered whether or not they could singly or two or three together support a girl in the school in China. Before the letter had been published many days the secretary received

letters from various places enclosing money to support a girl or two girls, or even more, in the Chinese school. Letters were sent to the mission requesting that girls be selected for Sabbath-schools and classes to support. The society at once adopted the school, and ordered the mission to pay a certain amount each year for its support.

When all this news reached the mission in China, there was rejoicing, and none was more thankful than Mrs. Parton. But she was even more surprised than thankful. The fact that her letter, so insignificant as it appeared to her, should have such an effect was beyond her understanding. She little thought, perhaps, that it was not the letter, but the necessities, as the facts showed them, that brought such a response to her appeal. The letter was a simple statement in plain language of the matter, and made so earnestly, yet so modestly, that every one reading it could see that it was written by one who knew of what she was writing and was prompted by one purpose—to elevate and save the people among whom she lived.

“Well, you’ve done it now,” was her hus-

band's remark as the two were alone in their room. "After all, does it not seem that the Lord wanted you to let his people know what he had for them to do where you are?"

"Yes, that seems to be so," she replied; "but I had no idea that the money would come so easily. Who would have thought that a letter—and a letter of mine—would do so much? I am now glad that I wrote it; but had you known what that letter cost me, you would not have insisted on my writing it. I felt as if I would be willing to do anything almost rather than write a letter for publication."

"No doubt of it. But so would many of the timid martyrs rather have done almost anything to save themselves from publicly confessing Christ; yet it was their duty, and they did it. Do you think one of them, when it was all over, regretted that confession?"

"Why, do you think my writing that letter was like confessions of the martyrs?"

"No, it was not martyrdom, nor such confession, but it was doing what you could for Christ; and he has honored your work."

CHAPTER VII.

THE NEW RELIGION AT TOA AW.

WE must go back in our story again to the time of the persecution of the Thau Pau Christians. For several months they remained in exile at the Foo city, but then were allowed to return to their native village, and even to worship God within the place. The people, though bitter against them and their religion, were compelled by the government to allow them to remain in peace in their homes. The property stolen from them was partly returned.

For a while the Christians were very quiet, keeping the Sabbath, however, and worshiping God in their homes, but so as to make little noise. Each Sabbath they met at the home of Liong to hold a quiet religious meeting. As the enemies of the returned exiles saw that the government, if compelled by the foreigners, would punish per-

secution, they vented their hatred in words rather than in acts. Even these words became fewer and less hateful, as the Christians proved themselves kind and meek of spirit. It was not long before regular service was held each Sabbath in Liong's home, and at length the Christians grew bold enough to hold it with open doors.

"We must have a teacher," soon became the spoken desire of the people; and their friend Khiau, whom at the beginning of this story we have seen as the preacher, was sent to remain a part of the time as the preacher in charge.

A preacher made a chapel necessary, for it was not best to hold the service in the home of Liong: there was likely to be too much disturbance; nor was it, for other reasons, a convenient place. But where should a chapel be found? Outside of the circular lau were several small houses, and to these others were added as dwellings when the old lau became too small. But these buildings either were unfit for the purpose or were owned by enemies of the gospel. Standing on the edge of a dirty

pond—really, partly in it—was a small low building with mud walls and a couple of square holes for windows. This belonged to Liong. He had no special use for it, and said that if the mission wished he would let them have it for a chapel. Since no other building could be obtained, this was taken and fitted up. A partition divided it into two rooms, one to be used as a place of worship and the other for the preacher, or for the missionaries should they visit Thau Pau. Humble and poor though it was, the little chapel was thankfully set apart by the people for the worship of God. Rarely has the gospel started in a humbler place or with less attractive surroundings. But a few decades hence, when those who were young then are old and have seen what the gospel has done and the progress it has made since the first regular service was held in that little low, dark chapel, they may well say, “What hath God wrought!”

The missionaries were not anxious to have a large or fine chapel at Thau Pau, for the place was too far out of the way to be a centre of work. They hoped as soon as

possible to reach the town of Sio Ke, a number of miles to the north-west, where, if a foothold could be gained, the work of the gospel would have a central position from which to branch out in all directions. Toa Aw was on the road to that large and important place. Had the missionaries chosen, they would have selected Thau Pau as about the last place in that section of the country in which to start the mission work, and Toa Aw would not have been chosen much sooner, except that it lay nearer Sio Ke. But God's ways are not as man's. By a sudden leap, without the knowledge, much less the plan and effort, of men, the gospel had stepped over large towns and villages and taken a foothold in this little out-of-the-way village at the foot of the mountains.

Some time after the chapel had been opened, Liong invited Soe to attend the services there. The invitation was accepted, and Soe spent his first Sabbath in a Christian assembly. He professed to do so only as a token of friendship to Liong, but in his heart was a longing to know more of this new religion. He could not get from his

mind the things that Liong had told about this God and his sending his Son into the world to die for men. No more careful hearer than Soe was in the little chapel that day. He listened and watched, and watched and listened, until the very close, when he had many questions to ask of his friend and of the preacher.

“If this be all true,” said he, after a while, “how happens it that foreigners—who, as you say, have known these doctrines for many hundred years—did not come to the Middle Kingdom before to tell the people about this God? If the religion be true, why has the world not known it before? Did the people of foreign countries want all the good themselves, and want the Middle Kingdom people to have all the evil?”

Khiau could give no satisfactory answers to many of Soe’s inquiries, and excused himself by saying that he was but a disciple himself, learning all he could, while he taught what little he knew that he might save as many as possible.

“But,” said he, “I know that this is truth: ‘God so loved the world that he gave

his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' I believe in him and have everlasting life."

"What! will you never die?" asked Soe. "Does this new religion do that for you? Don't the people of foreign lands die, either, if they become disciples?"

"Oh yes, they die," replied Khiau, "and so will I; but there is another death after that, and it is of this I spoke. The second death is the awful one, because it never stops."

"'Second death'?" asked the man. "What is that? How many deaths can any one die? When men die, do not their spirits go into the world of spirits?"

"Yes," replied the preacher, "and there the spirit begins to die; but it cannot die entirely: it continues to die for ever and ever. That death is like the sky. You can look up into it and see a great way; but if you were to go into the sky, you would find that you could see just as far after you had gone a long distance as you could at first, and so you might go on, and yet never find an end."

Soe shook his head and was unable to understand, so for a moment was silent. Then he asked,

“How do you get this life? How do you escape from this death that you speak of?”

Khiau replied;

“You must pray the great and true God to give you this life, and must trust him to do it. He has said that he will, and he will keep his word.”

“How must I believe?” asked the man.

“The holy book tells about it. We believe the books of the Middle Kingdom, so must we believe this book.”

“But we don’t believe all the books of the Middle Kingdom,” persisted Soe; “some of them are not true, and how do we know that this is?”

“If you were sick, and a physician should give you medicine after you had tried all other physicians in vain, and his medicine cured you, would you not say that his was the medicine for your disease?”

“Yes, that I would,” replied Soe.

“Then, if you found others sick as you were, and you gave them the same medicine

and it cured them and all to whom you gave it, would not you think it was meant for such disease?"

"Yes, and I would tell everybody about it," spoke the man, eagerly. "That was the way with Liong when he and Gan came back from the foreign hospital. I wish the foreign doctors there could cure my sore foot. Do you think they could?"

"I am not sure," replied Khiau, "but they would be willing to try. You might go down and see; they will not charge you anything. But let me go on. What such medicine would be for the body the doctrine is for the soul that is sick."

"How do you know that the soul is sick?" asked Soe, doubtfully.

"How do you know that people have a fever?" asked Khiau. "By seeing how they look and what they do. But many men who have a fever say they are well and wish to go to work, yet they are too sick to know what they need or what they are."

"That is so," responded the man.

"When one has had the fever and has been made well, he knows about it," con-

tinued Khiau; "he knows that he has been cured. That is the way with the soul. Every one's soul is sick; we are born so. Now, the only medicine that will make the soul well is the new religion. I know that it will make people well, for I have tried it. I saw that I was sick after I had taken some of the medicine, for that is what it does at first: it shows people how sick they are, and then it makes them better if they will continue taking it."

"Is that the way?" asked Soe, with much deeper interest than he had yet shown. "I begin to see how it is."

"The soul has sickness as the body has," continued Khiau, "only the soul cannot die of its disease; it keeps growing more and more ill all the time. There is no medicine but what the true God gives, who made the soul and knows all about it."

"What is the medicine?" asked Soe. "How do you take it? I want to know more about it."

"The medicine is what this holy book teaches. It tells us to believe in the true God and make him ours; it tells that he

gave his Son to die for us—that, since we were sinners, we would all have perished if God's Son, Jesus, had not died to make an atonement ; that is, to pay the price for us. He so loved us that he was willing to come to the world and die for us. Now, it tells us to take all this and believe it and act on it. Since Jesus has died for our sins, we are to believe that he is our Saviour and take him as such. We are to give our whole souls to his care and believe that he will save us from this eternal death because he says he will, and because we trust him to do it. We must believe that he does this, not because we are good or worthy, but because he loves us. Then, when we have done all this, we must serve him. No, we must begin to do his will, to try to obey and please him, at once, as soon as we become his servants."

Through all this explanation Soe listened attentively, and then said,

"It is well ; I will think of it and learn more."

The time for afternoon service soon came, and Soe remained an attentive listener to the close, when he went home.

Soe said nothing about the new religion in Toa Aw except to his family; he remembered the disturbance the enemies of the gospel had created at Thau Pau, and he wanted nothing of the kind in his own village. He thought, though, that he would not allow any who might choose to become Christians in Toa Aw to suffer as had the Christians of Thau Pau. He knew what course he would pursue, and, being the one who owned most of the property there, he knew that his word would have effect. Perhaps he wished that some of his own village would become Christians, but none of them knew much about the new doctrine; not one of them was half as much interested in it as he. He was not ready to accept the new God as his; he was only ready to defend any one who should accept him. Just there Soe stood as he reached home that night. He was very silent, and answered the questions of others in the fewest words possible. He said that Liong and his friends were, as far as he knew, getting on quietly with the rest of the people and he hoped there would be no difficulty.

Soe was unusually thoughtful that week. It was a matter of concern to many, for all liked the good-hearted man, and each took an interest in his welfare and comfort. When asked if he was sick, he several times said yes, that his soul was sick, but corrected himself at once and said that he was not much ill, nor had he much trouble; he was only thinking. The next Sabbath he had an excuse to go over to Thau Pau, and went early. He did not come back again until near night—even later than the previous week. Again he questioned the preacher and the other Christians as to how this new doctrine made a man feel and what there was in it that would make the heart light. They seemed light-hearted, and he felt sad. His heart was as heavy as a stone, he told Liong when the two were alone, and he wondered what could have made it so. He was not accustomed to be so gloomy. Perhaps it was because he thought so much of what a sinner he must be, to make the Son of God come from heaven to die for him—if, he added, this religion of which Khiau said so much was true.

“If it be not true,” replied his friend, “it is strange that it should trouble your heart. Shadows do not strike us so that we feel them.”

“I *feel* this,” spoke Soe, “and it hits me hard; it has made me sore, and the sores are like the one on my foot—a running sore. Will they be like that, always running, always sore? Is there nothing to heal?”

“Yes, there is,” said Liong, joyfully; “the great Physician will heal. Ask him to send the medicine to your heart and make you well.”

“You know him better than I,” replied Soe; “will you tell him? I will go with you, for I want him to see that I am the one, and that I mean what you say.”

“Yes, I will,” said Liong; “and then you ask too.”

“Don’t do it out here, nor in your home, where all will hear,” spoke Soe. “Let us go to the woods, where no one will hear. I do not want the people of Toa Aw to know about this yet.”

The two went to the woods after the morning service, as if for a walk, and there,

away from men, they kneeled in prayer. To Soe it was a time of sad and gloomy foreboding. He was thinking of the second death and his sins that made him worthy of such a punishment. Instead of Liong's prayer giving relief, it seemed to add to the trouble of the afflicted Soe. For a time he was too much in fear and doubt to pray, but, encouraged by the words of his friend, he added a few petitions, and then the two returned to the chapel and to the afternoon service. Soe's face revealed his feelings very plainly, and Khiau saw that the man was in trouble. The words of the speaker were directed to give relief to the poor penitent, and were not without effect.

At the close of the service Soe asked the preacher,

"Did you say that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin? Does that mean mine?"

"Yes, all," responded the preacher.

"But will it do so to all who come, no matter how many and for how long?"

"For all, and for all time," answered Khiau.

“Then it will last always. How can it?”

“Off in the mountain,” replied the preacher, “there is a fountain that long before you and I and our fathers were born sent out its cool water for men and beasts to drink. It has been running ever since, and to-day is as full, as clear and as good as it was hundreds of years ago. That is the way with the blood of Jesus. It is a fountain, and it is opened for sin and all uncleanness. It will cleanse you as it has many thousands before you were born.”

“A fountain?” said Soe to himself—“a fountain that never ceases to flow? Yes, that is what I want—a fountain that will carry away my sins far from me, and will yet be running pure and clear for others. Yes, that is the fountain for me.—And may all who will be cleansed by this fountain?” asked he of the preacher.

“Yes, all,” was the response; “and you may be cleansed to-day if you only will. Jesus says ‘whosoever will,’ and that means you.”

“True, true,” replied Soe; “and I will—I will!”

With a little more questioning Soe left for his home. He went with a lighter heart, but not with perfect satisfaction. He was like the blind man who saw men as trees walking, but the dimness of sight was passing away, and he began to see clearly. It was not a sudden light, nor startling; and when the full sight was given, he wondered why he had not seen before. It was so simple to believe and let Jesus do the rest that he could not understand why he had failed sooner to understand.

Soe was not so quiet after the second Sabbath as he had been after his first attendance at Christian worship, but he was not sure what he ought to do as to telling others about it. He wanted no trouble in Toa Aw, and yet he wanted all to know what he did. After thinking for a time he decided to wait and have a talk with the preacher the next Sabbath and learn more clearly his duty. He was ready to do it, but wished to know surely what it was, lest by haste he might cause disturbance. He had always felt that better management at Thau Pau would have prevented the persecution. He did not

remember that the people in the two places were unlike, and, more than that, that Liong and himself were very unlike. Both were leading men, but Liong was more willful and overbearing, more outspoken, though not more decided, but less ready to give others the benefit of their opinions. While Liong was a leader, he was one to arouse more enmity and make far more enemies than Soe; so when the people at Thau Pau had an opportunity to repay Liong and show their power, they were quick to do it.

The next Sabbath, Soe started for Thau Pau again, but not alone: he took with him two of his friends and on the way told them where he was going. Out of curiosity they readily yielded to his request, and went with him to the chapel. There, Soe, after asking the preacher between services his duty, confessed, in the hearing of his friends and all present at the inquiry-meeting before the afternoon service, that he had determined to give up the worship of idols and the spirits of the dead and become a worshiper of the true God. The confession surprised his friends, though it did not make them

angry. They saw that he was in earnest, and felt a curiosity to know more about the religion that he had just confessed.

When the service was over and the party were on the way to Toa Aw, Soe told his friends more fully of his change of religion and change of heart. They listened respectfully, and said that they were ready to learn more about the new doctrine.

“I mean to bring it into Toa Aw,” said he. “If it is good for me, it is good for my family and my friends, and for all whom I know. Will you join with me?”

The men tried to excuse themselves on the ground that they knew too little yet to decide, and said that they would wait to learn more. They were afraid of trouble, and were not enough interested to make any sacrifice for the new religion. But they thought, too, that with Soe, the chief man in the place, as a friend not only, but a leader, in the new religion, there was not likely to be much outward opposition. They knew that he was too much beloved by all to be persecuted, especially as he owned most of the property in Toa Aw.

When Soe reached home that night, he called his family together and told them what he had learned and what the new doctrine was to be and why he believed it true.

“Now,” said he, “I mean to serve this God. I will not compel any of you to follow me, but you must not expect me to worship the idols any more, nor will I offer anything at the ancestral tablets. I mean to give my whole heart to the true God, and not the smallest part to the false ones. And he is to be the God of my home. If, after you have learned all you can about him, you do not wish to serve him, then you may do as you like; but you must not ask me to help in any of the old worship to which I gave time and money. I do not mean to pay for any idolatrous feasts, nor even for the worship of ancestors.”

This confession of Soe was not unexpected to his family; but when the news was made known to the villagers, they were surprised. In a quiet way he gave his reasons for changing his religion. People listened with respect and had not much to say in opposition. Chinese rarely at first oppose Christianity; not

until they have taken time to let their superstitious fears work, and not until some fanatic has aroused them to hate it, do they say much against the gospel. Nor are they, as a rule, willing to oppose it at all if there be no reason to think that the gods or the spirits of the dead will be angry and punish all for the sin of the few.

For a few days Soe's change of faith was a subject of talk in Toa Aw, and then the people let the matter rest, as if they cared very little about it. But the talk did not entirely end, though it might have died out had there not been some—as is usually the case—to turn every misfortune into a visitation of the gods as punishment for the change of religion. These soon found an opportunity to say "I told you so," and to arouse the people against Soe and the religion he was trying to bring to the village.

A death occurred, and at once these opposers said the gods were angry because a foreign God was worshiped in the place. They hinted that this would be followed by other and greater calamities, the end to which it was impossible to see. Some spoke to Soe

and warned him of the danger, and said it would be his own fault if others suffered. They declared that the gods were angry and would soon punish severely the people who dared to desert them for a foreign worship.

“Well may the gods be angry,” said Soe, “when I, who have done so much for them, refuse to do any more; but it is a strange way of showing their anger to punish their friends for what an enemy has done. Why do they not chastise me, who have offended, rather than those who faithfully serve them? If that is the way the gods treat those who are faithful to their service, then I am glad that I have turned from them. It seems that I shall be safe now. If what you say be true, then the sooner you become the enemy of the gods, the sooner will you escape their anger. They seem afraid of enemies, and punish friends for what their enemies do.”

“They are merely showing to their friends what they can do to enemies. If such things are suffered by friends, let the enemies beware,” replied one, significantly.

“It is a strange kind of showing,” said

Soe, "to cause the faithful to suffer that the unfaithful may learn. The lesson I take is that if gods killed that man, then they are not to be trusted; they would sooner slay friends than enemies. To teach an enemy a lesson they will kill a friend."

"You may talk now," was the answer, "but after a while you will weep. Some day the gods will hurt you worse than the running sore does."

"Perhaps so," replied Soe, coolly; "but if I remember aright, the sore was given me when a faithful servant of the gods. They did not protect me then; it will not be strange if they try to harm me now. Yet I have a greater God than they for my friend."

"He may be a great God in the foreigners' country, but the Middle Kingdom is not his land."

"That is true," replied Soe, "but some day I hope it will become his, and that you will live to be one of his servants."

"Do you suppose that we will desert the gods of our fathers and neglect the spirits of our ancestors? No, indeed! Shall we leave those we love to suffer and starve

in the spirit-world? What will not our children then do to us when we are in the land of the dead? And what shall we say to the dead when we meet them?"

"Better ask, What shall we do when the spirits punish us for our neglect?" spoke one.

"How will they punish you?" asked Soe.

"That we cannot tell," was the reply; "we know soon enough when the punishment comes. But we do not intend that it shall come; we do not wish the spirits to come to earth to punish us, and will care for them all we can."

"And so they come to earth to punish?" said Soe. "If they do that, why not stop and get something to eat and drink, and thus save their friends the trouble of carrying it?"

"Do not speak thus of the noble spirits of the dead," almost whispered one of the bystanders; "they may be listening. Do not let us suffer for your evil words. Our village may be visited by enemies whom they send to punish us for what you say."

"They will but be doing, then, what they did when we were all friends of gods and

spirits—I as much as any of you. What are gods for if not to protect their friends, I would like to know?" asked Soe. "But they did not protect us from the Tai Pings; here we see yet marks of the ruin the rebels brought to our village. We left it for gods and spirits to take care of, and they allowed our enemies almost to destroy the place."

"That was to warn us not to forsake the religion of our fathers," replied a man. "If we forsake, they may, and probably will, send far worse enemies."

"I do not see how they can send much worse ones," spoke Soe, quietly.

"They may send some who will destroy life and kill you."

"That will not be so much worse," answered Soe. "They will only remove me from the place where enemies trouble, and where gods and spirits are constantly growing angry and punishing their best friends, to a place where no angry gods or revengeful spirits can come, but where there is a merciful, great and loving God who pities, forgives and saves; and that is what gods of the Middle Kingdom cannot do."

Talks like these set some people thinking and made others more bitter against Soe and the religion he had accepted. Even this feeling might have passed away had not several others shown decided sympathy with the new religion, and even been seen going to the house of Soe at times of evening worship. After he had made known his purpose to his family he had begun to worship the true God in his home, and asked all of his family who would to join him. At first his wife objected, but, as he allowed her to do as she chose, she soon became a silent worshiper with the rest. He invited neighbors who were at all interested in the gospel to unite with his family in this service, and thus night after night quite a little company gathered in his house. These meetings made the friends of the gods and of spirit-worship angry. Nor was this anger lessened when Soe took with him Sabbath after Sabbath to the village over the mountain several to spend the day there in worship of the foreign God.

One stormy Sabbath the little company, instead of going to Thau Pau to worship,

remained at home and held worship in Soe's house. This was more than some who had gradually become exasperated and waited for an opportunity would endure. They met the same day to talk the matter over and decide what to do. That something must be done all admitted. Sabbath worship, they supposed, meant the opening of a chapel, and that would be the signal for gods and spirits to visit the place with most awful calamities.

Soe led the worship and tried to preach or explain the gospel. His own knowledge was not great, but what he knew he knew well, and his explanations as well as his arguments against idolatry were understood by his hearers. Those who were wavering were established more firmly, and all went from that first Sabbath service more determined to become servants of the true God than when they entered:

So, also, from the meeting to consider what should be done to oppose the gospel all present went away determined to do all in their power to drive out the new religion. The next day they began by a cautious talk

to warn Soe to keep the worship of the foreign God from the village. His replies soon made them forget their proposed caution, and they began to threaten.

“Who owns the larger part of the lau and of the village property?” asked Soe.

“You,” was the reply; “but we who live here have rights too, and we mean to keep them.”

“So you shall,” answered Soe, “and I will be one to see that you are not disturbed. As you have rights, so have I and all who live here. As for stopping the worship of the true God, it may as well be said first as last that I do not mean to compel any of you to worship him. I mean only to worship him in my own house, and not one of you need enter that, nor come near the door, nor within sound of our voices. Indeed, if the worship disturbs you, it will be well for you, during such worship, to go out into the fields until it is over. It will not last very long—not half as long as the worship of idols; and when that troubles me and my friends, we will say nothing, but go the fields while you are enjoying it.”

Arguments as well as threats were useless, and the people, becoming excited, declared that they would drive Soe and his friends from the village as Liong and his friends had been driven from Thau Pau.

“That might be done in Thau Pau,” remarked Soe, calmly, “but that village is not Toa Aw, nor is Liong Soe. I own property here; and when you undertake to drive me from it, you undertake to fight the mandarins. I shall stay here and worship the God I know to be true; that is not against the laws of the Middle Kingdom. And, more than that, the mandarins will take care that I be allowed to worship whom I please. If the people did drive Liong and his friends from Thau Pau, remember that the mandarins made them invite all back and compelled the people to restore the property, too, that had been taken away.”

The people knew that what Soe said was true, and that they would be bringing trouble on themselves if they undertook to drive him from the place; they knew, too, that, while very peaceful, he was firm in maintaining his rights, and that to attack him would

probably be to get themselves into great trouble. The lesson learned by the enemies of the gospel at Thau Pau had not been without its effect on the Toa Aw people. Though very unwilling, they finally decided to profit by it when they saw how decided Soe was, and that he would do what he said. In their hearts they really liked him, for he was a noble, kind-hearted man.

Though there was no outbreak against the gospel, the feeling against the Christians continued, and not a few were the indications that acts of violence would have followed had the people dared. Gradually, however, they submitted to the presence of foreign worship, as they called it, and, as no special evil followed, they cared less about opposing it.

Soe continued to have worship on weekday evenings and on stormy Sabbaths, and now and again on Sabbaths that were not stormy. At first the people who were interested in the gospel and able to go went on Sabbath to Thau Pau, but often there was no preacher at the chapel there, because Khiau was sent to some other place for weeks.

Liong usually led the service at Thau Pau, as he could read, but his teachings were not always wise. One day, when reading the tenth chapter of John, he compared Khiau to the hireling who deserted the sheep; this left a very unfortunate impression on the minds of the people regarding their absent preacher. Perhaps Liong did not intend his words to mean what the hearers took from them, yet even so early he showed that he was not over-favorable to the preacher who had been sent to them.

Soe and his friends felt after a while that the services at the chapel were not much better, if no preacher was present, than those which they held in the house at Toa Aw. It became quite common for them, when there was no preacher at Thau Pau, to remain at home and hold service. In the end this proved a great advantage not only to the people of the little village, but to the country beyond.

Leng Tso while at Thau Pau met the people of Toa Aw and became greatly interested in them.

“I knew,” said she, “that God would

hear the prayers of his children. The missionaries have longed so much to preach to the people and places beyond Toa Aw; it may be now that the Lord is preparing the way for them to reach those places. Cannot you tell the people—those living beyond—what you have heard and know to be true? If there could but be a chapel at the large town of Sio Ke, and a preacher there, who knows what good it would do?”

The Christians of Thau Pau were glad to welcome Soe and his companions to their chapel, and showed a true brotherly feeling to them. The talk between services was often about the opposition against them in Toa Aw; and when Soe told what he had replied to the would-be persecutors, he was asked,

“But does not the holy book say that ‘if any man will sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also’?”

“Yes,” was the reply, “but they did not mean to sue me at the law: they meant to take all my property and drive us all from the place, contrary to the law. Because they would do what was against the law I determined to resist them.”

“But is it not best to submit to the opposition of enemies?” was asked. “If one smite us on the right cheek, are we not to turn the other also?”

“So the Lord bids us,” answered Soe, “but he does not tell us to submit that we may bring our enemies into the greater trouble. Had we submitted, the people would have driven us away; then we would have appealed to the mandarins, who would have compelled those opposed to us in Toa Aw to bring us back and return us our property. This would have given us as well as all others great trouble.”

CHAPTER VIII.

A JOURNEY TO HA BUN.

KHIAU of late was so often ordered away from Thau Pau that his wife no longer made her home there, but stayed in the Foo city. Yet she visited the little village among the mountains, and remained there for weeks at a time when her husband was there. She was rather pleased to be away from the village and in the larger city, as there had appeared on the part of Liong a feeling not unlike jealousy toward her husband. To her Khiau was almost perfect, and she could not endure hearing others speak slightingly of him. Liong was an ambitious man and liked honor. For a time after he became a Christian this feeling seemed to have gone, and he appeared to be as humble as the humblest; but with the return of himself and his party to the village under the protection of the mandarins he showed a lively

sense of his own importance; he took the lead of the band of Christians and became their head. With the presence of Khiau as preacher appointed by the foreign teachers, Liong saw that he was second. He bore this in silence for a time, but after a while began to manifest a desire for supremacy.

While Khiau and his wife were at Thau Pau a message came from the missionaries requesting him to go farther inland to a place many miles north-west; the people had learned of the gospel, and wished a teacher. Khiau was proud of the honor and responsibility, and was soon ready to start. Of course his wife could not go along, and she was glad to return to the Foo city. As she was preparing to go Leng Tso reached the village. She had come for a stay of a day or two only, and the two agreed to go together to the Foo city. The Bible-woman intended going farther and proposed a trip to Ha Bun, stopping at the various places on the way to carry on her work, as well as to visit old friends. She persuaded Khiau So to accompany her.

The two started one morning early with

several friends from the village. It was a long, tedious walk before they reached the small river where they might take a boat. Neither of them felt able to afford to ride in a sedan-chair, the only means of carriage except by boat in their part of the country. There are no horses there, and few cattle. These last are not used in parts of Southern China as beasts of burden, nor yet to draw wagons, their only work being to pull the plough or harrow; so those who cannot walk must ride in a sedan-chair or stay at home, unless near enough to a river to use a boat. The Bible-woman had long ago learned to walk, and the wife of the preacher had been obliged to learn later. Though a sedan-chair, with the two bearers, may be hired for perhaps forty cents a day, yet the question often is about the forty cents. Khiau's salary at this time was only six dollars a month, and from that he must board and clothe himself and his wife. As that was nearly twice as much as an ordinary day-laborer earns, they were satisfied; but it was far from what Khiau So had been accustomed to in earlier days.

None in the party were more thankful than our two friends when the path ended on the bank of a small stream. This was little more than a narrow and shallow brook, being wide and deep enough to float a light flat-bottomed boat that lay at the head of navigation, waiting for the party.

“You cannot all go,” said the head-boatman; “the water is too low. The boat will run aground if you all come aboard with your baggage.”

It was agreed that if the boat could carry the burdens the men should walk until they came to deeper water.

With some walking along the bank and others sitting in the little vessel, the party started down stream. It was easy to keep up with the boatmen as they pushed the craft along, now moving to this and then to that side, to keep from running aground. But deeper water and a wider surface came farther down, and more burdens could be carried.

About noon the party reached the mouth of the creek, where the smaller boat was exchanged for a larger river-craft. These

vessels are constantly passing up and down the river, which, at the place where our party reached it, is a stream of considerable breadth, but so shallow that boats drawing only two feet of water are at times unable to sail in some places. Changing rifts of sand and gravel lie like bars across the channel, and to pass them boatmen are compelled to get into the water to scoop away the rifts or make a channel through them.

The water in the river was low when the party took the larger boat, and the progress down-stream was slow, but, as the sailing was pleasant, they cared little about speed. Chinese learn, as travelers, the lesson of patience. To sail on a river-boat, to be run on sand-rifts and compelled to wait idly for an hour or two while the men dig a channel, or slowly to push one's way against a swift current by means of poles, is tedious traveling, but it is more trying yet to lie becalmed on a sailing-boat, where there is too much depth of water for poling and the boat is too large for oars to propel her rapidly. But then Chinese are rarely in a hurry; to-morrow will do, if to-day is not sufficient.

The passengers eat and drink—nothing stronger than tea and river-water, as a rule—they talk and laugh, they sleep and snore, and not least of their pastimes is gambling.

These river-boats in Southern China are usually flat-bottomed, but rounded upward at stem and stern as well as at the sides. Rather narrow, and light of build, these vessels are made for light and easy sailing, yet they are capable of carrying large loads. The load of freight is regulated by the depth of water in the river. Some of these crafts are rather pretty, but many have lost what beauty they ever had, and, as for comfort, few have a supply. Many of them have little cabin except a piece of matting stretched over bent poles; this, unless needed to keep off sun and rain, is rolled up and laid on the side of the deck. Occasionally one of these vessels large enough to have a crew of several men is seen, but often the crew consists of two, a man and a woman, the husband acting as captain and the wife as mate. When children come to these parents, they are free passengers for the first few years, but must soon learn to work their passage.

On one of these river-boats our two friends took passage. It was during a time of low water, and they knew that the voyage might be a long one. The length, however, depended on the number of rifts their boat encountered and the speed with which the men dug a channel through them.

While the passengers were congratulating themselves on the speed of the craft there came to their ears the sound *schrush-schrush-ush-ush-sh-sh*, and then the water went on without them. They were fast aground, and might enjoy the scenery without change. The boatmen were soon at work, now silently digging a channel, and now as noisily talking in angry words and vile language—no oaths were used: the Chinese tongue has no words in it for oaths; the vileness makes up, however, for all such lack—because the sand and gravel refused to be removed as quickly as they wished. The passengers took the stop coolly. They had paid their fare, or intended to pay it, and what difference did it make to them how long the voyage lasted? If their provisions held out—passengers usually take their provisions along—it

mattered little to them. No extra charge for stoppages; and the longer the voyage, the more time had each one for rest and to play the gentleman or the lady. It need hardly be said that such delays, and especially the language used by the boatmen, were anything but pleasant to our two friends.

By close watching in the daytime the rifts could be partly avoided, though it was often a question whether or not the vessel could pass over shallow places, and some places that seemed deep enough proved just deep enough to form a good stopping-place. Traveling at night was so liable to detentions that the boat was fastened as darkness came on, and the crew took a well-earned rest. That the passengers enjoyed their rest it would be hardly safe to say, nor might it please delicate ears to tell why they did not. It is often asked, "What are some of the greatest trials the missionary in China must meet?" Reader, pardon the statement here: some of the smaller trials—small only in point of size—are the insects on those river-boats. They may not trouble Chinese as they do

foreigners, but many a missionary would understand torture in China to mean traveling and sleeping a few nights on one of those river-boats.

Not until the close of the second day did the boat reach the Foo city. There Leng Tso and her companion found a warm welcome from their old friends, and there the preacher's wife was at home. To her house did the Bible-woman go, and with Khiau So she made her home most of the time when in the Foo city. This place had a never-ceasing interest to the two. In it had been passed some of the most pleasant years in the lives of the women, and there had Leng Tso passed through the most terrible trials of her sad and trying life.

Shortly after reaching their old home the two spent part of a day in revisiting the places that once had been their homes and in telling of the lives lived within them. When Leng Tso told of the awful scenes during the rebellion, the two wept together. She pointed out to her friend the places where she had hidden to escape the soldiers, and the streets through which she had run

with her husband and family to find, if possible, a way out of the city on the night of its capture by rebels.* There remained the same bare walls and roofless dwellings that had been left after the imperial army passed out of the place at the close of the war. Street after street was deserted, and ruin was everywhere. The rubbish of destroyed dwellings lay in huge piles in the streets as the soldiers had left all years ago. Some houses that stood then were now deserted and going to decay. Ruin was slowly creeping over the city. More than three-fourths of the once large place—it having had nearly one million inhabitants—lay in crumbling ruins. Less than two hundred thousand would now comprise the whole number of the inhabitants.

Wearied and sad, the two at length turned their feet from the place of desolation to a spot where they were certain of finding friends and life and comfort. In the large chapel they were among the first to assemble for evening worship. At these gatherings

* See *Chinese Slave-Girl*. Presbyterian Board of Publication.

larger and larger numbers came each time the two visited the place. It was almost the only spot in the great city where there appeared to be life and hope. For a while they remained at the Foo city, Leng Tso spending much of her time in visiting the women and reading the Bible to them. Khiau So longed to engage in the same work, but felt timid.

“My lips seem tied,” said she, “when I try to speak to the women, unless to Christians.”

“Why not, then, talk to Christians?” asked the Bible-woman.

“I do, in Thau Pau,” replied Khiau So, “but here a fear overcomes me. I cannot say how or why it is. I can talk about other things, but not about the one important thing. True, I can speak to Christians, but the teacher * says we must try to bring all the souls we can to the truth.”

“God’s people need more of the truth; they are not taught as they should be,” suggested the Bible-woman. “They are most of them only children in the truth. Teach

* The husband of Khiau So.

them, and through them you may reach many other souls."

"The teacher says when we love people we love to speak of them to others. This has troubled me a great deal, for I love the Lord, and I did love to speak of him before we went to Thau Pau—that is, before Liong became unfriendly to the teacher. That has made me feel badly. I wish the foreign pastors would not ask him to go back to Thau Pau; a more learned man should be sent there, and one who never lived in the place. Liong thinks himself as learned as the teacher."

"It may be that he will be sent to the new place where he has gone now; there he will be a stranger, and you will be able to talk to others again. You will be glad to do it when the people come to you to know the truth," suggested Leng Tso.

"I hope he will not be sent so far away. I would so like to come here to live; it is such a pleasant church, and all are so kind here. Then, too, we shall need to learn a new language if we go where he has gone. It seems to me that younger preachers should go

there. Yet I would rather go there and do that than return to Thau Pau. Liong is very trying to the teacher."

"He is trying to others too," replied the Bible-woman. "I think that others do not like to hear what Liong says. He was always trying to rule the rest. Yet he is very different from what he was as a boy or young man. Had you seen him then, you would have said that it would take more than man to make him humble. He is not very humble yet, but very much better than he was then."

"He must have been bad if he is so much better now. I sometimes have asked the teacher if Liong is really a child of God." "What did he say?" inquired Leng Tso, eagerly.

"He said that a man who would do and suffer as Liong has suffered for the doctrine could hardly have done it had not God's grace helped him. He says that he thinks the evil one is tempting Liong through his love of power and honor. More than that, he says it may be that Liong will fall some day, but after that will rise a humble and penitent

man and faithful to the truth as well as ready to obey it in everything.”

After a brief stay in the Foo city the friends started down the river, stopping at two or three places to visit and to carry on the work of the Bible-woman, who was well known and much loved by those she visited. To hear “*Ban Chim lai*” spoken would bring many a one to the door to welcome the woman whose coming was thus announced.

Khiau So was surprised as well as pleased at the warm welcome given to her friend. She was not less surprised to see the interest which those visited took in the reading and in the talks of the Bible-woman. These talks, like the woman herself, were plain and unpretending, but practical. She did not preach, but talked, and explained the gospel to those who had an opportunity to ask about the things not understood by them. Even the children could learn much from the simple language and plainly-put truths.

In one place, as Leng Tso, after reading her favorite chapter—the third of John—commented on the words “for God so loved the world,” she said :

“ ‘God so loved the world.’ We never hear men in the Middle Kingdom speak of the gods of this country loving the world. They hardly love their own friends, and will soon enough desert them if friends neglect to provide for their wants. The gods of the Middle Kingdom do not love; they hate. It is the great and the true God who loves. He loves everybody; he is always watching to do good. Even when people hate or oppose him, he still pities them and is merciful to them. He waits for them to think better of their lives, and, instead of wasting them, to give them to him, that he may give to them eternal life. He is like a father watching for his bad children to come back. He is always sending them some good thing, some message of love, some word of invitation, always pleading with them to come back. Even when he punishes, it is to make them think—to make them see what helpless beings they would be without him. But all this tells only that God loves, and not *how* he loves. ‘He so loved the world,’ the Lord says. Do you know how? He gave his only begotten Son. He had one Son, and

him God loved as only God can love. You know how much fathers and mothers love their boys, and how much if they have only one. But who would give that only son for the sake of some dear friend? All might love the friend very dearly, yet they would say, 'I love my son more; I cannot give him to save even so dear a friend. It is the only son; if I had several or only two, one might be given; but this one— No, no, no! I cannot spare him; he cannot die.'

"But God did not say so. He looked down and saw that not his dearest friend—not even a friend at all, but one who did not love him, did not care for him; yes, his enemy, and a bitter enemy, too—was in trouble. God did not say, 'Let him suffer; he deserves it.' No; he looked and pitied. He saw that no one was willing or able to help man, no one cared for him. Man was not only in trouble, but Satan had taken him and was leading him captive to the awful pit. God could not let man go; he looked if there was any one to deliver, and there was no one. God did not then say, 'He is my enemy, and it is right that he perish.' No; God

looked, and there was no one to save. No one loved man enough to do anything to save him, Then God said, 'I love man; I love him too much to let him perish. Something must be done. If no one else will, I will do something; yes, I will do much: I will do all that I can.' Then he knew that there was only one thing he could do to save man, and that was to give his Son.

"Would he do it, do you think? What! his own Son to save his enemies? Yes, men were his enemies. And yet God loved them. He loved them very much—so much that Jesus himself could not tell how much, except to tell what he did to prove that love. He loved men so much that he gave—Whom? Listen. I will read: 'He gave his only begotten Son.' Yes, God gave him. It was all the Son God had, yet he gave that only one to save men. He *so loved* the world. Yes, *so* as only God can love. If he loves us so much, what should we do? Is it right, is it reasonable, to worship these gods that never did, and never can, love as God does? What have they ever done for us? What can they do? What

are they? Men and women pray to them, but what good does it do? People say that if we give things to the gods they will show us favors, but God showed us the greatest possible favor when he gave his Son. If, as the people say, the gods should return favors for the presents made, ought not we to do something to show that we love God?"

In this plain way did Leng Tso present the truth to the little bands that gathered about her in the homes. Some, no doubt, were glad to listen because it gave them something new, something to talk of to others; but there were those who listened with deeper interest each time the Bible-woman talked to them. Through her they were gradually coming into the light or walking in the brighter and brighter light as they went on their way as Christians.

"I want to visit my son," said Leng Tso one day as they were about to leave a village where they had spent a day or two.

"Where does he live?" was asked.

"In the large city down the river on the way."

"What! in Chang Bay?"

“Yes; he is in business there.”

“I would like to see him not only, but to visit that place and see the church and its people. The teacher has often spoken of that church as one where the people are more warm of heart and active in work than in any other of all the churches in this part of the Middle Kingdom. He has told me of E Ju, the elder there, and of his wife. I would like to meet them. From what I have heard, they are very faithful to the Lord.”

“Yes, they are; and much of the prosperity of that church is owing to E Ju and his wife. They are wise and faithful. You will like them, though they are not like people of the Middle Kingdom. They do not talk and talk to hide their meaning until they know your mind, but tell what they mean and wish, and leave it to you to say what you wish. They are like foreigners.”

Khiau So was introduced to Lin, the son of the Bible-woman, and to his wife, at their home, where the two stayed part of the time while in Chang Bay. Lin was yet a

young man, and rather a quiet one, but a man who thought and was ready to give a reason for his opinions and acts.

“Why is it,” asked Khiau So in the evening of the day of their arrival, “that you, who are a Christian and the son of a woman who has given all her later life to the work of teaching the doctrine, should give your time to business rather than to preaching the gospel?”

“If all Christians became preachers,” replied Lin, “who would take care of the Church? Who would make money to carry on its work? We cannot expect the foreign Church to support our preachers: we must do it some time; and the sooner we begin, the better will it be. Then, too, we must send the doctrine to others, and not expect the people of God outside of the Middle Kingdom to do all the work.”

“That is true,” spoke Khiau So; “yet the greatest need just now is for men to preach the gospel. If you are able, why should not you do it?”

“I am not as able to preach as I am to help support the preachers,” was his reply.

“My mother is teaching, and I help support her; and my cousin, Uncle Iau’s son, is preaching, and my uncle is helping support him.” Then, recollecting himself, he said, “No, not supporting him, for the foreign pastors do that; but my uncle gives of his money to help the mission, which is nearly the same. So two are making money to aid the work, while two are teaching.”

“But would not your work be of more value to the cause,” asked Khiau So, “than the money you can earn?”

“Perhaps so—that is, it would be so now; but I hope to increase my business and after a few years make a great deal more money.”

“Yet by preaching now you might turn to righteousness many who after a while would give much money to the Lord’s cause,” was suggested by the preacher’s wife.

“That may be,” said Lin; “but there is another reason why I am not a preacher: I do not think myself suited for the work. God has plans for all his children, and he fits each for a part or a share in that plan. I am fitted for business rather than for preaching. I am slow of speech.”

“I hope you are not in business because it is easier?” suggested Khiau So.

“I am willing to do what the Lord requires of me,” responded Lin, quietly. “I did not become a Christian to have an easy life, but because I love the Lord. It cost me more to become a follower of Jesus than it has cost many others.”

“What has it cost you?” inquired the preacher’s wife. “You have a comfortable home and, as you say, a good business, and you are making money. I would like to know something more about the cost. I remember now, though, that your mother told me part of the story of your earlier life, but it has been partly forgotten.”

“It is a short story, and not unlike what many have suffered; yet had I not been willing to serve the Lord, I would not have been here to tell this story. My mother has no doubt told you that I was stolen from my father when I was a child. I was sold to become the adopted son of a rich man who intended to give me all his property, for he had no children of his own. He and his wife were very kind to me, and treated

me as a real son ; I could ask for no more comforts. But I heard the doctrine, and after a while became a Christian. My adopted father heard of it, and commanded me to cease worshiping the foreigners' God. I refused as politely as I could, but he continued his demand that I return to the worship of the idols of the Middle Kingdom. One day, as we were working in the field—for he was a farmer and owned much land—he so strongly urged me to turn back from the true God that I told him I neither could nor would turn back, and that even if he drove me from his home I would not give up the new religion. He was so angry that he struck me with a heavy hoe, and I fell senseless to the ground. He turned away and left me to die. He never came to see whether I was dead or alive, and no doubt I should have died had not Christian friends found and cared for me. From that time until I made a home for myself I was an outcast, except as Christians cared for and provided me with a home. To become a follower of the Lord I gave up all and nearly lost my life ; so you see that it did

cost me something. And yet, if all had to be passed through again, I would do as I did and give up all for Christ."

"It is hard, though," interposed Lin's wife, "to lose a fortune; but it is all right, I suppose."

"It would hardly make any difference to you," said Lin, half jokingly; "for had I stayed with him as his son, another would have been my wife. If I lost a fortune, I gained a good wife by it."

"I did not think of that," replied the wife of Lin. "What we lose in one way for the doctrine we gain in another, so it will be all right in the end."

"Even in this life," suggested Leng Tso. "Yet with the promise of the life that is eternal our Lord says that those who give up all for him in this life shall even here receive a great deal to compensate; and the comfort and the happiness we receive pay a hundred times over for any loss we may endure for the sake of the doctrine."

Khiau So was anxious to meet E Ju. It was not according to custom for her to call upon him, and surely not to call first;

but E Ju was the chapel-keeper of Chang Bay church, and it was easy and proper to go to the chapel and stay after evening worship, or go early and meet the chapel-keeper then. The first night the two women spent in the city they were weary and did not attend chapel service, but were there early the next evening, when Khiau So was introduced to E Ju. He was rather a strange-appearing man for a Chinaman. His eyes were not as much of an almond-shape as are most of the eyes of Chinese, but reminded one of the look of a foreigner. He usually wore large Chinese spectacles, being near-sighted; these added to the peculiar, yet pleasing, appearance of his face. To see that face one would not soon forget it. It showed an openness that told of an honest man and a quickness of movement that spoke of an active body and a not less active mind. His eyes seemed to look through the glasses right into the eyes of any one speaking to him, and to pierce to one's very thoughts. There were in his voice a fullness and a roundness of tone that were very pleasing, yet in that sound was a

something which said that the man did not live to please as much as to work, and to work well.

E Ju was a thorough Chinaman, but had few of the bad qualities, though nearly every good quality, of his race. He was a man of decided character, and as fearless as decided. What he believed, he said without fear or favor; yet he was a man who knew when to speak and when to be silent. He had true politeness, but was unwilling to sacrifice truth to ceremony. He was so plain and outspoken that many of his countrymen disliked him, or, rather, his plain-speaking. Every one respected and trusted him, and there was probably not another Chinese Christian in that part of the country so respected and trusted by the missionaries as E Ju. Not only would he tell his countrymen their faults, but he would do the same judiciously and kindly, yet frankly, to the missionaries. He did not seem to know how to deceive.

E Ju was glad to meet his old friend Leng Tso, and as glad to welcome to the chapel the wife of his friend Khiau the preacher. He took the two around through the church-

building and the schoolroom, and showed them everything belonging to the establishment. Chang Bay chapel and all connected with it indicated taste and wisdom. The city itself, being an important one at the head of navigation for large river-boats, was regarded by the missionaries as worthy of good and large buildings, and time has proved their wisdom. The Christians, and especially the chapel-keeper, were proud of their chapel and of the rooms connected with it.

Khiau So was surprised at first, and not very well pleased, at E Ju's bluntness and frank way of speaking. After showing the two around he told them about the prospects of the church.

"But," said he, "it will not prosper as it should until a pastor is settled here. All is now really left in my charge, though the preacher, who is a good man, lives near the city, and should have more care of everything about the place; but he is easy and ready to let others take all the work they will. I am not a preacher, only a business-man; and, while able to take care of the chapel, it is not right that I should be so

often left to attend to the evening services. If we are to do the Lord's work, we must do it with all our strength, and not with half of it, leaving to others the work we might do. I am not speaking about the preacher, but of us all."

"Yet, if chapel-keeper, why should not you, who are surely able to do the work so well, take charge of the service?" asked Khiau So.

"I may do it fairly well," responded he, "but we need here the best service possible to be had. This must become a very large and strong church to carry the gospel to the country around, and to have it soon become such a church, everything possible should be done each day. Ten years later it will feel sadly what is but a slight neglect now. This must not be a child for the doctrine, but a mother. That is what the foreign pastors understand; it is their wish, but it is not so easy to teach our people that each one's help is needed to make this such a church as it ought to be."

"Then here is a chance for you to do a great work," suggested Khiau So. "Why

are you not a regular preacher instead of a chapel-keeper? I have often heard the teacher, my husband, speak of Brother E Ju, and I am sure that he thinks the church would be greatly profited that had you as preacher."

"I am not fitted for the work," said the man. "God made me, and he knew what I could do. He has given me that work; and if I try to preach, I will be doing what he has not called or made me for. True," added he, by way of apologizing, "I am ready to tell all whom I meet of the doctrine, and will continue to do so; but I have not the gifts for a preacher. Then I cannot say enough pleasant things to the people; I say the truth as others do, but not in a way that is acceptable. No; I was made for business, and in that I can best serve God."

"Yet," persisted she, "there is such a need of faithful men to preach that it seems if any one is able to tell the doctrine he should give his time and his life to that work."

"It is true that the Lord needs preachers," said E Ju, "but he needs other workers as

well. He has called some to preach, others to different work: the different work is mine. I have not come to this opinion without careful thought, and I know that my work is not to preach. It is useless to speak to me about it; all was settled long ago. I began to preach once."

"Indeed? How was that, and when?" asked Leng Tso.

"You know more of my life than the wife of the teacher does," replied E Ju, "so I suppose that you will not care to hear it told over again."

"That does not matter," spoke the Bible-woman; "I will be glad to hear it repeated, and she will be equally glad to listen, I know."

"Yes," responded Khiau So; "though the teacher has told me part, I would like to hear it all from you."

"It is not wonderful," began E Ju, "but the Lord was directing me to the work he had for me. My work is not great, like that of the preachers; I am but a door-keeper in the house of my God, but I would rather serve here than rule in the tents of

sin. I was born many miles away from here, over on the other river. That was before the gospel had reached the Middle Kingdom. When a man, I became a cook, and my business was to prepare feasts for idolatrous celebrations. I was a faithful servant of the gods and worshiped the spirits with all my heart. After I had been in that business for some years teacher Burns—a foreigner, but dressed as one of our own people—came to the village where I lived. I heard of the ‘foreign native,’ as he was called, and went to see him. I heard him tell of Jesus, and after a while my ears were pleased with the sound. I heard again and again about this Jesus and the love of God, as teacher Burns came time after time to the place or remained for days to preach. Others ridiculed him for trying to appear a Chinaman, but I became too much interested in the truth to ridicule him. At length I believed what he said, and became a follower of Jesus. Then I could no longer continue my business. True, I might provide for other feasts, but who would hire me? Besides, nearly every feast had something of

idolatry in it. I had saved some money—for my business had been good—yet the money would not last all my life, and I must look for other work. This was not easy, because all were ready to turn against me, since I had turned against the gods and the religion of my country. Of course many tried to persuade me to return to the worship of idols, but how could I, when they were false and the great God of the foreigners was the true God? There seemed but little for me to do at my home, yet there were soon very many like myself who were ready to give up, or had already given up, the idolatry of the country. Multitudes came to hear the word, and many believed and obeyed it. This made it only the more difficult for the Christians to get something to do. I determined to go to another place, and came here to see if I could earn a living. I might have done so at once had I left the new doctrine behind, but I saw so many who knew nothing of the Saviour that my heart would not let me be still. How could I, who was enjoying a rich feast, see others starve, when I knew where there was enough, and to spare, and all of

it free to the poorest and most needy as well as to the rich and the great? I began telling what I had found, and many listened and believed. While much time was spent in telling others of the Saviour, it seemed my duty to try also to earn a living. I started in business, and would have made much money here, it is almost certain, if I had prepared food for idolatrous feasts. That I would not do, but was ready for anything that would help me earn my living and yet serve God. He whom I served did not let me suffer. I continued preaching and working at my business, and did the very best I could to please; but the people did not wish me to speak against their idolatry when they asked me to provide for their feasts. How could I help doing my duty? The foreign pastors saw that I was ready to do the Lord's work, and asked me to take charge of the chapel while I was still at my business. It did not seem to me that the two could be carried on at the same time, because one would interfere with the other. I was glad to work for the Lord, yet had begun to see that my work was not to preach: I spoke

too plainly for the people. Many listened, but others would not hear such hard things said; they would not hear the truth as I told it. Then I said to myself, 'You may be a chapel-keeper, but not a preacher—be the door-keeper, but not the leader, of God's house.' But the people are coming," said E Ju. "I will ask Lin to ring the gong, and then will tell the rest in a few words."

Lin, who had just come in, was asked to ring the gong, and soon the measured tones of this call to worship were heard, and the people rapidly assembled. E Ju saw that he had no time to go on with his story, so, excusing himself, he went to the platform as the two women walked to the woman's enclosure, behind the speaker's place.

As the preacher was not there, E Ju took charge of the service. Every one liked to have him lead, as he was so prompt and interesting, though his decided way and unhesitating rebukes, if deserved, were not relished. These, however, seldom came during evening worship.

After the close of the service the chapel-keeper continued his story:

“The foreign pastors at first urged me to continue preaching and offered to support me, but I said it would not do; I was not fitted for the work. I was learning that study was too trying for a man who had all his life been active. I think that was one reason why I could not speak more pleasantly. I did not go out into the open air enough, for I was reading and studying so much that my appetite was lost, and I became irritable. I told them that I must have some business to aid in my support and enable me to be outside in the air more than a student and preacher could be. So I became the chapel-keeper. This is my story. Is it of little account? Indeed, it is; but it is the story of a sinner saved by the mercy of God. My life belongs to Him who saved me. If it be not given to the kind of work that his people think it should be, it is given as I think the Lord would have me spend it.”

CHAPTER IX.

LOVE IN THE SCHOOL.

LENG TSO took her friend to Ha Bun to see the churches and the schools—not the least of them the girls' school. Expecting to surprise the wife of the preacher, the Bible-woman had said little about it beyond telling her that such a school was in successful operation. But it was a sad surprise that awaited not only Khiau So, but the Bible-woman herself.

When the two reached the home of Iau, Leng Tso speedily asked about the girls' school.

“Well may you ask,” was the reply of her sister-in-law. “Ah! it is too bad that we should have women and girls go to school. I feared it would be so. They were not made to be educated—at least, not to go to school where young men are, and

where they teach. It was a pity—such a pity! I am sure it was the work of that young foreign pastor. Why did they let him have charge of anything? He is too young to attend to such work. He means well, but he does not know much. He is not like the other foreign pastors.”

“Why, what is the matter?” asked Leng Tso, in surprise. “What has the pastor done? What has happened to the school? Who is the young teacher? I have heard nothing; tell me.”

Iau, who had come in just as his wife began to tell his sister about the school, replied:

“It may not have been the young pastor, or he may not have intended causing trouble, but much has been caused. He does not know enough about such work; he knows enough about carpenter-work, though, for he can handle a saw and a plane like a mechanic. Some days ago he talked to me about the work of building houses in his country as if he had done it. He told me many things I did not know about tools, and showed me a lot of them he brought

with him. He may be a good carpenter, but he is not a good man to manage such work as he came here to do."

"What was it that Kin Liong said about the new preacher?" asked Iau Chim, Iau's wife. "He said that the young pastor knew how to make boats too, did he not?"

"Yes," replied Iau; "he has made two or three toy sail-boats for the boys, and they were out sailing them the other day when we came across the harbor. The young pastor and two or three of the officers of the foreign war-vessel were watching the boats sail. The sailors said that the man who could make such boats knew how to build vessels, but he does not know how to take care of a school," added Iau, shaking his head doubtfully.

"I would like to know what is the trouble with the girls' school," spoke Leng Tso, a little tartly. "The young pastor may be a good or a poor boat-builder and carpenter, but what has that to do with the school? Has anything happened to the girls' school?"

"Yes, a great deal," answered Iau Chim. "It is all bad—very bad."

“It is not so much with that as with the boys’ school near,” suggested Iau; “the trouble began there.”

“But what is it?” inquired the Bible-woman again.

“You had better go to the school and ask,” was the reply; “we may not have heard all, and what we have heard may not be true. I hope it is not. To think that such things should happen in that school so soon! But we might have known it would be so, with such a young man as teacher and girls going to school so near.” So said Iau Chim.

After further inquiry, but getting little better or more full information, Leng Tso asked Iau if he would tell in as few words as possible what the difficulty was.

“I cannot tell you in a few words; I have already heard so much that it is impossible to tell half if a day be taken for it. There is trouble with the two schools. It was bad to have the two so near, and it was bad for the new pastor to put a man so young in the school as teacher.”

“How do you know that the young pastor did it?” asked she.

"Every one says so," was the reply.

"Are you sure it was the young pastor who did it? You were at the school of the boys when the young teacher was placed in charge, were you not?" asked Leng Tso of her brother.

"Yes, I was there," he answered.

"Were not the other foreign pastors there? and did not they conduct the exercises and speak as if they were willing that Won Leng, the young teacher, should have charge?" She was beginning now to understand that there was difficulty between Won Leng, the young teacher of the boys' school, and the school for girls. The two schools were near together, and the pupils, though separated, might see each other; from a second-story piazza the boys and their teacher could look down into the yard through which the girls occasionally took walks, though it was not the yard belonging to their school.

"Yes," said Iau; "all the pastors seemed to agree with what the young pastor said."

"But did he say anything?" asked she.

For a moment the man stopped to think, and then replied:

"I am not sure what he said, if he said anything."

"He did not say much," spoke Iau Chim, "for he had only just come and did not know our language."

"True! true!" chimed in Iau. "He had but just reached Ha Bun, and could have said nothing. But he is the one who has made so many changes, every one says."

"Did he start the seminary for the older students or the girls' school?" inquired Leng Tso. "If he did, it was a good work."

"No; the pastors had thought of the large school long before the young pastor came," echoed Iau Chim; "so they had talked of the girls' school; but, after all, it was not he who began those, but Mrs. Min-turn and the young pastor's wife who began the girls' school."

"So I think you will find that the young pastor did not do all the bad, either," suggested the Bible-woman. "He is not so bad; he may, like all young people, make mistakes, but he will learn yet. He is doing some work that is good."

"Yes, he may do some things well,"

added Iau, "but he is not equal to the older pastors. They know exactly what to do and make no mistakes. Pastor Minturn knows everything, and Pastor Wagner knows everything. But the young man will learn. He knows about tools and building, though."

Leng Tso noticed that her brother did not talk as quietly nor as sensibly as he used to speak, and, though she said nothing, she watched him closely. At first she thought it was excitement about the trouble of which he and his wife had spoken, but after a while she saw that he spoke somewhat strangely about other things.

Thinking it best to wait until she could see others, Leng Tso asked nothing more about the school, and as soon as able the next day took her friend to visit it. There was little change to be noticed except the addition of two or three girls and the absence of one of the old pupils. Asking the matron where this one was, the answer came in the form of the question,

"What! have not you heard of the scandal? How can that be?"

Without telling what she had heard, the

Bible-woman asked what was meant and requested the matron to tell her where the girl was.

“Oh, she has been taken from the school,” was the reply. “We felt that she should not be here; she is a very wicked girl, and Won Leng, the teacher, is a very wicked man. I am afraid that the young pastor will cause us a great deal of trouble before he grows old enough to learn how to work aright.”

“No matter about him,” said Leng Tso—“I think he is too much blamed—but tell me what Chui and the teacher have done that is so bad.”

“They have written notes to each other, and he gave her a present of a fan and she made an embroidered piece of work for him. And they were not even engaged to be married yet! Only to think! Who ever heard of such a thing in the Middle Kingdom? We have all felt very bad about it, and the whole school has been troubled; even the church has been in great sorrow.”

“Have any of the notes written been found?” asked Khiau So, who was as much interested in this unheard-of affair as any.

“Yes; that is the way we came to know about it. Had it not been for finding one of the notes the girl had written, we might never have known of all this evil.”

“What was in the note?” asked the Bible-woman.

“That is the worst part of it,” replied the matron. “She told him that she had received his note and was so glad to know that he cared for her, a schoolgirl, and that she loved—yes, that is the word: *loved*—him. Only think of that, and they not married, nor even engaged! Oh, it is fearful! Her friends did not know about it at all, nor did his. No one had asked her mother if she would give her daughter for the teacher’s wife, nor had her mother asked any one to talk to his friends about it. To think that he and she, without any one even advising, should have begun to form an engagement! It is too bad—too unheard of to be true.”

“And she wrote that she loved him?” asked Khiau So.

“Yes,” replied the matron; “she said *loved*; I am sure of that word. We all heard the letter read.”

“But how could she send the note or receive any note from the teacher?” asked Khi-au So.

“That was the mystery for a while,” answered the matron, “until her little brother told that the teacher had given him a little paper to give his sister Chui and she had given him one for the teacher; and then the boy said he took to his sister from the teacher a fan which Won Leng said belonged to her. He had carried the present to Won Leng, too, but did not know it was a present. I was so glad when she was taken from the school that I could hardly feel thankful enough. But—will you believe it?—Won Leng still teaches the school. The young pastor, they say, will not let the others put the teacher out of the school. He has been talked to about it, but says that it is not so great a sin; if it were, the Bible would have spoken about it. But the church has punished the teacher and Chui’s mother, for she is guilty too. She said that she did not know about Chui giving a present to the teacher, and it was proved that she told her daughter how to make the embroidery.”

“Was it proved that she knew what it was

for?" asked the Bible-woman, who was showing rather a strange interest in the affair.

"“Proved?” repeated the matron. “Would not she ask? Do you think that Chui would tell an untruth to her mother?”

“What did they do with Chui’s mother and the teacher?” asked Leng Tso.

“The church suspended them from the communion. They both were members, you know, but Chui is not, or she would have been suspended too. It was right and just. But Won Leng should be turned out of the school. A man who will write a note to a woman before he is married, or even engaged, to her is not fit to teach a school.”

More of this conversation need not be given. It is enough to say that this affair had created a great deal of excitement among the Chinese Christians, and feeling had been shown toward the missionaries, though Mr. Parton was especially selected as the one largely to blame for such an unheard-of affair. As he was the newest comer, and as such a thing had almost never been heard of among the people, it was naturally thought that he must be the cause.

He learned of this opinion, and was amused until the teacher and the mother of Chui were suspended, and then, with the other missionaries, he began to think. When asked to remove the teacher for what had been done, he quietly, but as decidedly, refused, and said that he could not see that Won Leng had been guilty of so great a sin in writing notes to a girl whom he loved, nor yet was it so sinful to make or receive presents from her. Little was said to him about the deception practiced by the teacher, which was really the charge brought against the young man when summoned before the church. There it was shown that both the teacher and Chui's mother had told what was untrue in the affair, and for such falsehood they were suspended; but it is probable that neither would have been suspended had the young couple allowed others to make the match and bring about an engagement, instead of taking the love-making into their own hands.

Love-marriages are not unknown, but are rather rare, in China, and are regarded by the people as very improper. The opinion

of most of the people is that a couple should not meet, nor even know much of each other except by and through others, until after the marriage. It is needless to say that married life in China is often wretched. A woman united to a man whom she has never met until she has been married to him often learns that she has been cruelly deceived; nor is the husband likely to know much more of his wife. Coming together thus as strangers, is it a wonder that the couple learn to dislike, and even to hate, each other? The two lives are miserable; the man neglects his wife, and she fears and keeps away from him and looks upon her life as a wretched existence that cannot end too soon. Not unfrequently does she end it by suicide.

The whole story of this love-making has not been told. Before the girls' school was opened, Chui, who was thought a little girl then, attended the boys' school with some other girls. When Won Leng was placed in charge, Chui's mother, anxious to have her girl educated, allowed her to remain in the school, and the mission, never thinking of evil or that such a thing as a real love-

affair would take place in that school, were glad to have the girls remain. When the girls' school was opened, Chui was placed in that.

When the note was discovered, it was at once handed to the matron, and then to the teacher, and so to the pastor, and an investigation was made—not by the church, however, until after it became evident that there had been falsehoods uttered. The pastor, though a genuine Chinaman, was too sensible a man to discipline members because they wrote love-notes. Friends at once proposed an engagement between the two—for, as it fortunately proved, neither was yet engaged—and as soon as possible the marriage bargain was concluded; but poor Chui was at once taken from school and kept closely at home. Being an affianced bride, it was her duty, according to Chinese custom, to keep secluded; her education must at once stop. The poor girl was under a cloud; she was regarded by many as guilty of a great wrong against society and the customs of the country, and most of her friends shunned her. To be suddenly taken from school and

treated as a criminal because she had innocently and almost unconsciously learned to love the bright, active and rather handsome young teacher passed the understanding of the pure and worthy young girl. That she had done wrong all told her, but no one showed her that she had sinned against God in trying to hide and deceive. The great sin ever held before her was that she had done contrary to all Chinese custom.

Chui was compelled for two reasons to remain secluded from society—first, because she had so sadly broken the rules of society; second, because that now, being betrothed, she must remain hidden until the wedding-day, which had already been set. Sad and very lonely, with little company except her mother, the young girl spent the days of seclusion. While she longed for company, she was afraid to have callers lest they should repeat the words of rebuke she had so often already heard. When the Bible-woman called, Chui was glad, yet troubled; she liked the kind-hearted woman, but expected that she too would speak of her error. Timidly the girl greeted Leng Tso, and then

mekly waited to receive the reproof she feared. Though it did not come at once, Chui felt sure that it would come before her caller left.

After Leng Tso had spoken of a number of matters of little interest she said,

“I am sorry that you were compelled to stop school. You were not tired, were you?”

“‘Tired’?” asked the girl, in surprise. “Why should I be tired? I was happy at school, and only wish I could have remained to learn more.”

“So do I,” spoke the Bible-woman. “You should have stayed for two years, that you might learn a great deal and then be able to teach other women when you are married and live where the women do not know about the truth.”

Chui looked at her in surprise; such an idea was unexpected. For her to continue at school after falling in love with a teacher, after being engaged to him too, and after such an amount of talk and trouble as had been caused! The girl had never thought of it, and surely did not expect to hear

another suggest it. Then she thought that, as Leng Tso had been away from Ha Bun for some time, she had not heard the story. It was strange, too, for Chui knew that the women of China—and the men are not better—were always ready to tell unpleasant news.

Looking timidly in the face of Leng Tso, the girl asked,

“Did not any one tell you why I left school?”

“Yes; I was told,” was the answer. “But that is not reason enough to make you at once give up school.”

“But they said I must at once leave the school,” replied Chui; “they said that I was not fit to be with good girls. Oh, they called me bad names and— But it may be that I did wrong, only I did not mean to. I did not know it was wrong; no one told me so, and no one ever said it was wrong. I never heard the preachers say so; the catechism did not say anything about it, and I never read in the holy book that it was wrong to love a man before becoming engaged to be married to him. Is it wrong?”

I do not wish to do what is evil. No, no! I desire to do right and to please God. But they say that I am wicked;" and the young girl began to sob. "It is so hard to have people say what they do about me and to me. Am I so bad? If it is so wrong, why was I not taught about it before?"

Leng Tso was troubled, especially by the last question, but she replied as well as she was able:

"You must not expect to be told of all the evils there are in the world; to be told of them may make you long for them. That is the reason why older people often are silent. But I fear that they have treated you too harshly."

"And it is not a sin to love him?" eagerly asked the girl, as she tried to draw hope from Leng Tso. "I could not help it, he was so kind and good. Others would have done as I did had they been placed as I was. But I did not wish to care for him. He was the teacher and I a pupil, and it seemed that he was great and wise—so wise that he would never think of a schoolgirl like me. I did not know that I would ever like him

more than others; I did not know anything about it until I knew that he liked me very much, and then it seemed I liked him even more. Was it wrong?"

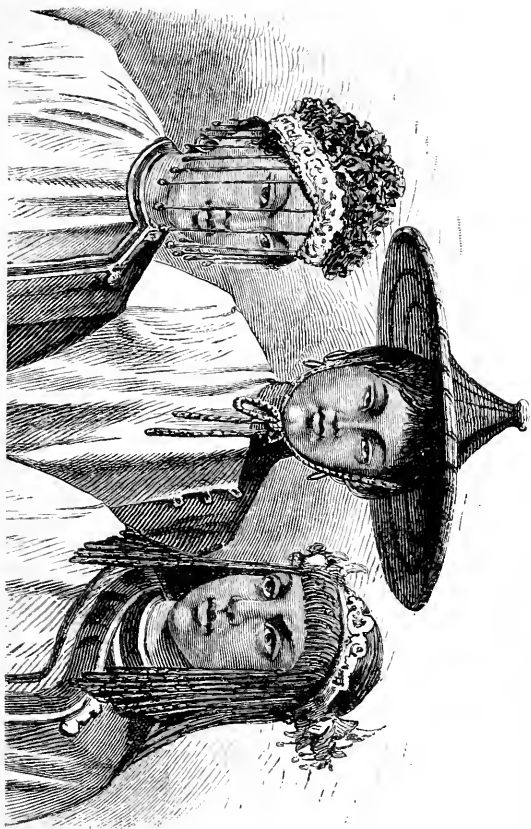
Without directly answering, the Bible-woman asked,

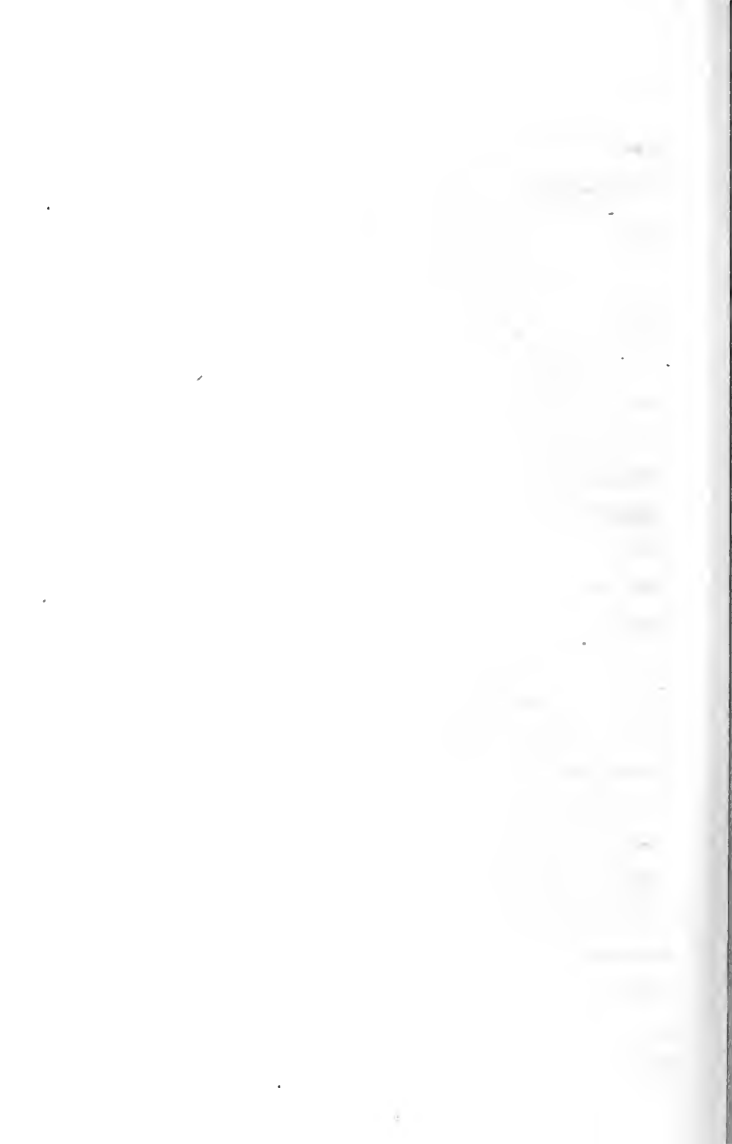
"Will you tell me all about it? I cannot answer until I know, and from you, the whole story. Can you trust me enough to tell me all?"

Chui hesitated. She was approaching womanhood in age, and not less so in feeling; she had learned caution, yet longed for sympathy and for a friend to whom she could tell all. If there was one whom she could trust, the girl knew it was Leng Tso; and the kindly face and unreproving words of the woman almost convinced Chui that she could tell her all. Yet uncertain, the girl replied,

"I have told all again and again; every one knows the whole story, and that is the reason all speak so harshly. If I had not told it, they might have found less fault."

"You have not told all to me," persisted the Bible-woman. "Tell me, and I will





then say whether or not you have done wrong, and will try to show you where the wrong is, if wrong there be."

The manner rather than the words of the woman convinced the girl that she could safely tell all to Leng Tso. She began:

"I *will* tell you all, but it is not different from what others know, only I told as little as I could. When I was in the school of the boys and the teacher came, I liked him, and so did all the others, he was so kind and pleasant. He tried to help us in our studies and seldom scolded. He wished to do all he could to help each one. I could not understand some things, and he sat down and tried to make everything plain. This he did to others as well as to me, and no one thought about it. Then, at worship, he prayed that we all might have the Lord's help in our studies, and he talked to us about asking help from God. I did that; so did others. I was sorry when the girls' school began and I must go there, for the teacher had helped me so much in my studies. I told him so one day, and he said that he would be willing to help me even

there if he knew how to do it. But it was not right for him to go to the girls' school, nor to interfere in any way. After I had been in that school a few days I felt bad because I did not have him to help me, and because the old teacher did not help me as Won Leng had done. Then there was something that I could not learn, and the old teacher did not help me; so I wrote a note to Won Leng, telling him what I wanted to know and asking if he would please tell me. I gave the note to my little brother to take to him. I said that I missed him, but did not say that I loved him; I did not think of saying such a thing. I would not have dared to write had I known that I thought of him as anything but a kind teacher. He sent back with my brother a note telling what I wanted to know, and said that he missed me in the school and that he would be glad to help me in any part of my studies. Some time afterward I wanted help again, and sent him another note, and he sent an answer; in that way we each wrote three or four notes. Then he wrote one telling how he missed me, and

how much he had learned to love the little schoolgirl. I did not know what to think or do. I kept that note, and read it again and again. Then I thought that I was not engaged to be married, and I wished that my mother would try to have me become his wife; but I did not dare say a word to her or to any one about it. It seemed unwise for me to wish that I might become the wife of a teacher, and one who might be a preacher. What was I? But the oftener I read the note, the more I thought and longed to see him. I asked my little brother about him, and was so glad to hear him talk about the teacher, but did not dare to let any one know how I felt. I waited some days to write a reply to the teacher's note, for I did not know what to say. I was so happy to believe that he cared for me that I wished to tell everybody, yet dared not say a word, for he wrote in his note that I must not read it to any one or say a word about it; so I kept it all to myself. At last I wrote a note in reply; I told him how glad I was to know that he did not forget me, and said that I would never forget him, and that I thought

more of him than of all my friends. After it was written I was afraid to send it to him or to give it to my brother, so kept it with me; and in some way it was lost, and was found by others. Had I known it was so wrong to write such a note to him, I would never have done it."

"And is that all?" asked Leng Tso, when Chui stopped.

"Yes, all, except about the presents. They say that I did very wrong to give him that piece of embroidery and to receive a present from him. I gave it only because one day when I was in his school he asked if I could embroider; so, after I learned how, I sent him a piece of my work as a present and to show that I had learned. Did I do wrong?"

"Is that all you did?" asked Leng Tso, not noticing her question.

"Yes, that is all that I can remember," was the answer.

"Were you ever alone with the teacher?" asked the woman.

"Alone with him!" exclaimed Chui, in amazement. "No; why should I be? There was nothing he wanted to tell me

or I him that we could not say when others were by. And I have not seen him since I went into the girls' school except at meetings or as he went by on the street."

"What did you do with the notes he sent you?"

"I kept them all—I liked to read them and see how he wrote and what he said—until that note was found and so much was said; then all were burned."

"And have you never seen him to speak to him since you left his school?"

"Not once; I have not spoken to him since the day I left his school. How could I speak? He did not come where I was, and it was not right for me to go where he was. Now I have told you all; did I do so very wickedly?"

Leng Tso felt that the girl had told her all the truth, and replied quietly:

"You should have told your mother about it all—indeed, should not have written the first note without asking her."

"I did not think about that," replied the girl; "but I did tell her about the fan, and she knew about my sending him the embroi-

dered work. And I think my brother told her that I sent the notes: she did not object. I suppose that she thought me only a child, and that I was making a present to my teacher, as is often done by pupils. I wish, though, that she had not denied that she knew anything about it. Then he should not have said that some one else gave him the present and that he had not sent the fan to me; I know that was not right. Will you please tell me, now that you know all, what else I did that was so wicked?"

"I do not think that you have been so wicked," replied Leng Tso, decidedly. "You should not have written those notes, and surely not the last one, without asking your mother after showing his to her. Then you should have told your mother, if you liked him so well."

"And was it not wrong to like him before being engaged?"

"No, it was not," replied Leng Tso, again decidedly. "The holy book says nothing against loving the man who is to be your husband, but commands wives and husbands to love each other."

“But he was not, nor is he yet, my husband,” interposed Chui; “we were not even engaged to be married.”

“I see no sin even in that,” replied Leng Tso, “especially as neither of you was engaged to another and could choose whom you would.”

“What! *I* choose?” asked the girl, in astonishment. “Is it not the duty of parents and the go-between to choose?”

“That is the custom in the Middle Kingdom, but not of other countries; and the holy book says nothing to command or to forbid it, so far as I know.”

“Then I did not sin against God?” said Chui, with a great sigh of relief. “That is what troubled me greatly. I knew that I wished to serve him, and I was trying to be his disciple and hoped soon to become a member of the church; but this came so suddenly and so terribly against me, as if to destroy me. Then some said that I was not fit to be a member of the church, and that I was not fit to be with Christians. It seemed so terrible. All was so bright and I was so happy before. It appeared as

if a typhoon had suddenly come in the most beautiful calm day and was tearing down and uprooting all I had. But"—and she asked the question with hesitation—"after we are married will I still love him?"

"Why not?" asked the Bible-woman.

"Some women told me that it would be a just punishment to me if I hated him after we were married. They said that those who love before they are engaged cannot expect to love after marriage."

"Why should that be? If a woman loves really and gives her heart entirely to a man, she will not take it back, if she be a true woman and he a man worthy her love."

"And will God forgive me? Will I dare go to the inquiry-meeting again?"

"Certainly; God says he will forgive the sins of all who come to him trusting in the Saviour. But be careful that you ask it for Jesus' sake. The inquiry-meeting is just the place for you. You must not think that because you have not done according to the customs of the Middle Kingdom you have not done according to the law of God; our customs and his law may be very different.

If you have not broken his law, you have not sinned against him. His law forbids only such customs as are sinful, and the holy book leaves many of the customs of a people to itself."

"Now I see," spoke the girl; "I have not sinned against God, but against the customs of the Middle Kingdom, and the Middle-Kingdom people are punishing me for it. And that is the reason why the new foreign pastor—and, I think, the others too—say so little about it. Our own pastor did not say I had done wrong, except that we had all deceived, and that I and the teacher had been very unwise in acting as we had to cause so much talk and trouble. But he is such a kind and loving pastor! Have you heard what the teacher says and how he is treated and how he feels? I am so sorry that he must suffer because of me. If you see him, will you tell him that I am sorry to have given him pain?"

Leng Tso was willing to promise, for she felt as few could a deep sympathy for the girl, and more than once during this call had been more than half tempted to tell her own story.

After a few minutes of talk on other subjects Chui asked,

“Am I so much worse than others in loving one to whom I am not engaged?”

“Is it wrong to love that which is good and noble? No; we cannot help loving such beings when we are constantly with them. That, I think, is the reason why our ancestors so arranged society in the Middle Kingdom: they knew that women would love the good men and hate the bad, so that the bad would be left without wives. For the sake of the bad men the custom was made.”

“Do you think so?” asked the girl, in wonder.

“I think so, but do not know it to be the fact,” was the reply.

“If I could only know that some one who was not bad had done as I have done, I would not feel so badly about it,” said Chui, half to herself.

Leng Tso looked for a while at Chui, and then asked,

“Would you like to hear about one who loved a young man as you do?”

“Yes, I would,” was the eager answer. “Was it in the Middle Kingdom?”

“Yes, and not far from this city. You know the woman, though you may not know the man.”

“Do I know her?” asked the girl, anxiously. “Who is she? Who is the man, too? But I wish to know who the woman is.”

“Listen and I will tell her story, and you may then ask, if you wish to know;” and then the Bible-woman began to tell her own story. As part of it is already known to the reader, and all of it to those who have read the *Chinese Slave-Girl*, the story will not be told here in full as told by Leng Tso. In brief, it was this:

“A small child was sold in time of great drought to save her life and to gain a little money to keep the rest of the family from starving. The man who bought her took her to a village where he lived and made her his slave. He was unkind to the child; an old woman in the village took pity on the little stranger and treated her kindly, and almost made the little one her own child. This woman, who was quite old, had a grandson

—a noble boy—a few years older than the slave-girl. He saw how the child was abused by her master, and when able gave her all the help he could. He treated her as if she had been his sister. The two were together with the other children of the village whenever they could be, this boy always taking the side of the slave-girl and defending her against all enemies. The girl, as she grew older, loved the brave boy and looked on him as a hero; she learned that he cared as much for her as she did for him. As they grew older he told her that he meant to buy her from her master and make her his wife. For years they lived in this way—she as happy as a slave-girl could be with such a master, and he happy in the belief that when he was a man he would buy her to become his wife. The master took a great dislike to the youth. When the boy's father tried to buy the girl, the master charged such a high price that no bargain could be made. After a time the boy—now almost a man—told his friends and the slave-girl his purpose, and started from home to earn money more rapidly, that he

might buy the girl. He remained away for several years. In the mean time, the girl's master sold her to become the second wife of an opium-smoker. He became a gambler, and when in a gambling-shop one day after he had lost all his property offered his second wife for sale to any one who would give him money with which to gamble. In this way she became the property of another man, who made her his wife. This man was killed in the destruction of the Foo city, and his property was destroyed; after that the wife was free. Some time after she was sold to become the second wife of the man to whom her master sold her, the young man returned to his native village with money enough to buy the slave-girl. Finding that she had been already sold, he turned away in despair and moved to the Foo city, where he started in business and became wealthy. After some years, while passing along the street, he saw the former slave-girl, now the wife of the man who had bought her from the gambler. He knew her, and she him. As they met the old love revealed itself, but, according to the

rules of society, they could not meet except with the husband's permission and in his presence. The man, through others, tried to buy from her husband this woman, but he was unwilling to part with a wife whom he loved; she knew nothing of the proposed offer. In time the man who loved her was persuaded to marry another woman—one far better educated and of a more aristocratic family—yet neither he nor she could forget the one loved in childhood. When the Foo city was captured, this man and his wife were away, and so were saved, but their property was destroyed. Years after, all three of these—the man and his wife and the former slave-girl, now a widow—became Christians and met. He was a preacher and the widow was a Bible-woman.”

“Was that woman yourself?” asked Chui suddenly interrupting.

“Yes,” replied Leng Tso; “it was I.”

“And is the man yet living? and is his wife alive?”

“Yes, both are alive.”

“Who is the man?”

This was asked with so much hesitation

that the Bible-woman had little difficulty in saying,

“I can tell only the woman’s name, but must say nothing more about the man.”

“Do you love him yet?” asked the girl, with a strange earnestness in look and tone.

“Yes,” replied the woman, with deep feeling; “I love him yet.”

“And you loved as I do, and love yet! How strange! Is his wife living?”

“Yes, both are living,” said Leng Tso, not noticing that she had been asked and had answered that question before.

“Does she know you? and does she know that you love him?”

“Yes; he told her all, for she has talked to me about it. I know her well; she is as true and noble as he is, and I love her as a sister, because she is so good, so kind to him and so true to me. She is not to blame that he did not buy me back. It is not her fault, and why should she feel troubled? There! I have said all there is to be told. Now let me ask, ‘Do you think you are the only one in the Middle Kingdom who ever loved a man to whom she was not already engaged?’”

“But he meant to marry you,” said Chui, “and went to get the money to buy you for his wife. The bargain seemed almost made; nothing but the money was needed.”

“True,” replied the woman; “but I too have often asked myself if I was not sinning by holding hidden in my heart this love for a man who is the husband of another. I too have prayed God to forgive me and to help me to conquer the love.”

“Have you conquered?”

“Yes, in one way. I can pray that God will make the lives of him and his wife happy and spare them to each other, and I have long since learned to say, ‘Thy will be done.’ I think had it been otherwise I might not have known about the gospel, and might never have been able to tell others of it.”

The visit of the Bible-woman gave Chui great comfort, and Leng Tso became deeply interested in the young girl. There was a bond of sympathy that drew them closely together, and the Bible-woman’s kindly words to others for the girl had no little influence in turning the sympathy of others toward Chui.

Won Leng continued to teach in the boys' school, but was transferred to another place after a time, and thither he took with him his young bride, Chui. After the wedding all the talk ceased, and she was regarded with the same feelings as other wives.

It is often said that love before marriage—rather, before engagement—in China is unknown. As a rule, that statement will hold true, but it has exceptions; the most noted instance of which the author knew while in that country is the one he has just related.

CHAPTER X.

THE ANTI-FEETBINDING SOCIETY.

DURING the stay at Ha Bun of the two women from up the country there was no little discussion about unbinding the feet of women and girls. So much had been said that the people were thinking, and thinking wisely, about this strange and foolish custom. Of course the thinking and the talking were mostly among the Christians and those who mingled with them, yet people outside of the church heard the talk and had their thoughts as well. That such thoughts were always in favor of binding the feet of women and girls need not be supposed: China has sensible people. Yet the vast majority looked at any effort toward unbinding the feet as un-Chinese and foreign not only, but as a part of the foreign religion. To meet the sneers of these and hear them say that the foreigners

were controlling the minds of the people was not easy for the Christians. It needed no little urging as well as instruction to persuade the Christians to take any forward movement. They could not see why this custom should be given up, especially as the Bible said nothing against it, and the most of them quietly settled down to let the whole matter alone. But it was impossible to silence the missionaries or the Chinese pastors and preachers, who would persist in telling their hearers that it was unnatural, and even sinful, to deform the body for the sake of a fancied beauty. At length some were convinced that something must be done, if for no other reason than to quiet the voice of conscience and of the preachers; but there were a few who from earnest conviction were ready to do all in their power to stop the binding of feet. Such proved their sincerity by acts. Especially was this the case with the family of one of the native pastors. His wife unbound the feet of her eldest daughters and left the feet of the younger ones unbound.

“What had better be done?” asked one of

the preachers of another. "We may continue to talk, but unless we act the talk will be wasted. We must show that we mean to do something and are ready to do it."

"So I think," added the other. "But 'What?' and 'How?' are questions all can ask. Who will answer? The foreign pastors say we should meet together and talk of the matter in a public gathering, and learn what others are ready to do or to propose."

"True," spoke the first one. "It is useless to try to keep a fire with a single stick; bring many dry ones together, and there will be heat if only a small flame be applied."

A meeting was called in a church in the city, and all interested in binding or in unbinding feet were invited; the meeting was held on a weekday afternoon. It was thought best that the first meeting should be for women only. About seventy women were present; three missionaries and two native pastors were on the platform, and thus with about seventy-five in the first gathering an anti-footbinding society began a work that is likely to become in China not very unlike that of the total-abstinence societies of America.

The meeting was conducted by the preachers, native as well as foreign. Addresses were made showing the injury and wrong of binding the feet of girls and women and appealing to those present to make a start in breaking down the evil custom. Many of those present were ready to begin if some would but lead the way. The speakers had decided on the way: this was to sign a pledge not to bind the feet of their young daughters, and to remove the bandages from those already bound. When such a pledge was suggested, many a woman closed her lips firmly and shook her head, as if to let it be known that she would not sign it; others were willing and ready. There was a low buzzing among the women, some appealing to others to sign and others inspiring their friends to refuse. The pledge was offered to each woman, and, to the surprise of all, forty signed it. Among these was the wife of one of the pastors, and her mother, who was more than seventy years old. It seemed absurd for this old lady to sign such a pledge, her children all being grown and married; but it was soon seen that old Mrs. Lee—for that was her

name—did not sign as a mere form. She afterward told her daughter and others,

“I do not mean to ask others to do what I am not willing to do myself. It will not do for a Christian to say ‘Go,’ but ‘Come.’”

“Why, mother,” spoke the daughter, “do you mean to unbind your feet?”

“Surely I do,” was the reply.

In vain friends told Mrs. Lee that for one so old there was an excuse, and that she need not unbind her feet; it was not expected of her.

“No matter what is expected,” replied she. “What will be the effect of my example? I must let my light shine before the world. How can I do it but by unbinding my feet?”

This anti-feetbinding society made quite a stir in the city, especially among Christians. Some were as decidedly in its favor as others were against it.

Few supposed that any but young women and girls would be expected to unbind their feet. But when the wife of one of the pastors unbound her own feet, and her aged mother did the same, other women began to

ask themselves whether they were expected to follow the example. Not a few were relieved to learn that old Mrs. Lee was unable to walk with the bandages removed, and was compelled to restore them.

“It might be the same with us,” suggested several, “and why should we cripple ourselves so as to be unable to walk at all? We can walk now, and better walk poorly than be helpless.”

Some, however, unbound their feet for a while and then rebound them, to become accustomed to the change gradually. Mrs. Lee felt disappointed when she saw that to keep the pledge as she understood it she made herself a cripple and a captive.

“I have been chained,” said she, “for life, and must wear the chains, but better wear them with a little liberty than exchange them for a prison.”

The first meeting created no little talk. Men took part in it as well as women, but the male portion were more in favor of the movement than were those who suffered most from the evil. They were anxious to attend a meeting themselves if another was

held. When the people were anxious for it and the excitement had become great, another gathering was called, in the largest church, and men as well as women were invited. The house was full. People came from churches out of the city. Preachers from other places, as well as from Ha Bun, were there. Women filled the places for the female part of the congregation, and men the body of the church. Addresses were delivered by one and another after the object of the gathering had been stated, but that which gave the most interest to the meeting was a paper read by one of the young preachers, Lee Choh Lin. As this paper, written by a Chinaman, gives, as far as the author has ever seen, the best description of the evils of feet-binding, a translation of the main portion of the essay is given:

“As to binding the feet, the custom is pitiable and to be abominated, because it greatly injures people and is extremely distressing. Some bind until the flesh is rotten and vile; some, until the bones are broken and the calf of the leg withers away. Some become so weak that they cannot hold their chopsticks

to take their food, and some grow pale and emaciated and end their lives in consumption.

“When the feet are bound at first, some cry continually; they even cry aloud as they weep, and call with a loud and mournful voice for help. Their fear becomes so great that feet and hands tremble and from the whole body flows a cold sweat.

“After the feet have become of proper shape and size there is always more or less pain and trouble, caused by the pressure of the nails into the flesh. In some cases the foot becomes rotten; then they sprinkle on alum or plaster with salt vegetables. When in pain and distress, they call out, saying, ‘For what purpose is this binding of my feet?’ Some curse and revile their lives, saying, ‘Binding my feet! Oh, that some one would kill me!’ They groan over and deplore their cruel fate, because the large is turned into the small, the straight into the crooked, and the five members are bound into one. They have less strength, more suffering and are less able to walk than those whose feet are unbound. In ascending hills, descend-

ing steep, crossing difficult places, and in everything, there is more inconvenience and more misery. To speak of all the particulars of this evil a whole day would not be sufficient.

“This custom is not only injurious to humanity, but is plainly sinning against God. Such private torture is far worse than that received in punishment by law; for there, in many cases, by paying money one can be released, but in the case of feet-binding the torture lasts a lifetime. Can this be without sin? We must remember that God is all-wise and made our bodies and all our members, each member being perfect. Man must be very brave to dare to use this cruel method and violently change what God has made. Can such a person be without sin? I think not. Any one willing to think carefully will know that this custom is far from right. It certainly does not profit, and only injures. In the first place, it injures one’s self; in the second place, it injures others; thirdly, it is not in accordance with the will of God. Thus it is plain that the feet should not be bound.

“What a pity to see so many of the chil-

dren of the church with bound feet! We should mourn over this. It is a great mistake of the parents. They do not think deeply, but obstinately follow the customs of the world. They have always heard their parents say, 'Not bound, not pretty; not bound, not fit to behold.' Now, I think that bound feet are not pretty, because the foot that God has made has five toes, long and short, in proper proportion and very pretty. When a foot is bound, this pattern is destroyed; for all are made into one bundle. Nor is the pattern always the same, for some bind in one shape, and some in another.

“When a woman wishes to unbind her feet for an airing, she always does it in a concealed place. If a man should come, she would run or cover her feet, because she is ashamed of them. That shame is proof that her feet are not fit to be seen. What a pity that people will follow the customs of the world more faithfully than they do the doctrines of God!

“Some excuse themselves by saying that unbound feet are not honorable, and that such as have them are not fit to associate

with respectable people, and that they will be looked upon as slaves. But if we look at this carefully, we will see that bound feet are not honorable, because binding makes them vile. Surely that is not honorable? If seen and touched by a clean person, he must wash his hands before he touches a rice-bowl, takes hold of chopsticks or puts food to his mouth. Men are so conformed to this world that they call dishonorable things honorable, and thus turn everything around.

“If all the women would leave their feet unbound, like women in other countries, whose feet are pretty and honorable, it would be far better. What is made pretty is pretty, and what is made ugly is ugly. Our empress, for example, although she does not bind her feet, is considered honorable.* Now, among the bound-footed women, who can compare with the empress in honor? Who can associate with her even as an equal? Who dares, because her feet are not bound, call her a slave? Thus you

* The Mantchu Tartars—and that includes the emperor's family—do not bind the feet of women and girls, but allow them to grow as nature made those members.

may know that those whose lot it is to be honorable will be honorable, and those whose place it is to be lowly will be lowly. Though you bind your feet small enough to put them in a rice-measure, yet, if you are of the lowly, you will remain lowly still. If you are not pretty, will binding your feet make you so? For instance, if you have a crooked nose, can you make it straight by binding your feet? If your face be black, will binding your feet make it fair? Certainly not. So you may know that there is no profit in binding the feet, but injury only.

“Shall not all of us who are Christians exert ourselves to have this custom removed from our churches? The holy book bids us not to be conformed to this world. There are daughters of Jezebel constantly whispering in your ears, saying, ‘Do bind! Do bind! You must not unbind! You must not unbind!’ But do not listen; rather, learn of Sarah, whose daughters you are, and thus glorify God.”

The address of young Mr. Lee was listened to with interest and made a lasting impression. The young man was popular, and

anything from him would have effect. All knew that what he said was true, yet on the other hand remained the fact that large-footed women were looked upon as poor, degraded, and even slaves, while those having small feet were counted among the better class.

"It is all true," said one man to his neighbor; "but if we allow our girls to unbind their feet, we cannot marry them to respectable wealthy men and cannot get a good price for them."

"True," was the answer; "and we cannot afford to bring up daughters to marry men below their own station, and then receive a price that does not pay for one-fourth of the trouble and cost we have had. Foot-binding is evil, but to escape that we meet another that may be far greater."

The meeting did not break up when the addresses closed; then began the real business of the gathering. The people willing to engage in the new movement organized themselves into a society whose object was to change the custom of binding the feet of the girls and women of China.

"But we must do more," said a man,

before the meeting adjourned. "This is not a work for the women alone: the men—especially the young men—can help a great deal in this."

After a minute or two of silence the speaker continued:

"Let the young men sign a pledge that they will not marry girls whose feet are bound. Instead of making small feet a prize, let them be regarded as the mark of weakness. Then every girl will wish to have her feet left the natural size."

This last address made more of an impression than anything that had been said.

"We must have a pledge for the young men," said one. "Let them agree not to marry women with small feet, and then the bandages will speedily disappear."

No one opposed the motion, though some of the young men yet unmarried and not engaged wished that some one would say a word or two against such a pledge. They might be willing enough to marry large-footed women, but how would they feel to have the world speak of their wives as of the lowest class?

None was more elated than the Bible-woman at the result of this meeting. That for which she had so long looked had begun. Justice to Leng Tso suggests that, while she was a large-footed woman, it was not that she might have company among the people of the church, but that the women might with her enjoy a blessing that she could fully appreciate, that made her long to see every woman and every girl remove the bandages from her feet.

These meetings of the anti-footbinding society were held each quarter, and were attended by large numbers. While the excitement caused by the movement soon lessened, the interest continued, and the society grew in members and in strength. It is living and working quietly but decidedly yet, and will probably never die until the last bound foot in China is laid in the grave.

CHAPTER XI.

TROUBLE IN THAU PAU.

THE differences between Khiau and Liong had arisen slowly, but they came to stay. Before he became a Christian, Liong had been one of the leaders of the village, and he could not get rid of the desire to regain his old position. He had received very little religious instruction, and his waywardness was more the result of ignorance than of wickedness. Khiau was a little inclined to be overbearing, so that it was difficult to say which was the more to blame. The feeling between the two men did not take the form of quarrels.

Liong showed his feeling rather in a dissatisfied manner and an unwillingness to do what the preacher requested. One day he surprised Khiau with a request that the missionaries be informed that he had need of the building used as a chapel and would be glad if they would give it back to him.

“But what shall we do for a house in which to worship? There is no other that we can get.”

“I cannot say,” replied Liong. “You are the leader here, and it will be your work to find another place.”

Khiau sent the message to the missionaries and sadly told them that no other building suitable for a chapel could be had in the place; if service was to be continued, a new chapel must be built.

It was a time of great scarcity of money in the mission, but the necessity was plain, and it was decided to build a new chapel at Thau Pau as soon as possible. Word was sent that the mission would help, but the people must do all they could. This was good news to all. Even Liong was glad to have a new chapel in the village, and the rest of the people were thankful, for the old building was anything but comfortable.

They busied themselves with trying to collect money for the new chapel, but money was far from plenty, and many of the villagers would far rather have given money to keep a chapel away than to build one near them.

After great effort twenty-seven dollars was collected, and the mission agreed to add fifty to this amount. It was found that more money would be needed to complete the building, and three dollars additional were collected in the village, and the mission added twenty; so that the chapel cost about one hundred dollars, a little less than one-third of which was given by the people. This sum appears very small to us, but thirty dollars was an immense sum for the poor people of Thau Pau to give. It was fully equal to four hundred dollars with us, as far as the actual purchasing power is concerned; and when it is remembered that the people in villages away from the coast and the large cities have very little money, it will be seen that thirty dollars was not a small sum for the Christians of Thau Pau to give.

When the money had been raised and the place for the site obtained, the people opposed to building a chapel showed their opposition by threats; but when warned that they might offend the mandarins if they undertook to prevent the erection of the chapel, they sullenly allowed the work to begin.

No great amount of material was needed; no bricks were brought nor stone carried from a distance; no great pile of lumber lay near the site of the chapel. No one, to have seen the preparations, would have suspected that a chapel was to be built there. After a little digging for the walls the masons set on edge two boards united by two cross-pieces about a foot in length, and into this box the men began to shovel the earth they had dug. A small portion of lime was put into the box with the earth, and then, with blunt sticks, the men pounded and stamped the earth and lime until the whole became almost as hard as stone. More ground and more lime were put into the box until it was full and all had been pounded solid; then the box was moved along to add to this first and lower part of the wall. When one side had been begun in this way, the next end or side was begun in the same manner; and thus the wall all around was started. The first course completed, the box was raised, and on top of the lower course the masons continued to build, adding thus until the whole was high enough.

Before the building was completed a child in the village became very ill ; at once the enemies of the gospel said that this was caused by the chapel, and that the work must be stopped. This was sad news to the people of God. In vain did they urge that the chapel had nothing to do with the child's illness ; the superstitious people would not be convinced, and insisted that the building should stop at once or all in the village would be made ill, and perhaps killed.

A still greater trouble was in store for the faithful ones. Liong began to show his hostility more openly. He neglected the chapel service on the Sabbath, and it was said that he had even been seen to work in the field on the Lord's day. Gan, who was under Liong's influence, actually did work on the Sabbath. Liong was constantly telling the others that it was useless to go to the chapel, where they would hear little more than they knew themselves. It was a severe blow to the others to have both the men who brought the gospel to the village fall away, and the faith of some was shaken.

It was a sad meeting that was held one

day in the old chapel, to which were invited all the Christians of Thau Pau and neighboring places. Two of the missionaries were there. They had learned much of the sad story of Liong's wandering and Gan's sin. Earnestly and tenderly they warned the people of the danger of accepting doctrines that were contrary to the Bible. As a father would plead with his children, so they pleaded with these uneducated Christians, and taught them more clearly the way of life and duty.

The visit and the counsels of the missionaries had a great effect on the Christians, who were made stronger in their faith and more willing to endure trial for the Lord's sake.

Yet another trial came to the Christians of Thau Pau. One morning early, as a girl about fourteen years old was working near her home, she gave a fearful shriek that startled the whole village. She uttered a single word, but it was one that made the blood of all who heard it almost stop:

“*Haw!*” *

* Tiger.

Every one knew the meaning of that awful word; and when uttered with such a fearful shriek, all who heard the sound knew that the dreadful beast was near. Those who were in their homes hastily shut the doors and locked themselves in, while others outside ran to the nearest place of safety.

For a few moments only were the people hidden. From the home of the young girl whose scream had been heard there came the agonizing cries of her mother. The first impulse of the family within, when hearing the cry of "*Haw!*" had been to shut and bolt the door, but the mother had caught in the shriek the sound of her daughter's voice. A mother's love overcame all fear, and the door was carefully opened as the mother looked out to see where the daughter was. The girl had disappeared, nor was the sound of her voice heard. The awful stillness was too sure a harbinger for the mother to mistake. Looking out from her home, the parent saw a huge tiger disappearing in the edge of the woods, carrying in its mouth the limp body of the young girl; it was then that the scream of the mother made known to the af-

frighted people that the tiger had done its work. Some men, impelled by a desperate courage, burst open their doors and hurried out to see what they could do to save the life of whoever might be attacked by the beast. It was but a sentence from the mother's lips that told the story, but the men knew all.

Had the girl been a heathen, there might have been more general sympathy for the parents and more decided efforts made to pursue the beast. In vain, for a time, did the mother appeal to the men to save her child; the father himself was almost dumb with fright. At length, when many precious moments had passed, some started to frighten the tiger and make him drop the body. The beast had so much the start, and fear had so much effect on the pursuers, that they failed even to find the tiger. It was a sad return for the pursuing party, but far more sad to the bereaved mother when she saw them slowly enter the village without her daughter.

The visit of the tiger and the capture of the child of one of the Christian families were

regarded by the heathen as certain proofs that the gods were angry at the building of the Christian chapel. They did not hesitate to tell the bereaved parents and the other followers of the Saviour that this was a just punishment for turning away from the religion of their fathers. They declared that this was but the beginning of calamities. The gods had waited long to give people time to return to the faith of their ancestors, but, since all opportunities had been rejected, the punishments would now come.

Perhaps the best human visitor who could have come to the village was the Bible-woman. She had heard of the calamity and knew too well the feelings of a bereaved mother; so to her it seemed a duty to go at once to Thau Pau to comfort the mourners and do what she could to prevent the rising of superstitious fears on the part of Christians. Leng Tso had heard of the trouble about the chapel and the growing feeling on the part of Liong against the preacher, and then against the whole band of Christians. She was not vain enough to suppose that she could restore peace and harmony, but did

think that she might prevent the trouble growing, and that through the wives she might influence the husbands.

It was not as cheerful a welcome as the Bible-woman was accustomed to receive that greeted her when she reached her old home. A feeling of sadness seemed to be on everything relating to the Christians of the village. The unfinished chapel was the first thing to greet the eye; and when she met her old friends of the church, they gave her a half-hearted welcome, as if they were uncertain whether or not she were a friend. The idolaters were polite, but nothing more. They felt that they could afford to leave matters to the gods who had begun to work, and were willing to escape trouble themselves.

Visiting the bereaved family, Leng Tso tried to comfort and cheer them with the assurance that the heathen gods had nothing to do with the carrying away of the young girl.

“If it were the gods,” said she, “who was it that carried away my mistress, Hou So, long before the doctrine came to Thau

Pau? Who was it that carried away from several of the villages during the past few months not only girls and women, but strong men? Tigers did it. If the gods did it, would they take away half a score of their own faithful ones first, and then last of all come here and take away one of the Lord's people? Why, it would be proof that the Lord's people are far more safe than are those who worship the gods. As far as I have heard, your child is the only one in all this part of the Middle Kingdom who has been carried from a Christian family by a tiger."

The words of the Bible-woman were not without effect; and as she spoke of the better life and gave them hope of seeing their loved one again where no evil comes, the bereaved friends listened and were comforted. To them it was so unlike the teaching of the superstitious heathen to hear of again meeting their lost one, even though a tiger had made her its victim, that they could but accept the comforting words of the woman as she spoke and read to them from the Bible.

After the first fright at the tiger's work had passed away, the Christians became more calm and hopeful. They still continued to worship in the house of Liong, and the heathen, seeing that the new chapel was left to go to ruin and that the people were discouraged, gave them but little trouble.

But there was a cause for sorrow that did not appear openly. Liong, as has been said, was wandering away and secretly teaching the people to doubt the doctrines taught by the preacher. He was also promoting trouble among the people and trying to turn all against the chapel service and the preacher.

As we shall not have much more to say about Liong, the rest of his story may be added here. He was, after kindly admonition, suspended, and finally, with Gan, excommunicated from the church. But at the last accounts Liong is again attending the Sabbath services. No doubt a war is going on in the heart of the self-willed man between his own ambition and his desire to be a faithful disciple of Christ. The author believes that the spirit of Liong will yet yield to the power of God's Spirit, and that

the proud man will come back to the Saviour.

When the chapel had remained in its unfinished state for some time, the missionaries determined to complete it. The ground on which it was built was theirs, and their need of it for the purpose of teaching and preaching—which are allowed by law in China—was great, and they could safely appeal to the government for protection as they went on with their work. When the repairing of the damages done by the weather was begun, there was a stir in Thau Pau. Many were the threats made that the building should not be completed; but when the people saw that the missionaries not only meant to go on with the work in spite of all threats, but had the authority of the Chinese government to sustain them, they allowed the operations to proceed, taking consolation in the hope that the gods would destroy the work. But the gods did nothing of the kind; the chapel was at last completed and opened for service.

CHAPTER XII.

KHIAU'S SORROW.

WE go back in our story to the time when Khiau was sent to the village of strangers to preach the gospel to them. He was delighted with his visit and would gladly have returned to the strangers as their preacher, for his stay in Thau Pau was becoming trying to him. The missionaries, who knew how uncomfortable Liong's jealousy made Khiau, would gladly have sent to Thau Pau a man better suited to the field, but they had none to spare. To make the work less trying to Khiau—rather, to give him relief and to supply needy stations—he was sent, as has been seen, to preach for a while at other places. This pleased him better than to be put in charge of a large established station. Occasionally he was stationed at the Foo city for several weeks at a time as assistant to the preacher in

charge. The church in that place had grown so large that the work of preaching to the audiences gathering daily became more than the regular preacher could well attend to. Khiau regarded the Foo city as his home, since he was so often sent to other places than Thau Pau, and there his wife spent the most of her time. One day Khiau received a message from the missionaries instructing him to visit Thau Pau and then go to a more distant station for a few weeks. After spending two weeks in his native village, as directed, he went on to the farther station. One morning, after her husband had been away about three weeks and a half, Khiau So said to her friend Leng Tso,

“I am feeling very ill to-day. I wish the teacher were here, but he is so far away that it would be folly to send for him. Yet I fear that this illness will not soon pass away.”

“I would not send for him until I was quite sure that the illness is likely to last some time,” suggested Leng Tso. “It would take two or three days for him to get the message, and almost as long for him to reach here, and by that time you might be well.”

“It is true,” replied the preacher’s wife, “and for that reason I will not have any one send word to him.”

“I hope you will not be very ill,” spoke Leng Tso, in a hopeful tone; “but remember that one of your best friends is with you. I will take care of the household affairs and do the cooking. But you must have a doctor; for whom shall I send?”

“I do not know,” replied the preacher’s wife. “I wish one of the foreign doctors of Ha Bun could come, but he would not unless paid for it with so large a sum that it would take half of my husband’s salary to pay for one visit. If the doctor who is a disciple himself* were in Ha Bun, he would come, I am sure. How the doctrine softens men’s hearts toward the poor!”

“I am sorry that no foreign teacher-doctor is in Ha Bun now; we must call in one of the Middle Kingdom. Whom will you have?”

“Do you know Un Toan? He was once a student in the hospital at Ha Bun, and has now an apothecary-shop here.”

* The missionary physician.

“Yes, I know him,” replied Leng Tso; “I know where his shop is, and will call him. Now, you lie down and keep very quiet while I attend to the work, and then I will go to get Un Toan. His shop will hardly be open so early as this.”

Khiau So was very ill—far worse than her friend supposed—and was glad to lie down and leave all matters in charge of Leng Tso. Quietly but quickly the work was done, and the Bible-woman hurried to find Un Toan. His shop was still closed, and a person in the shop adjoining told her that the “foreign Chinese doctor” would not be in yet for half an hour, but if she wished to have medicine he would speak to the doctor and have it sent around in an hour.

“I want him to come at once to see a woman who is very ill,” said Leng Tso.

“I will tell him,” replied the man, kindly.

Giving the man the address, Leng Tso returned to the home of her friend. Entering the room of the sick woman very quietly, she looked at her and supposed Khiau So to be asleep, but she heard the sick woman ask in a low voice,

“Is he here?”

Going to the bed, Leng Tso said that he was not in his office, but would, no doubt, soon be there.

“I wish he were here now; my head aches fearfully. I am afraid that I have a great fever that will not end soon. For some weeks I have not felt well, but said nothing, hoping I should soon feel better. Yet,” added she, hopefully, “the Lord knows best, and it may be that I needed to become ill for some wise purpose. Yet I would so much like to see the preacher here. But it would be wrong to send for him yet. If I grow worse, do not send for him unless you think”—and here her voice faltered and a tear came—“unless you think I shall go home.”

“Oh, do not talk of that,” replied the Bible-woman, with more feeling than she cared to show. “You have been ill only a few hours; many are ill for weeks, and recover. Do not think of the shadows until the sun is going down.”

“There is a cloud hiding the sun now, and I cannot see the light.”

“Jesus says that he will light us,” replied Leng Tso; “so fear not. He will never leave you nor forsake you.”

“It was not that,” spoke the sick woman, faintly; “I have tried Jesus too long and proved him too many times to doubt his love now. No, it is only an earthly shadow that I see. It seems to me that I cannot tell whether I must go forward to the better life or stay a while longer in this life.”

“Do not think of such things now; leave all to the Lord. There is much work for you and me to do yet. I will go now and make you a pot of tea, and then you may sleep.”

“Let it be cool, for I am so hot!” murmured Khiau So as her friend left the room.

The tea was brought, and, though warm, was eagerly swallowed, as the sick woman said,

“I am so thirsty; and if I dared, I would drink cold water. But that will not do if I have a fever—at least, that is what Middle-Kingdom doctors say.”

As the doctor did not come, Leng Tso

went to the shop again; he was in his office quietly smoking. To her request that he should come at once he replied:

“It is too early to make calls yet, but I will soon be there.”

“It is not too early to be ill and to die,” spoke the Bible-woman, with no little indignation. “When people are ill, they need a doctor at once, no matter how early or how late it is.”

“That may be the way of Middle-Kingdom doctors,” replied Un Toan, “but I am a foreign doctor. They never go out early.”

“That may be the case with those who care for money only,” answered she, “but I know it is not so with those who come to the Middle Kingdom to teach the doctrine as well as to heal disease. It is not so with Dr. Bun, and it was not so with Dr. Ing.”

“That may be so,” spoke Un Toan, “but I am not doctoring as they did; I am doing it to make my living.”

“Shall I tell you why they do not give medicine late in the day?” asked Leng Tso, with no little contempt in her manner. “My brother told me: they drink so much *sam-*

shu,* that in the afternoon they are not sober enough to trust themselves with medicines."

"That may be," replied the doctor, "and it shows that they are very careful what they do."

"I did not come here to talk," said Leng Tso, sharply. "Will you come to see Khiau So at once? She is very sick, and should have medicine without delay."

"I will come in a few minutes," was his reply as he began his preparations to go.

The doctor soon came to the sick woman. Carefully he examined his patient, asking questions, meanwhile, of her and her attendant. He knew enough of disease to see that Khiau So was a very sick woman, but, as he did not think her dangerously ill, he left for her some medicines, and in the afternoon he called again, to find the woman in a very high fever and delirious. Acting on the practical teaching he had received from the foreign physicians at Ha Bun, he refused to give any other medicines until the next morning. Then Khiau So was more rational, but the fever remained. She was

* Chinese for "liquor."

frequently calling for cold water, and begged her friend to give her one drink—only one.

“Shall I give it?” asked Leng Tso.

For a while Un Toan stood and thought. He had forgotten what the foreign physicians would do under such circumstances, but did remember that the Chinese refuse water—especially cold water—to fever patients; so he said that she must not have anything cold, as it might increase the fever by compelling it to fight all the harder to gain the mastery. Leng Tso obeyed, and the poor fever patient was compelled to thirst or to drink warm drinks. Her piteous appeals for water the Bible-woman regarded as the ravings of one delirious, and did not heed them. She asked the doctor again what he thought about his patient.

“Oh, she will soon be up,” he replied as he passed out of the door.

But there came no change for the better; the fever continued to rage, as though to burn the very life out of the patient. Khiau So seldom spoke except during the times of delirium; then her words were wild, and her mind seemed at times with her husband, and

again back in her old home of luxury and wealth. Once, in a moment of half consciousness, she said,

“Oh, the preacher has come, and he was so far away! I thought you would not send for him, I thought that you wished to keep him for yourself; but you have let him come. You are good to forget your own heart and remember mine. It is hungry for him, and here he comes.”

Leng Tso was startled and looked toward the door, thinking that Khiau might really be coming; but no sound of footstep was heard, and she knew that it was but the imagination of the delirious woman.

“Shall I send for Khiau?” asked Leng Tso.

“For whom?” asked the sick woman, in a dull, indifferent voice.

“For the preacher,” was the answer.

“I do not know,” replied Khiau So, in a half stupor.

Leng Tso did not try to get an answer; she had heard enough already from the patient, when partly conscious, to know that Khiau So was anxious to see her husband, and, though yet believing that the sick woman

would recover, Leng Tso determined to send at once for Khiau. Going to an acquaintance, she had a messenger called, to whom was told the errand on which she wished him to go:

“Tell Khiau to hasten back, and not to stay for anything, for she may not recover.” This was added more to hurry the preacher than because she really believed that Khiau So was likely to die.

“How much will you pay me for going?” asked the man.

“Whatever is right,” replied she; “only hurry and bring him back.”

“But I want some of the money before I start,” persisted the man. “I will need it to buy food on the way. How do I know that you will be here when I return? I must be sure that my pay will be given.”

“How can I be sure that you will go,” asked she, “until I find you have brought him back?”

The bargain was made, however, and satisfactorily to both, the principal object of the woman being to hasten the man on his way. Glad was she to see him start on a trot to-

ward the city gate, eager to show that he meant to do as she demanded.

When the doctor came, Leng Tso told him what she had done, and asked if he thought Khiau So would be much better by the time her husband came.

“When will he be here?” was asked.

“In about four days—that is, if the man makes great haste; for the teacher will come at once, I am sure.”

“She may be better,” said the doctor; and then, hesitating, he added, “And she may be worse. The medicine is not doing what I expected. The fever is gaining rather than losing. I have never seen one who had such a fever, and I hope I may never see another. Medicine takes no hold, but the disease throws it off as if it were water on oil. I have tried every foreign medicine I know of for fever, and now I must try medicines of the Middle Kingdom. If those fail, there is no remedy; she must die.”

Before leaving the house the man said to Leng Tso,

“You had better pray to the foreign God to save her life.”

“Do you think that she will die?” asked Leng Tso, anxiously.

“It is not for me to say,” replied he, “but she needs all the help she can get.”

When the messenger had been absent about two days, the sick woman opened her eyes and asked,

“Will you send for him? I want to see the preacher before I go.”

Thinking, perhaps, that her friend was delirious, the Bible-woman asked,

“Where are you going?”

“I am going home,” was the answer. “The Lord is coming for me soon. He sent the messenger to tell me to be ready, and I said that I would be ready as soon as the teacher came. Will you send for him soon? or the Lord may come first.”

“You may get better now; the fever is passing away. Soon you will be well again.”

“Yes, very soon,” was her reply, “and never to be sick any more. And I shall drink from the river of life, and none will refuse me its waters, for He has said that we may drink freely. But will you send for the teacher?”

"I have sent for him," replied Leng Tso, "two days ago, and urged the man to hurry and tell him to come as quickly as he could."

"I knew it! I knew it!" said the woman, with a stronger voice. "I knew that you were faithful to your friend. Yes, you have been more than a sister to me; no sister would have done what you have done. It was wrong for me to doubt you for a moment. The Lord will know how faithful you have been, and how you have loved and cared for me; he will reward you as I cannot. You will forgive me for thinking evil of you, will you not?"

"You have always been a sister to me," replied Leng Tso, "and I have nothing to forgive. Now you must be quiet and rest, that you may be better when the teacher comes."

"I shall never be better here," said the sick woman, with a strange calmness; "this sickness is unto death. It is all plain to me now, and it is well. Only I wish so much to see *him* before I go. Will he come to-day, do you think?"

“I fear not; it will take the messenger nearly two days to reach him, and then not far from two days for him to reach home. I think he will be here to-morrow.”

“Must I wait until to-morrow?” sighed Khiau So. “The Lord may come before that.”

For a few minutes both were still, and then, looking at her friend with a pleasant smile, the sick woman said,

“It will be well. If I go before he comes, I will see the Lord all the sooner, and I may see the teacher by and by. And there it will be for ever; he need not go away to preach to far-off places then, for the holy book says, ‘They shall go no more out.’ Always there, and at rest! There you will come, and we shall all three be there and with the Lord. Oh, to live in that land for ever and to be able to drink from the river of life, with none to forbid! That will be heaven.”

As the two were talking a footstep was heard approaching the house; it stopped at the door. In a moment the face of the sick woman lit up with joy as she said,

"He comes! he comes! The teacher comes! the teacher comes!"

With a quick tread a man's step entered the room, and as the Bible-woman looked to see who it was she saw the form of Khiau. He seemed exhausted by fatigue, yet so anxious that he did not realize his condition.

"I knew you would come; I was looking for you," said the wife as she reached out her thin hands to him. "But I feared that you would not come before the Lord called me. Now it is all well."

Tender was the greeting between the man and his wife, and Leng Tso, after a word or two of welcome, left the room. When the Bible-woman entered the room again, Khiau was sitting with his head in his hands, and his wife lay quiet and exhausted, each seemingly lost in thought.

"How is it that you came home so quickly?" asked Leng Tso. "Had you started before the man reached you?"

"No," said he, "but I came soon after he arrived. You had given him such urgent orders that he traveled day and night, and came where I was yesterday afternoon."

“How was it possible for you to come so soon?” asked she.

“I did as the messenger had done—hired men to travel with me at night to carry torches to keep off tigers. He said that you had promised him much larger pay if he brought me back within three days, and he urged me to hasten to get here within two days, saying that you would then pay him even a larger amount of money. I cannot thank you as I would like to do for all you have done, and for this last proof of your kindness; but it shall never be forgotten. I paid him all he asked, and will pay you back what you advanced. But now I do not feel like talking of money. She says that she is going home, and I fear it is so. If it be the Lord’s will, what shall I say to prevent? God knows best. He gave her to me, and spared her so long to be a faithful wife; why should I complain? Yet, the longer we are together, the more sad is the parting.”

“Only for a little while,” whispered the preacher’s wife as she opened her eyes and smiled. “Only a little while, and He will

come for each of you, and we shall be together and for ever with the Lord."

Khiau So was rapidly growing weaker, and it was plain that death was not far away. Now and again in a low voice she spoke a word of cheer to her sorrowing husband and the mourning friend sitting by her side. After a while the dying woman asked,

"Is it growing dark so soon? Have I slept, or is night coming earlier than before I was ill? It is growing dark—very dark. I cannot see you. Teacher, come near. I cannot hear your voice. Take my hand. Are you there?"

These words were spoken in a low tone, and then for a minute or two she was silent as her husband bent over her, taking her hand and trying to speak; but he and Leng Tso were weeping and unable to utter a word.

"Come here," said the dying woman, in a louder voice, to Leng Tso.

The woman walked to the opposite side from that where the husband stood. Then, Khiau So, reaching out her own hand, caught hold of that of the Bible-woman, and, drawing it down upon her own breast,

she held it there as she drew the hand of her husband and laid them side by side on her own bosom.

“I want to feel that you are both with me,” said she, “for I cannot see you, it is so dark.” Then, as if a sudden change had come, she spoke in a louder voice: “No! the darkness has gone; it is light now—all light! Brighter! Brighter! How beautiful! Oh, it is his face! He is coming! I see him! Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!”

The voice grew softer and weaker as the speaker repeated the name of the One dearer to her than all besides, until the last time, when it seemed spoken in a whisper, as of a child falling asleep. Her voice was still; her hands moved not. Holding the two side by side on her own bosom, and clasping the hands of the two who kneeled beside her, the woman seemed to feel the last pressure of the hands of the earthly ones she loved most, while her eyes were beholding Him whom she loved best and her lips were repeating his name. When her husband and friend looked at the face after they had waited in vain to hear her voice, they saw a sweet

smile there, and a look that told that Khiau So had thought of other scenes than those of earth before her spirit had taken wings to meet the Lord.

“She has gone home,” said the bereaved husband as he saw that his wife was dead. “The Lord has taken her. Yet a little while—”

CHAPTER XIII.

LENG TSO'S SORROW.

WITH few words of parting Leng Tso and Khiau separated the day after the funeral, he going to his station, and she passing some distance down the river to spend a few days with her son. It would have been strange if neither of the bereaved ones thought of the past of long years ago, but neither spoke a word of that after the death of Khiau So. Of her they conversed, and her memory seemed the only bond that joined the two.

Leng Tso was greeted with a warm welcome by her son, and as soon as the words of welcome were over Lin said,

“At last we are to have a pastor in our church here.”

“‘A pastor’? Who is he?” asked the Bible-woman. “I knew that you wanted to

get one, but did not know that the church was able to support a preacher."

"Lay Jin Su is the man we have chosen," was the answer. "He is a student, but will come as soon as his studies are completed."

"'Lay Jin Su'!" repeated Leng Tso, in surprise. "Why, this is his home, is it not? Why not select a man—especially since it is to be a young man—from another place?"

"E Ju and I thought we should choose another," spoke Lin, "but the others said that they knew Jin Su,* and had known him from a child. I fear that it will prove a mistake, but we must trust in the Lord and do our best, not looking for trouble. He may prove the very man we need. Even if he be not all we wish, he surely will be better than no pastor."

"I hope so," answered Leng Tso. "I know Jin Su; he is said to be one of the best scholars in the school."

At evening worship E Ju spoke to the Bible-woman of the expected pastor, and, though his words were cheerful, there was in their tone a sadness that she knew would

* "Lay" is a surname.

soon be explained. When all but his wife and Lin's family, together with Leng Tso, had left, E Ju spoke more fully.

"Jin Su was not my choice," said he, "but he was the choice of nearly all the others, and they may be right. We know him to be a good young man, but a little vain, and this will exalt him still more, I fear. Then it does not seem well to promote a youth to become the spiritual teacher and leader of those who have known all his earlier follies. He has, no doubt, repented of them all, but we find it hard to forget them."

"Will he come?" asked Leng Tso.

"Oh yes; we knew that he was willing before we chose him. His relatives arranged all that beforehand," responded E Ju. "I am sorry that family influences had anything to do with this choice, but it will be such a comfort to have the same pastor each Sabbath, and to know that he is ours and not to be sent to some other place. Then, too, it will be such a comfort to the sick and bereaved to have one who has been long with them to come in and sit beside them and talk with them. I often feel that I wish one to

whom I can go and tell the sorrows and trials of my own soul."

"Have you heard how Uncle Iau is?" asked Lin, when they were all home again after worship. "I heard a day or two ago that he is much worse, and that his mind is almost gone; he cannot do any business."

"What! my brother Iau?" inquired Leng Tso, in surprise and sorrow. "I have not heard from him for some time. When last I saw him, he was not as he used to be, but I hoped he would be well again after a few weeks of rest."

"But he would not take the rest," spoke Lin. "He would go to his business. He seems wild in his wishes to build for the mission; he would go to work putting up chapels and schools all over the country. Teacher Minturn must keep watching and holding him back constantly."

The Bible-woman listened with great pain to this news, but the thoughts of all of Lin's family were speedily turned from a trouble that was distant to one that was near. Lin's oldest child, a bright little girl, became suddenly ill, and grew worse all through the

night ; when the morning came, the anxious watchers saw no change for the better. The Chinese doctor tried all the remedies he knew, but could not stay the disease. Through the second night father, mother and grandmother watched by the little sufferer. With morning the pain passed away, and the child looked at her parents and then at her grandmother and smiled. Leng Tso stooped down to kiss the little one, when she raised her arms, as if to be taken.

“Shall grandma take her?” asked Leng Tso.

“No, grandma ; there is coming a beautiful one to take me, like one of the angels you told me about. He is coming now, and I am going with him.—Papa, the good angel has come—the one you said would take little girls to Jesus when they were tired. And I am so tired!—Mamma, I am going.—Good-bye, papa, mamma, grandma and baby, and little brother. I am going to sleep in the angel’s arms. Good-night!”

It seemed indeed as if an angel had come and taken away the soul of the little girl. So sudden had been the departure that none of those who were watching could realize that

the child was dead. Slowly the truth came to the minds of the parents, and the mother began to moan and cry for her child, and almost unconsciously to mourn in a loud voice as the heathen Chinese do. Gently the father stooped at the side of his wife and in a low voice said,

“Shall we receive good at the hands of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil? But this is not evil; the angels came and took her. We have not lost her; the Lord has saved her for us. We have one of our family in heaven.”

The words soothed the mother, and not less did they comfort the grandmother. She said nothing, but steadily were her eyes fixed on the smiling face before them. The child was a great favorite with the grandmother, and from her had learned many a truth of the better world. The two had often talked of the home in which they should live for ever, where grandmother and granddaughter, parents and children, would not say “Good-bye” nor wait for absent ones.

After some time of silence Leng Tso said with a sigh,

“And the angel did come and take her. She is waiting for us, but it will not be long. Yet a little while, and only a little while. One more in heaven to draw us thither—one less on earth to keep us here. Heaven is swiftly becoming the home-land, because it has so many we love.”

In the same street, and not far from the home of Lin, another family missed a little daughter. The two families had been quite intimate—as much so as Christian and heathen families ever become in China—and the two little girls had become friendly, so as to visit and play together. The two children died the same day, but the mourning in the two homes was very unlike. Neither family knew of the other's loss; and when the news of the death of the playmate of Lin's daughter reached his home, the sorrowing father went to offer a word of sympathy. Already were friends preparing to bury the child. But there was no outward mourning, with weeping women and hired mourners. No great preparations for a funeral were going on, but speedily and quietly a few friends were making the

little form ready to carry it away. Lin said little: he knew what this hasty preparation meant; and after some words of sympathy, in which he told of his own loss, he left his friend. Soon after he had reached his home the body of his daughter's playmate was carried out of her home and away from the city. No funeral procession accompanied the corpse; the body was contained in no coffin; no ceremonies preceded the burial, nor followed. No grave had been selected by men appointed for the purpose, but in a hole hastily dug in an out-of-the-way place the little body was hurriedly laid and as quickly covered. The few who had charge of the burial, as soon as it was over, hurried away as though they had been guilty of some crime.

The next day was held the funeral of Lin's child. Friends gathered, and at the time appointed the preacher entered the home and began the funeral service. A portion of Scripture was read; he offered prayer and then made an address, after which a hymn was sung and again a prayer was offered, and then, with another hymn, the

service at the house was closed. Quietly the friends arranged the funeral procession, and then, while two men bore the coffin fastened to a long pole that rested at its ends on their shoulders, the relatives formed in the procession behind the body, while in front walked the preacher, the officers of the church and another man, who carried a banner on which was the name of Jesus. Musicians now appeared, to lead the procession. When all were ready, these began their peculiar funeral music, and the procession started from the city to the place of burial. People looked on as the mourners passed by, wondering that such a procession should follow so small a coffin. At the grave there were no ceremonies such as the heathen practice, but the body was quietly lowered to its resting-place; the relatives gathered closely about the tomb and then began singing a hymn. The voices trembled and many a note might have been sung more correctly, but the simple tune and the words so full of trust and hope carried with them the hearts of the mourning singers. A few words were spoken by the preacher,

a prayer was offered, another hymn, and the funeral service was ended. The grave was closed, and the bereaved ones returned to their homes. They went sorrowing, but not as those who have no hope. The words of the speaker, his prayer, the hymns, all told that they had laid away the child only for a little while. That they would see and meet her again they believed, for they were Christians. It was a Christian burial, and the sting of death was not felt; for to the mourners the little one was not dead, but asleep in Jesus.

In the other burial there was nothing of Christ and nothing of heaven, nothing of immortality and nothing of a resurrection. The body of the child was buried as if it had been a dog's; the mother and the father did not go to see where their child was laid, nor did they follow its form from the city. And yet those parents loved their child as truly as Lin and his wife loved their little daughter. The difference between the two families in their sorrow was the difference between heathenism and Christianity. The first believed—at least, were taught by the

superstition of the country—that the spirit of an enemy had entered the body of their child, or, as some teach, that an enemy had come to their family and been born in the form of their daughter. After they had learned to love her and their hearts had become wrapped up in the child, then the enemy had killed her to be revenged on them. To have a funeral and make any sign of grief would be gratification to the enemy. To give the body even a decent burial would prove to such enemy that they cared for the child, even though they did not mourn. So, to make the unseen and unknown enemy suppose that he had failed of his revenge, the parents treated the body of their child as though it had been that of a brute. But this is the superstition of heathenism.

In the quiet after the funeral Leng Tso felt the loss of her grandchild, and could hardly endure this new bereavement so soon after the loss of Khiau So. Fortunately, she was called to forget her own grief in comforting her daughter-in-law. The mother, not long a Christian, could not understand

why her child should be taken, when so many other parents had theirs spared. The patient words and ways of the Bible-woman soothed and comforted Lin So, and the firm faith of the father helped the mother to look hopefully forward to the time when the child should be hers for ever.

Not long could Leng Tso remain with her son, for a message came asking her to go to Ha Bun to see her brother Iau, who was very ill; and she hastened to him. When she saw Iau, she hardly recognized in the poor wasted skeleton the brother she had left in comparative health not many months before. Iau did not notice her; his mind had utterly failed, and for a while he had been madly insane. Nature had at last become exhausted, and now his dying was a question of only a few days.

Looking on the face of her brother for a few moments, Leng Tso stepped to his bedside and asked,

“Brother Iau, do you know me?”

He opened his eyes with a vacant stare and looked at her for a moment or two, and then the eyes closed again.

“Don’t you know me, your sister Leng Tso, Ban Chim?” asked she, again, in a louder voice. “I am your sister, once the little girl Leng Tso. Do not you know me?”

Again he opened his eyes and looked, and then, with an effort, said,

“Do not know.”

“Do you know Jesus your Saviour?” asked she.

A look came over the sick man’s face showing that he understood, and his lips murmured,

“Yes, I have known him many years. He knows me, too; I belong to him.”

After speaking a few words about the Saviour the Bible-woman asked,

“Do not you remember your little sister Leng Tso who lived with you in the village along the water, under the old banian tree? She was sold to buy food for you and Seng and father and mother.”

Iau murmured something that she took to mean that he did remember, but it was long ago.

“I am that little sister,” added she. “I have come to talk with you of Jesus.”

"Yes, yes!" replied he, after a minute or two of effort to bring out the words; "I know him. It is he who saves me. He loves me, and I am a sinner, too; but it is like him to love those who have no one else to love them."

Iau sank slowly, but surely. He remained most of the time in a quiet, unconscious state, but as the end approached there came times when he seemed more like himself. He appeared to recognize his family, especially his son, the preacher. One day, after gazing intently at this son, the father spoke to him and said,

"Preach the doctrine! Preach the doctrine! It is true; it saves. Nothing else will. The Middle Kingdom is sick—sick unto death—but the doctrine will save it. It is the only medicine to save the Middle Kingdom."

The end came unexpectedly. Only Leng Tso was with the sick man when he opened his eyes and asked,

"Have they come yet?"

"Who?" inquired his sister.

"The messengers," replied he. "The

Lord promised to send messengers for me, and I have been waiting for them. Tell them, when they come to the door, that I am ready. I am not fit to go with them to meet the Lord, but he knows all about it and will send the wedding-garment. I have been washed, and am clean and ready to go. The blood of Jesus has washed out the very stains of my sins. Jesus has done it all; he wanted me, and I want him so much! He will overlook, because he so loves me, everything that is not as it should be. Yes, I am ready—all ready.”

“I hope you will not go yet,” spoke the sister; “there is work for you on earth. You are not so old a man; many years may be yours to live and work here for the Lord.”

“No; my days are ended. I wanted to stay and work longer, but now I wish to go. Life has been short, but sad and evil. I have had troubles of which none know. Come near, and I will tell my sister; she can understand. I am weak, and cannot say much nor speak loud. Listen. Do not call others; you can tell what they should know.

When I built that house for the foreign pastors and received orders to build others because that was so well built, I was happy and became proud. I thought too much of myself. I might have forgotten God, but he let me suffer for my pride. I would not listen. Teacher Minturn and teacher Wagner warned me; so did teacher May before he went home the last time to his native country. But I said it would be well. I took the work of the foreign doctor, and meant to do it well, but he determined to cheat me. He threatened and was very harsh. He said fearful things, and I thought that he could do all he said. No, no! I must not think of him. I have forgiven him—yes, I have prayed for him, and hope that God will forgive him. All said that I was overworking and would kill myself. No; it was not that. I worked so to keep evil thoughts out of my mind. I was afraid that the foreign doctor would kill me; I thought that he would give me poison medicine. No, no! I must not think of that; for I am going where all will know that I meant to do right. I did not cheat.”

“No one thinks that you did,” spoke Leng Tso, gently. “Do not let that trouble you. That foreign doctor has not learned to be like Jesus; he is not one of the Lord’s disciples.”

“I know it,” said the sick man, “but did not know that at first. He goes to the foreign chapel—that is, when he is not too drunk—and the chapel-keeper says that he bows his head when others pray; and whenever the name of Jesus is spoken by the preacher, he bows his head. That made me think that the doctor was a disciple too. I thought if he was one, then— But no; I will not tell even you all I thought, it was so bad. It is all gone now. I learned the truth, but Satan tempted me to think that all were wicked at heart.”

“You are too weak to talk now,” said Leng Tso, when her brother stopped to rest.

“I am weak, but I am almost through; let me speak a few words more. The more I thought and talked with the foreign teachers, the better I felt. Satan then told me that I was too wicked to be saved, and that God would not have a man who so long

had worshiped idols. He kept telling me of my sins, and made me feel that I was the worst man in the world. But even that temptation did not last. I told the evil one what the holy book says, and said that I believed and meant to trust that; then he grew tired. After that it was easier for me, but he soon became rested, and tried again; yet the Lord was my help, and I knew that he would not leave me. My soul became peaceful and happy. Then I wanted to do more yet to show that I and all I had belonged to the Lord. I tried to do all I could for him, and to let Satan see that I knew that Jesus loved me and I him. But I cannot tell what happened since I became sick. All is gone except it seemed to me that the Lord said it is time that I rested from the work. Then I heard his voice say that he would send messengers to take me where I might rest. I have been very tired, and as I lay with my eyes closed I tried to hear the messengers' footsteps. Do you think they will come soon?"

A change in the countenance of her brother told Leng Tso that the messengers

were near. Hastily she called Iau's wife and family, and then returned to the side of the dying man. Hardly had those in the house reached the bedside when Iau lifted up his hands and spoke in a clear though low voice :

“Here I am. I am waiting, and all ready. I have nothing of my own to wear ; have you the wedding-garment ?” Then, as if he saw it, he said joyfully, “Yes, they have it. Yes, Jesus has sent them for me. They are coming this way, and for me. Oh, for me—a poor worthless sinner, but a sinner whom God *so* loved ! A sinner for whom Jesus died ! I am too weak to walk ; will you carry me ? They have wings ; they are angels. I am going.”

Iau's face was lit up with a smile that was so beautiful, so unlike anything the others had ever seen on that careworn face, that each one looked on it with silent wonder. The hands had fallen by his side, the eyes were closed ; the bosom heaved slowly and fell once or twice, and then was still. The messengers had taken him, and the weary Iau was at rest. Soon the smile passed from

the features and they wore their old pinched, sad, sunken look, but those who had seen the smile remembered it and thought of Iau's end of earth in the light of that smile rather than from the old careworn look, that so soon came back. The family of the dead man thought of him now, not as the insane father and husband that had been, but of what he was before his mind left its throne—of the loving, gentle, kind husband and father of the years before.

Thus do we sometimes stand by our dying and see the weak, suffering invalids, the feeble-minded, the wasted remnants of what were once beings of whom we were proud, suddenly transformed into glorified ones.

CHAPTER XIV.

PERSECUTED, BUT SUSTAINED.

THE Bible-woman had been visiting in the country around Thau Pau, the Foo city and Chang Bay, but after the death of Khiau's wife she seemed to feel that she should turn to another field than that in which her old friend was working. Some time after the death of her brother she decided to visit the country north of Ha Bun, and to spend some time among the women there. She longed to go back to the Foo city, and would very gladly have spent some time at Thau Pau, but her own heart told her that it would be to see her friend Khiau.

The Bible-woman visited the church at Ang Tung Thau, and later that of Tang Wan, as a stranger, but not long did she remain a stranger to the Christians there.

She was acquainted with the preachers, and by them was gladly introduced to the people. Soon her visits to a home were as welcome in that region as if they had been made near her old home. One day, as she entered the home of a Christian family in a village not far from the city, she was surprised to see the look of sorrow on the faces of all and the mother in tears.

“What is the matter? Why do you weep?” asked the Bible-woman.

“We must leave our home,” replied the woman, “and be driven from the village as beggars. The men who came to warn us have just gone away. Oh, what shall we do? Will the Lord allow his servants to suffer thus? Must we give up all for his sake? What shall we do for food and shelter? What shall I do with the little ones?”

Leng Tso could not gain from the weeping woman a satisfactory answer, so she turned to the husband.

“It is so,” said he; “the village elders say we must leave the place. They were here this morning. They say that they will

not allow any in the village who worship foreign gods. The trouble began some time ago. When the crops ripened and we were getting ready to gather our share—that is, my brother and myself—the people forbade us, and said that our share on the family-field must go for the support of the temple-worship and for providing paper and food and other things for the worship of the spirits of the ancestors.* They said that, as we had deserted the religion of our fathers, we had no right to anything, and all the crops we had raised were forfeited and must be given for the worship.”

“But if each family works a share of the property,” said Leng Tso, “you surely have a right to do as you will with your own share. If you do not wish to use it for the temples or feasts of the spirits, they cannot compel you to do so.”

* In many villages in China there is ground worked in common, or by turns, by the different families. The village in such cases is usually settled by relatives who have held the land as a common possession since the death of the founder of the family. Part of the proceeds of crops on such fields is used for keeping up idolatrous worship. Sometimes, as in the case here, each individual family works a part of the common property, and each pays a share toward the idolatrous feasts.

“They will compel us or drive us from the village,” replied the man, sadly. “They would not let us have our crops, but kept them, as they say, for the worship of the gods and the dead. We have thus little to show for our work except what we raised on our own private fields. Even that we could endure, but they have told us that we shall not stay in the village at all. They mean to drive us out, and will take all our property. If we remain, they will cause a disturbance, and then tell the mandarins that we were to blame. The mandarins would believe them, for enough would be willing to testify against us for the sake of getting our property and removing Christians from the place.”

“Have you told the foreign teachers?” asked Leng Tso.

“Yes, we sent word to them some time ago; but the people around here say that they will kill the foreigners if they come here. We do not wish to have them killed.”

“They will not be killed,” replied the Bible-woman. “They will not need to come here, but will have the mandarins attend to the matter.”

The missionaries received the message, and advised the preachers near Tang Wan to visit the village and try to arrange to have a peaceable division of the property. Two men went to the village, and while pleasantly talking with some of the leading villagers a mob set upon them with spears and guns and drove the two preachers from the village, threatening to kill them if they remained a moment or returned. The mob then turned to the two families of Christians and ordered them to give up Christianity or leave the place. The heads of the frightened families begged for time to consider, but no time was allowed. The order was to decide at once.

"We will leave the village," said the two men, "as soon as we sell what property we own here."

"You must go at once," was the reply. "You own no property here. You have turned against the gods and the spirits of your ancestors. You are traitors, and the property is no longer yours. By turning from the Middle Kingdom you have turned from all you owned."

In vain they pleaded for a few days, and then for a few hours. Not an hour was given. The Christians were hurried out of the place at the point of spears and the muzzles of guns. Carrying what little property they could gather, the faithful ones became exiles and outcasts. To be turned from the door of one's home, to be driven out as a homeless wanderer, is a sad lot for any one in America, but far worse in China. Had it not been for Christian friends, the outcasts might have been left to perish, but at the chapel in the city of Tang Wan and among the families of Christians in the city they found shelter and food.

As soon as the two families left their homes their property was taken and divided among the men who drove them out. This was so plain a case of illegal persecution that the foreign consul protested against it to the mandarins. The chief mandarin of the city, under whose charge the village was, dared not act. He found the village-people not only, but many of the wealthy and powerful ones in Tang Wan itself, were secretly aiding the enemies of Christianity. The

mandarin was in sympathy with the opposition to Christianity, and would do no more than he could help. After mild measures had failed the consul sent an urgent despatch to the mandarin, demanding that the case of the Christians be attended to, and that they be allowed to return to their homes and to their property. An examination was ordered. After a very hasty one the mandarin directed the Christians to return to their village and behave themselves, and he would see whether their property had been taken. He gave no further decision and no order regarding the persecutors, who saw at once that they had little cause for fear. To go home would have been easy enough had the Christians had a home to go to, but the enemies had robbed them of homes as well as of property. An investigation was made, but the robbers were careful to fee the officers, so that themselves not only escaped punishment, but were not even compelled to give up their ill-gotten property. The lower officers found that they had a chance to earn a little money on their own responsibility. These men knew that when foreigners took a matter in hand they

usually kept at it until justice was given. Nor were the officials wrong: the consul did not stop until the people who had been driven from home and robbed were brought back and allowed to hold their possessions again. Meanwhile, the lower officials took occasion to demand money from the enemies again and again to keep them from the hands of justice. In time this cost so much that the enemies of Christianity saw that they had better make peace with the Christians than with the lower officials. They found that it cost more even in China to be robbers than to be honest; so at last an agreement was made by which the two families were allowed to take possession of most of their property.

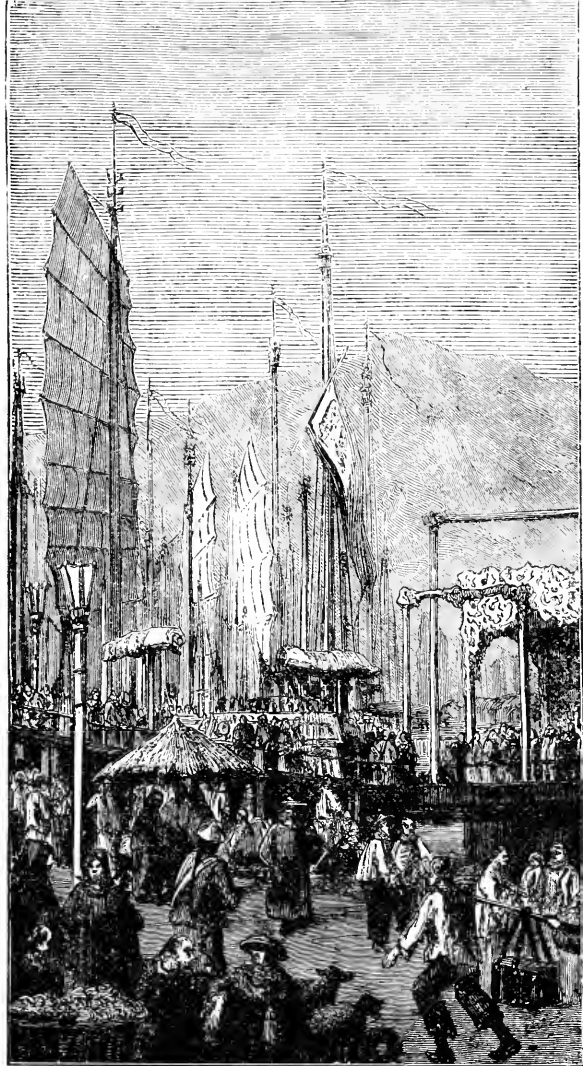
Shortly after the exiles were permitted to return, the Bible-woman visited the village to spend a few days in reading and teaching in the homes of those willing to receive her.

“So the Lord did not allow you to lose all,” said Leng Tso, “though he suffered you to be severely tried.”

“No,” replied the woman to whom she spoke; “we have most of our property back,

but could not get all, nor any part of the crops raised during the past year. Yet we are thankful to be allowed to come back and have anything. We showed that we were willing to give up all for the Lord, and he has let us take much of it back. I do not wish to complain, but we still suffer from the hatred of our enemies.”

“The Lord knows all; and when he has allowed them to do as much as he sees is for your good, he will stop them. The Lord suffers us to endure great trials, but brings us safely through if we but trust him and remain faithful. You know that the holy book says of the righteous who were clothed in white at last that ‘these came out of great tribulation.’ Let us all be patient, for deliverance will come.”





CHAPTER XV.

A WIFE'S TRIALS.

A GAIN the reader is asked to go back to a home in the city of Ha Bun and to a period more than forty years ago. A Mrs. Poh—Poh So, as the Chinese then called her; later she was known as Poh Chim, and so may be known here—had lost her husband and was left with a small family to feed and clothe. For a while she struggled on, working and earning as well as she could enough to feed and to clothe all. Like all around her, Poh Chim was an idolater and faithful to the worship of her ancestors. When one of her children—a girl—was nine years old, Poh Chim gave her to a family to become the future wife of a boy in that family. The two children thus became playmates as well as acquaintances, though, as Lian, the girl, grew older, the two were

not allowed to be as intimate as in earlier days; yet they were not kept ignorant of the fact that they were to be married when grown up.

It may be said here that it is not an uncommon custom in China for parents to take girls into their families to become the future wives of their boys. Such girls are regarded as daughters, though compelled to work. One taken in this way cannot be made a slave.

Some years after the daughter had become a member of this family, Poh Chim heard the gospel and became a Christian. She now wished to have her daughter back, that she might be taught the truth; but Lian's future husband and the whole family remained idolaters. Lian did not cease to visit her own mother. The feeling of mother and daughter had not been lost, for the child had been permitted to visit her mother occasionally ever since she was betrothed. After her marriage the young wife visited her old home as much as ever; the two places were so near that this could readily be done. During these visits the

mother tried to teach her daughter the truths of the gospel. Lian at first listened with respect, but soon grew tired of the new religion. Poh Chim would not give up, but each time her daughter came home urged her to think about the truth, and tried in every way possible to persuade Lian to go to the mission-chapel to hear the gospel. Sometimes the daughter refused to listen to the pleadings of the mother, and was ready to leave the house if anything were said about the foreign religion. But the pleadings eventually had their effect. Instead of refusing to visit her old home, the young woman came oftener to see her mother and to hear the truth. One day she asked,

“Mother, how is it that I, who was so unwilling to listen, now wish to hear more? It was not myself who brought about this change, and you could not do it; how did it happen?”

“God did it,” replied the mother. “I have prayed for you, and did not cease hoping that you would after a while listen to the doctrine. I knew it to be the truth, and knew what it had done for me, so wished

my daughter to know it too ; for that reason I prayed."

"Is it because God answered your prayer that I wish to hear now? If so, will he hear your prayer that I may know more?"

"Certainly," replied the mother ; "and if you pray, he will send his Holy Spirit to open your heart that you may understand the truth and have your sins forgiven."

"Will he forgive my sins too? I did not believe that what you told me about my being a sinner was true ; it seemed so strange that I should have sinned against a foreign God. If you had said that I had sinned against the gods of the Middle Kingdom, I might have believed it, but did not think it possible that I could have sinned enough to have made it necessary for God to send his Son into the world to die that I might be saved. Did he die for me? How did he know about me?"

"Yes," replied the mother, "Jesus knows all about sinners, and knows every one. More than that, he loves every one, and would save every one."

"Mother, will he save me? Why does

he want such a poor, worthless woman as I am? I cannot do anything for him. I have been very wicked, and cannot understand how he can care for me."

"Lian, we cannot understand much that God does. When you were a little child, you could not understand much of what I did, so you were obliged to believe it was right; and as you grew older you learned that many things were right, did you not?"

"Yes, mother—all but your letting my husband's family take me from home."

"Even that I was forced to do because we were so poor then."

"I wish that I was at home again with you. I do not wish to offer incense to idols and bow to the tablets of my husband's ancestors. What shall I do? I do not believe the idols or spirits can help me. I want to worship the true God. The gods of the Middle Kingdom do not love people as the true God does. What shall I do?"

"I can hardly answer," said Poh Chim. "I will ask the foreign pastors on the Sabbath-day, if I can speak to them. But why cannot you go with me to the chapel and

attend the inquiry-meeting? There you can ask the foreign teacher yourself."

"I do wish to go to the service, but am afraid to ask the teacher anything; my husband might find fault. I think he will let me go to worship."

Lian went to the chapel-service the next Sabbath, and was at the inquiry-meeting. Her mother asked the missionary what her daughter should do about worshiping idols and the spirits of her husband's ancestors.

The missionary replied by repeating the first and second commandments.

"God says that; so, if we are to take him as our God, we must do as he commands. We should in all cases obey God rather than man."

Lian listened to the answer, and asked,

"What if they command me to worship?"

"Have you determined to serve the true God?" asked the missionary.

"I have," was the reply.

"Then do as he says rather than as others say. Obey husband and others as long as you can do so without disobeying God, but God first."

Lian said no more, but quietly thought that she would obey God. She tried to hope that she might escape being requested to celebrate the worship. She had little trouble about idol-worship for some time; the mother-in-law attended to that rather than allow the young woman to take charge of it.

Though escaping difficulty here, the young wife came into greater difficulty elsewhere; she was more easily convinced as to her duty than as to how she should accept the Saviour.

“How is it, mother,” asked she one day, “that I cannot find the way? Jesus says that he is the way, but it is dark to me. I look and look, but see not a footstep to tell me that I am near the path. I pray and wait for God to show me, but the light does not come. Will it always be dark?”

“No, my child; Jesus says they that seek shall find. The Saviour knows that you wish to find him, and will not let you seek in vain. Perhaps there is something in the way. He says, ‘Behold, I stand at the door and knock.’ Is the door of your heart open to welcome him in?”

“I do not know, but I wish to have it stand open all the time. I have asked him to come in, but it appears as if he did not hear. Do you pray for me?”

“Yes; I have not ceased to pray for you since first I trusted Jesus. Perhaps there is something shutting the door of your heart, so that the Lord cannot push it open. Have you given up all envy, passion and hate, and do you try to live aright? Do you try to do all that God commands?”

“Wait, mother; I do not do all. I do not try to please my mother-in-law; she is so harsh and unkind that I hate her. Must I love her? How can I?”

“I do not think that we are to love all alike or to love the evil in others, but to be willing to do all we can for their good and to be willing to make sacrifices to give them happiness.”

“I have not done that with her. I have wished her evil, and yet I do not wish to harm her myself.”

“I am afraid that your ill-feeling toward her is like a bar across the door of your heart, keeping the Saviour from coming in.”

“What shall I do? I cannot love her.”

“Pray the Holy Spirit to help you treat her kindly and lead you into all truth and teach you of Jesus.”

At another time Lian asked,

“How am I to know that Jesus will save me?”

“You must believe that he will. He says that he will, and you must have faith that he will keep his word. Then give yourself, your life and all that you have to him, to be his for ever. Leave it all to him, believing that he will do for you all that you need.”

“But, mother, what will become of my sins? They are on my soul; I feel them there—a great heavy burden that presses me down. Often I feel that I cannot carry it any more.”

“Why should you, when Jesus says, ‘Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest’? Go to him and tell him that you have come as he has called you, to get the rest he has promised.”

“Is that the way?”

“Yes.”

“ Now I begin to see : the darkness is less than I thought it was.”

Lian went to the Saviour, and found the rest he promised. When she was about nineteen years old she was baptized and admitted to the church as a member. Now began the woman's real trials. Her husband's mother had allowed her to go to church, but now that she was accepted by the Christians as one of their number the family awakened to see that she had given up idolatry not only, but everything that belonged to the worship of China. It must not be supposed that they said nothing against Lian's becoming a Christian, but now that she had publicly renounced the gods and the spirit-worship of China her husband and also her mother-in-law determined to show their will and their power. They forbade her going to church and having anything to do with the foreign religion ; they tried to compel her to renounce her faith in the Saviour. But in vain ; quietly but decidedly she continued to worship the true God. They tried to prevent her going to her mother's home, but it was impossible to keep her entirely shut in, and at rare intervals she visited her moth-

er and was by her counseled to remain firm in the faith, but to be careful not to arouse the anger of any. As her little boy began to learn Lian taught him of Jesus and to pray. This angered the father and the grandmother very much. The husband forbade his wife teaching their child to pray to the foreign God, and told her that if she continued to pray to God he would whip her. One day he came into her room as she was kneeling in prayer. In a moment of passion the man whipped her severely, and threatened to do even worse if she again disobeyed him.

When her mother's relatives heard of the abuse Lian received from her husband, they were indignant; but they were almost powerless. China has little law to control the husband's treatment of his wife. But relatives of the wife sometimes take the law into their own hands. When Lian's relatives heard how she was abused, they offered to buy her. Lim, the husband, would perhaps have sold his wife, but his family refused. All efforts to purchase Lian were vain, and she was left to the cruelties of her husband

and his relatives. She was not allowed a room, nor even a bed, in which to sleep, but was obliged to lie down at night with any of the female members of the family who would allow her a place to rest. Her property and the presents she had received were taken away, and she was treated as a worthless being only suffered to stay in the home of her husband's family, but for whom no one cared and whom none respected.

For nearly four years Lian endured such abuse and insult, until her brother, watching his opportunity, secretly took her away to the home of her mother; there she remained for a while, hidden like a fugitive from her husband's family. It was soon known where she was, yet she was allowed to remain at her old home for several years—perhaps as much because Lim's family feared to meet his wife's relatives as from any unwillingness on the part of Lim's relatives to bring her back. After some years the husband visited his wife and asked her to return and live with him, promising to treat her better. She was finally persuaded to accompany him, but his promise was not long kept; he soon became

the same cruel man he had formerly been. She was forbidden to read the Bible, to pray, to attend church or to have anything whatever to do with Christians. Though she meekly submitted as far as going to church and meeting other Christians were concerned, she would not give up prayer or reading the Bible, though careful to do neither in the presence of her husband's family. Lim now became more than ever embittered against his wife, and refused to provide food for her or for the child. He insisted that she should work and earn money for the food and clothing of herself and her son. Thus was her life made worse than that of a slave. She was insulted, abused, and would have been starved and left to die as a brute had she not been able to earn some money to feed and clothe herself and her boy.

During all this time the poor woman bore her sufferings as meekly as possible, refusing to return to her mother's home and leave her child to be trained as an idolater, and trying to do her duty to her child and to her husband. It was a terrible trial, and the wonder was that she was willing to submit; but

Lian was a Christian, and she had learned that Christians are not to take revenge, but must be meek and pray for their persecutors. She did pray constantly that her trials might come to an end and she be permitted to go to the chapel and enjoy the services of God's house and the company of Christians.

The worst seemed to be reached about the time the Bible-woman came to Ha Bun, for the husband had allowed his wife to visit her mother again. While on one of these short visits she met Leng Tso, who was calling on Poh Chim. The Bible-woman had heard the sorrowful story of the persecuted wife, and was glad to speak a word of sympathy to her; but when she heard the whole story, Leng Tso felt like saying that Lian was better able to tell her to be patient than to receive such counsel from her.

"I thought *I* had passed through trial," said the Bible-woman, "but what is mine compared with what you are enduring? I have lost friends, but they have gone before me to the better land; I have many comforts here, and many to care for and to love me, but what have you?"

“Not much,” replied Lian, “and sometimes I feel like saying that I have nothing. Were it not for my child, I would gladly die; but for me to die would be to lose him for ever, I fear.”

“Do you forget the promise that God will be a God to us, and to our children after us?” asked Leng Tso.

“I sometimes forget everything,” was the reply. “I pray and pray that my trials may come to an end and that I may have peace, but there seems no end for me. Why must I suffer so? Is it because I have been so wicked that God allows me to pass through such sorrow?”

“No, it cannot be that,” spoke the Bible-woman. “Job was not wicked, and yet he was afflicted even more than you have been, for he lost all his children as well as his property. And then, too, he was sick through much of his trial; you have health, and you have your son.”

“But will God not hear my prayer and let me have peace and rest? He allowed Job to have peace and rest, and gave him greater prosperity than he had before.”

“So God may mean to do with you. Has he not already begun to hear your prayer? You are permitted to visit your mother again; is not that something?”

“True,” replied the woman; “and there is something more that I had not thought to tell. My son’s father gives rice enough now for both of us to eat; we need not go hungry any more. Besides, he furnishes me with wood to cook the rice, though I must continue to work for money to buy clothing. We are not treated so unkindly as we were some time ago.”

“Is not that the beginning of an answer to your prayer? It may be that the trial is near its end, and that your sorrows will be less and less and your joys begin after a while.”

“I hope so,” responded Lian. “My heart is nearly worn out. It seemed as though my prayer never rose higher than the roof of the house. I kept on praying because my mother told me that I must not grow weary, for in due season I should reap if I did not faint.”

Lim did grow kinder, and his mother less

harsh and severe. Lian was allowed to go oftener to her mother's, and after a time she was even permitted to attend the meetings at the chapel on Sabbaths. This was an unexpected delight to the humble Christian, and few were more thankful than she that first Sunday when she went with her mother to church. But the unkindness did not cease: harsh words were often spoken and blows were not spared; yet as months went by a change for the better could be noticed in both Lim and his mother.

When Leng Tso returned from her second visit to Tang Wan, she again met Lian at the home of Poh Chim.

"How far now has the Lord heard your prayer?" asked the Bible-woman.

"He has heard it partly," replied Lian, "but far from what I asked. I am yet treated as if unworthy the home of my husband, but his mother has lost part of her bitterness and he part of his severity. He says little about my worshiping other than the gods of the Middle Kingdom, and he seldom speaks about my teaching our child."

“It will all be well some day,” said Leng Tso, “and then, when you have come forth out of the fire of affliction, you will come forth purified and made beautiful for the Master’s glory, and your own good too.”

“I wish that time were near,” replied Lian, “for my heart is sick of such trials as I must pass through; I do not grow used to them. When the heart is sore, the least wound pains, and it becomes less able to endure than at first.”

“It is true,” said the Bible-woman, “that the heart that has long borne a burden feels the least thing added to the load. I too have carried sorrows on my heart, and they have lain heavily there. Each additional one seems very heavy.”

“But you have never suffered at the hands of one you had learned to love,” spoke Lian. “You have never known what it is to love, and yet to be hated by the one you loved.”

The author does not know, beyond the fact that Lim and his family became less and less cruel to Lian, that they became Christians. To judge from similar instances,

one has reason to believe that Lian's patient faithfulness will have the effect of turning the determined persecutors to accept the Saviour whom they so bitterly hate.

Leng Tso could not help comparing her own life with that of Lian. She knew what it was to long for one whom she had regarded as lost, and when she saw him again to find that he belonged to another. She knew what it was to be lonely in the world, and to look in vain for one who never came to her. Now, since Khiau So had died, that old longing had come back. She could not keep it away; she could not help thinking of the preacher, far off among the mountains, and wishing that she might see him, hear his voice, receive only a word from him—a single message saying that he was well, that he had not forgotten her, that he would like to see her again.

“Why is it,” she asked herself, “that I cannot keep my old friend from my mind? He is, no doubt, well and working hard. Yet he must be lonely, now that his wife is dead. He has no one to speak of her to him, no one to talk to him of old times.

There is no one to care for him when he is weary, and he is growing old. But why do I think of all this? Khiau mourns for his dead wife; why should he think of me? It is so many years ago since we were children in Thau Pau! But my heart is young yet. No, no! I will not think of this any more. We are growing old; we must both give the few years of life to our work."

CHAPTER XVI.

MISSION WORK BY THE CHINESE.

“THE people will be compelled to attend to mission work soon,” suggested Mr. May, “and the sooner they begin, the better. Never carry a child if it be able to walk: it will always remain a baby. Let us urge the Christians to undertake some work on their own responsibility. Mr. Parton, you are bishop of the preachers; cannot you start them off?”

“Yes,” answered the younger man; “I have already urged the men to inspire their people to undertake some work, even though ever so small, and some have begun. The church at Ang Tung Thau has started, and intends to support one of its own men as its missionary in the country beyond, and some of the people up the river have already sent out their men; so the beginning has been made. It may be like the snowball of the boys—

either gaining by every move or breaking and going all to pieces."

"There is power greater than that of man to keep it moving and from breaking," said Mr. Minturn.

"I am glad that the effort has already begun," spoke Mr. Wagner; "but we must insist on each church supporting *its own* work as soon as able. To be a missionary church, and yet to neglect the home work, will be to grow abroad while death takes place at home."

"I have thought of the Hakkas," suggested Mr. May; "it would be a good thing to have the native church start a mission among those. Let them form a society and send out one of their number as missionary and take the full charge of the field. What do you think, brethren?"

"A capital idea," said Mr. Minturn.

"Will they do it?" asked Mr. Wagner. "I am ready to see them try."

"The fact that the Hakka language will have to be learned will be a difficulty," said Mrs. Parton, "but it is not very unlike the Chinese, I think. Mr. Wagner can tell us."

“I am not sure,” responded Mr. Wagner, “but I think that the Hakkas are Chinese from the northern part of the empire, and that their language is much like that spoken at the North. The people around them do not appear to be able to talk with them, yet Mr. Parton will remember that Khiau was able, without a great deal of difficulty, to make them understand him. By the way, Khiau said that these Hakkas had sent a request to him to visit them again, and that he is ready to go whenever you say the word.”

Before telling the reader about the Chinese commencing a mission among the Hakkas, it may be well to relate how the Hakkas first came to be known to the mission.

A considerable time before this part of the story two men from the Hakka country—which is a long distance north-west of Thau Pau—visited a port to the south of Ha Bun to receive medical treatment in the mission hospital there. Both were restored to health, and also were taught about the true God. They became Christians, and returned to their home resolved to serve the

true God. One of them, Nui, opened his house, and the two conducted Christian worship there for some time, the people of the village attending and several of them becoming interested in the truth. Wau, the other convert, after a while left his home and moved to the Foo city, where he followed his trade of tailor. He soon learned of a Christian chapel in the place, and attended its service. He told the native preacher of his own conversion, and of the meetings that his friend Nui was still holding in their native town. Wau joined the church at the Foo city, and proved himself an earnest follower of the Saviour. The missionaries soon heard of this man, and, visiting him in the city, learned of the religious interest among the Hakkas.

Not long after this there appeared at the hospital in Ha Bun a number of Hakkas from the same place—among them, Nui, who had brought some of his suffering friends to be healed by the foreigners. But the man had another errand, and this was speedily made known to the missionaries. He had come to learn more of the gospel,

and to obtain a teacher to go back with him to his home. It was at this time that Khiau was first sent to visit these strangers. His stay was short because of other calls, but Khiau had been hoping that he would be sent there again for a longer time, and perhaps permanently. The mission, however, was too much in need of men to be able to send any one permanently to the Hakka country; it was only after long intervals that a preacher could be sent for a short time to teach these strangers. Nor could every man go; very few of the preachers besides Khiau knew enough of the Hakka language to preach to the people, and even he was far from being familiar with it.

Khiau was glad to receive a message, a week or two after the foregoing conversation, telling him to go to the Hakkas for a stay of several weeks—perhaps months. He was still at the distant station, and gladly did he start for the place farther on. He would not go back to Thau Pau, nor did he care to return to the Foo city. What was there for him at that place? He had lost his all when

Khiau So died; so he tried to convince himself, and so he said, but deep down in the preacher's heart was the thought that he had not lost every earthly friend. He knew that Leng Tso had been a friend to him, nor did he forget that past. Yet when thoughts of it came—and he could not keep them away—he tried to force them to leave by saying that Leng Tso was nothing to him. She had never shown that she cared more for him than for any other dear friend since that one time when first they met after the long separation. Khiau forgot that as a true woman Leng Tso was unwilling to force herself upon his notice, and that he had not treated her even as a friend of his wife should be treated. He had acted as if he wished their friendship to end. The woman who of all others had been a most faithful friend to his dead wife, and who of all others would now prove a faithful friend to himself, he had turned away from with hardly a word that told how much he appreciated her kindness. Among the Hakkas he could not help thinking of his early life among the people at Anam, whither he had gone to earn money to buy

Leng Tso's freedom. As the girl ever came to his mind then, so now would the woman come back—then to be always welcome, now to be driven away by a half-hearted effort.

“Why is it,” asked he of himself one evening when alone, “that I am ever thinking of Leng Tso? She has, no doubt, forgotten me. I have not seen her, nor have I sent a message to her or received one from her. And yet she will come back to my mind. She never comes to Thau Pau to visit the women; if she did come, I would be pleased to go there to spend one more Sabbath in the chapel. No; such thoughts must have no place in my mind. I am here for work, and to that all my strength and thought must be given. I must not—I *will* not—think of the Bible-woman again. She is doing a noble work, and I am thankful.”

For several months Khiau remained among the Hakkas, doing good service; meanwhile, the plan proposed by Mr. May was considered. The native churches had formed themselves into what may be called a presbytery, and at the autumn meeting,

held at the old home-village of E Ju, Mr. May proposed the formation of the society. There was a large gathering of Chinese pastors, preachers, elders and Christians. After all other business had been transacted, Mr. May arose and in a few words told about the Hakkas, and then asked the native pastors, preachers, elders and the others to remain to talk over the matter of sending a regular preacher to them.

All looked eagerly at the missionary, and wondered what he would next propose and what he expected them now to do. They remained after the presbytery closed, and were called to order by Mr. May. A president was then chosen, and another meeting, of a more informal character, was begun. Mr. May urged the people to begin missionary work themselves, and to start with the Hakkas. The idea was favorably received, but there were not wanting those who feared that the plan could not be carried out. The churches were too poor yet, and too little acquainted with such work; they were already doing missionary work at home, and to support their own efforts required a great

deal of sacrifice. Yet they were willing to think further of the matter.

“We must not make too much haste,” remarked Mr. May, “but must look at the ground before we decide. Let us try an experiment for half a year, until the next meeting of the presbytery. We can safely determine to support a man for six months; the amount of money needed will not be great. If at the end of that time you feel that you are unable to carry on the enterprise, then you will be compelled to give it up; but I believe you will be glad that you have begun, and that the Lord will bless you in the work.”

After a short time spent in talking over the matter it was decided to start the society, and to continue work for six months at least among the Hakkas. A president and the other officers usual to such societies were elected; a committee was appointed to collect the money needed, and one of the young men of the mission was chosen to act for six months as missionary.

The people could now think and speak of but little besides the new society. They were

aware of the responsibility they had taken upon themselves, and they felt willing to bear it; but it was something new for the Chinese to undertake such work alone. All the officers of the society and all connected with it were, or were to be, native Chinese.

Young Tek Ko was willing to accept the proposition, and in a few days he started for his field of labor. He was a modest young man and made no boasts of what he would do; nor yet was he too timid to undertake his work. Not often has a young missionary more hearty sympathy as he goes to his field than had Tek Ko. The whole Church was interested in him; soon hardly a Christian or an inquirer but knew as much about Tek Ko as about any preacher in the mission. What each knew of the young missionary became the property of all, for he belonged to all.

Though several of the churches and the stations not yet formed into churches had lately in part or altogether supported men preaching the gospel in neighboring towns, Tek Ko was the first missionary of the combined churches; more than that, he was their first foreign missionary. He was not

going to a people whose language he knew, but to a people of a strange tongue.

The Bible-woman was often questioned about the missionary and the country to which he had gone, many supposing that, as she came from that direction, she should know all about the place.

“I do not know about the people,” said she, “nor do I know their language; it is very different from ours, though the people are not so unlike us. They are kind and polite, I have heard, and will not treat the missionary unkindly. I never heard much about the Hakkas even in Thau Pau. They are separated by mountains from the Thau Pau village, and are very many *lee* * away.”

“Will you ever go there to read and to teach the women?”

“No; it is too far away for me,” spoke the Bible-woman, “and I do not know the language. Younger women must go to teach and to read to the Hakkas—those who are not too old to learn their language.”

“What! women of our country go off as foreign missionaries?”

* A *lee* is about three miles.

“Certainly; why not? Foreign women come here with pastors from other countries to teach us, and why should not the Middle Kingdom send women to teach these Hakkas, and others, too, who may need to be taught?”

“I believe that the foreign pastors will make us do everything strange and unlike the customs of the Middle Kingdom after a while. Who would have thought twenty years ago that we would send one of our number—and pay him a salary too—to teach strangers the doctrines brought from a foreign country?”

“It is because the Lord has opened our eyes and warmed our hearts,” said Leng Tso.

“Will the church continue to support Tek Ko after the six months are past, do you think?”

“Surely it will. This is only the beginning; no one but God can tell the end. The people of God are doing now what our soldiers do when there is a rebellion. The emperor sends orders that soldiers shall go to put down the rebellion, and as soon as an

army can be gathered the soldiers start, and more go from time to time until the rebellion is conquered."

"It seems to me to be more like sending out a spy to see the enemy's country," said a listener.

"It is somewhat like that, and Tek Ko is our spy and our soldier, gone out to look at the country and to begin to bring it to the Lord."

Tek Ko carried with him the request from the mission to Khiau to return from the Hakka country and stay for a day or two at the large town of Sio Ke on his way to Thau Pau and visit a number of inquirers there, and at the same time to try to find out whether there was any hope of renting a place for a chapel in the town. This was good news to the preacher. He longed to return to his old friends, though he would not admit to himself the real reason. He had been several months in the Hakka country, and it was but natural that he should wish to see old friends again.

Ever since Toa Aw had received the gospel the mission had been anxious to open a

chapel in Sio Ke, but had tried in vain to hire a building or to buy ground on which to put up a chapel. Soon after Soe began to hold services in his own house some of these Sio Ke people came to see what was going on; they became interested in the truth, and a number had become inquirers and Christians. These had often expressed a wish to have a teacher and a house of worship at Sio Ke.

At Sio Ke, Khiau was gladly welcomed by several who knew him. A little band of Christians and inquirers had gathered in the home of one of the number. When all who had been expected were present, the preacher said,

“Let us spend some time in worship, and then we will talk about a chapel. We need God’s help and wisdom rather than man’s in the work we hope to accomplish. It will be useless to try the methods of the Middle Kingdom. Men more scheming than we will be ready to defeat us; men with more power at the office of the mandarins than we have will prevent us, unless we can call to our help a higher power than any in the

empire. Our help must come from God; he alone can defeat the foes of the truth and bring to nothing the counsels of the idolaters."

After a season of prayer, Scripture-reading and instruction by the preacher, Khiau said,

"Let us now talk about the chapel. I have been away for some months, and do not know what has been done in that time. Have any of the foreign pastors been here lately?"

"Not very lately," was the reply. "They think it best for foreigners not to come, lest it prevent our getting a house."

"Have they tried to hire a house?" asked Khiau.

"They sent preachers several times to inquire about buildings to rent, but the people here knew, as soon as the preachers came, that it was to try to bring the doctrine here; so there was not a house in the place to rent."

"Cannot we hire some house here? Does any one own a house, or have you rented one that you would let us have if we paid a little more than you gave?"

To these questions Khiau received the reply that none had such a house as would be at all satisfactory ; the men were afraid to do anything lest they should be persecuted.

“ We are watched so closely,” said one, “ that we cannot hire a house without first promising most faithfully that it shall not be used for worship. The people say that Thau Pau and Toa Aw have yielded because they were small and because Liong and Soe were leading men, but here, in this large place, with all the wealthy and powerful men against the doctrine, they will show that it cannot come. They are very determined. So long as we are quiet they will not disturb us, but they threaten to draw great trouble upon all we have if we do anything to bring the truth here.”

“ They do not know our God,” replied Khiau, quietly. “ Others have resisted him, but in the end each one has been overcome ; so must they yield. Our time will come ; be not discouraged.”

“ I can tell you what may be done,” suggested one, “ but even that is not sure, for the people are so watchful. You might send

up a stranger who did not preach and cared nothing for the truth to rent a house for you."

"If he cared not for the truth, he would be likely to care more for what is not true, and to serve that rather than us," replied Khiau. "Besides, it will hardly do to try hidden ways; they are not the ways of the truth. Satan and the wicked deceive; God's people must not."

"Unless you are as wise as the others, you will not get the building," remarked one who had strong faith in Chinese methods. "They use shrewd schemes, and why should not we?"

"Because we have something better," replied Khiau. "They have only human wisdom and Satan's power; we have the wisdom and the power of God to aid us. Can any of you tell me where there are good places that may be hired if the people become willing? I mean to try tomorrow to get a place."

"No one is willing," spoke more than one, decidedly.

"We will leave the willingness to God,"

answered Khiau, "and do our part by trying to learn of suitable places. He will make the people willing in the day of his power."

The people gave Khiau the names of several men who had places that would be suitable for a chapel, if such houses could only be rented; so the next morning the preacher went to see the men. Each one was willing to rent; but when it was learned for what purpose the building was to be used, not one would make a bargain. In vain did the preacher urge that a chapel would bring, not evil, but good, and that missionaries had no object but the spiritual and the temporal welfare of the people; he could not persuade one to listen to any proposition whatever, so long as the building was to be used for worshipping the foreign God.

Though defeated in his efforts, Khiau was not discouraged; he had gained several facts that might prove of use in future bargaining. Finding that he could do no more, and thinking that he should as soon as possible make a report to the mission, he started for Thau Pau, and after a Sabbath spent there set out for the Foo city and Ha Bun. Before

he was ready to start, however, from the Foo city, two of the missionaries reached that place, and there was no necessity for Khiau to go farther. He gave to them a report of his stay among the Hakkas and his visit to Sio Ke, as well as of the work done before he had gone to the Hakkas.

“What do you think about Sio Ke?” asked one of the missionaries. “Can we get a chapel?”

“I do not see how,” replied Khiau. “There are suitable buildings that might be had, but the owners will not rent them. Perhaps, if a large price were offered, some one could be found who loves money more than he fears the wrath of the people. I thought that possibly one man would be willing to risk it if he could receive enough money to pay him for all the evil thoughts and words spoken, and for his building if destroyed.”

“We have not money to spare to give a large price,” said the missionary; “yet if able to get a suitable building, we will pay more than it is worth. After we have once gained a footing and the first anger

of the people has spent itself, it will be much easier to get a house at a cheaper rate. If you think that you can get a place, we will send you back to try again as soon as you are ready to go."

This was not quite what Khiau wished, but he could not say that he had any business at Ha Bun, nor yet at Chang Bay; so he agreed to try again at Sio Ke.

In due time Khiau reached the town, and after a great deal of talk and bargaining induced a man to agree to let him have a house. The man demanded an unusual price, but at last the bargain was made, as far as Khiau could make it. Pleased with his success, the preacher returned to the Foo city; but the missionaries had gone to Ha Bun, leaving word for Khiau to come to that city if he had met with any success. Learning that Leng Tso was not at the Foo city, nor yet at Chang Bay, he took passage on the river for Ha Bun. The missionaries were glad to learn of his success, and at once agreed to carry out the bargain he had made. He was instructed to return with another preacher and make the bargain sure.

Before returning Khiau learned that the Bible-woman had been at Ha Bun for some time, but only a day or two before had gone to the North on a missionary journey among the stations there.

“She does not care to meet me,” thought Khiau. “She has gone to escape me.”

The house-owner had kept his bargain secret, and took the money to bind it. At last the mission had a chapel in Sio Ke. So all thought, but there are uncertainties even in the certainties of mission work.

Not long after, the missionaries were surprised to have a visit from the owner of the Sio Ke property; he begged them to take back the money and release him from his bargain. He besought them to take pity on him, and not to suffer the people to destroy his property, and perhaps kill him. As soon as it had become known in the town that a house had been leased for a chapel in which to worship the foreign God, the people were furious. They went to the owner, demanded that he at once compel the missionaries to release him from the bargain, and threatened him with every kind of punishment if he

did not at once obtain a release. The missionaries, knowing that to hold the poor man to the agreement would be to bring upon him great suffering and loss, and possibly death, and that they would be unable to occupy the building amid so much opposition, released the man and received back the bargain-money.

For some time after this little effort was made to gain a foothold in Sio Ke, but the missionaries were not discouraged. They only waited until the excitement subsided, then began bargaining for another chapel. This building was rented, but the people were aroused to fury and tried to persuade the man owning it to break the bargain. He refused, and said that the building had been rented, but was not being used as a chapel, and until it was there was no need of making so much ado. Though this prevented people destroying his house, they threatened him with awful punishment if he allowed it to be used for the worship of the foreign God. Not content with that, four large clans formed a league to keep the gospel out of Sio Ke and the villages around.

They put up printed posters on the walls, warning every one against renting any property to the foreigners, and threatening to pull down every house that should be used for worshiping the gods of other nations. The posters further called upon the people to tear down any building used as a chapel, and promised protection from prosecution by the government.

The missionaries, knowing that to attempt now to open the chapel would be to have it destroyed, and probably to cause a riot in which lives would be sacrificed, allowed the building to remain unused. They, however, appealed to the mandarin of the place for protection. He admitted that they had a right, according to treaty and law, to worship their God in the chapel, but said that he was powerless to prevent the strong clans destroying the house.

If missionaries rarely force the officials to do their duty, they nevertheless by quiet persistency compel the mandarins to yield in the end. It was so in this case. After waiting a long time and politely presenting their case to the officials, the missionaries

left the matter in the hands of the American consul. He carried the affair to the higher officers of government, and was politely answered; but investigation was delayed. Quietly but persistently the case was pressed on the attention of the authorities, until they became wearied, as did even the people of Sio Ke by being compelled to watch against the expected attempts of Christians to take possession of the chapel.

After exhausting all their threats and finding no cause for executing them, the people of Sio Ke were suddenly aroused by seeing the door of the house standing open and a missionary within, as a number of people gathered about him. So quietly had preparations been made that none were ready, when the Christians gathered to worship for the first time in that chapel, to carry out the threats so often repeated. A crowd gathered about the door and pushed within until the entire space for standing was occupied. The people looked on in wonder, but not a hand was raised nor an effort made to carry out the oft-repeated threat. Through the whole service the crowd swayed about the

door and pressed upon those within, but not an act of violence was undertaken. During that whole day the crowds came and went; they filled the chapel to overflowing constantly; they listened, and they went away quietly; and when night came, the chapel stood unharmed. Nor was one of the threats carried out; from that day to this the worship of the God of the Bible has been kept up in Sio Ke. Though but a few years have passed since the chapel was first opened, the church is one of the largest and most prosperous in that part of China. It has its large house of worship well filled on the Sabbath, its comfortable parsonage occupied by a pastor whom it has called and is supporting liberally, and is a centre from which already are going forth influences for good that will soon be felt far away.

Before closing the chapter we will turn to Tek Ko and the Hakkas. At the end of six months the young man came back from his mission and reported to the presbytery. His was a modest story, but so full of facts, and each one so laden with encouragement, that all listened with delight to the very end.

He was the first foreign missionary whom they had a right to claim as their own. Tek Ko was *their* man : they had sent him out ; they had helped support him ; and now he was telling what they through him had done. It was not wonderful that many eyes should brighten and many an old man and woman should lean eagerly forward to catch each word of the young speaker. It was not strange that some young men felt their hearts swell with desire to become foreign missionaries too. It was not remarkable that the missionaries looked with confidence and gratitude at the eager faces and thought of the evidence before them of the success of their work. The Chinese had reached the highest stage of progress in church life and work : they had learned, or were rapidly learning, the delights of mission work.

Tek Ko told of the difficulties met in learning a new language and using it to teach the truths of the gospel ; he told, too, of the eagerness of the people for the word of life and how its effects were seen in their lives ; he told of their gratitude to those who had sent him to tell them of a Saviour ; and

then, in a closing appeal, he urged them not to stop, but to determine to make this only the beginning of their work for the Lord.

It needed no urging to make that missionary society permanent; the person to propose stopping with the six months' experiment could not have been found in that audience. The society was continued, and Tek Ko was sent back to the Hakkas. The society lives and prospers to this time, and Tek Ko remains its faithful, successful missionary. Instead of the single small station that he left when he made his first report to the presbytery, there is now a large church that has become too great for the care of one man, and before this reaches the reader's eye two churches will probably be where only a few years ago Tek Ko began his mission work.*

* From a paper of August, 1886, the following is clipped: "The report of Amoy Presbytery shows that there are now 54 congregations under its care. They have 8 native ministers, 73 elders, 76 deacons and 1569 members. The money raised during the year by the native Church for the support of the ministry, for the Hakka mission and for congregational objects amounted to \$3635, at the rate of nearly 2 per member, where the daily wage of a skilled workman is 16 to 20 cents, unskilled labor receiving 10 to 16 cents."

CHAPTER XVII.

ONCE MORE.

IN this closing chapter we take a farewell look upon several of the scenes and some of the friends encountered in the course of the story.

Chang Bay church met with trial. The young pastor settled there did not prove all the people wished. He became too proud at his elevation, and, like Rehoboam, was unwilling to take the advice of older men, but chose the young men as his counselors. Some of the people were his warm friends, while others became his enemies. He was unwise in his course and gave cause for many complaints. E Ju was called to Ha Bun to take charge of the girls' school, so that the church at Chang Bay lost its wisest counselor. After he left still greater troubles came to the people and to the minister.

Some of the preacher's friends remained firm to him, while others drew farther and farther away; but Jin Su seemed to forget that he was pastor of all, and gave his attention to his friends rather than to those who were opposed to him. The people asked the missionaries to make peace, and some demanded that Jin Su be removed to some other station.

"He is your pastor," replied the missionaries, "and we have no authority over him. If he commits sin, you must bring the matter to the attention of the presbytery. We have charge only of the stations not able to support a pastor."

This was a new lesson for the church to learn, and it learned it, and so did other churches; nor will they soon forget that the church takes a great responsibility when it calls a pastor. It was as well that the Chang Bay church should learn this lesson so thoroughly that it would not be forgotten.

The presbytery finally took up the matter for consideration. It was proved that the young pastor associated with the mandarins, and was, as nearly as a minister could be in

China, a politician. Jin Su became what may be called a "fast" young man, and his acts, as brought before the presbytery, proved him to be unfit to remain as pastor. He was tenderly warned of his dangerous course, then removed from his pastoral office and suspended from the ministry. To the other pastors and preachers this was a shock such as they had never before felt, yet they not only sanctioned the suspension, but felt that it was the best thing to do. Chang Bay church was astonished, yet most of the people said it was right and just; nor could others, even though warm friends of Jin Su, say that the presbytery had done wrong. The people were in great trouble when their pastor was taken away, and feared the church too might in the end disappear; but it did not. Another preacher was sent, so that the people had the services of a pastor again. From that time the church began to improve, and is now regaining its old prosperity.

E Ju came back to Chang Bay, as the confinement of the school was too severe. He came back to recover, as he hoped, his lost health; but the good man's work was

done, and slowly he passed down to the border-land of life. He reached the line where this joins the unseen country, and the faithful servant of the Church and of the gospel passed over the line with a firm faith that he was entering heaven. His wife still lives. She was anxious to do more work for the gospel after her husband's death than before, and became a Bible-woman. For a while she went around to the different places, reading and talking to the women, but she felt unable to continue. She then went to the missionaries and told them that she could not do that work, but wished one to do it for her and her dead husband; so she put into his hand the amount of money needed to support a Bible-woman for a year, and told him that as long as she was able to give that amount each year the mission should have it to carry on the work. She has thus far kept her word.

Lin remains at Chang Bay, a faithful man, modest and quiet, but doing what he can for the cause to which his mother's life is given. Since the death of his uncle Iau he has supported his mother.

Jin Su's life has undergone a great change. He removed from Chang Bay to Ha Bun to be out of evil associations, and began anew to live the life of a true Christian. His discipline has proved a blessing—not more to others than to himself. He meekly received the sentence of suspension, and showed by every act that he felt its justice and meant to reform. He is now a teacher and living at Ha Bun, a worthy Christian.

At Toa Aw the gospel work is steadily gaining, though the place has never had a regular preacher, nor even a chapel other than the house of Soe. The people, many of them having become Christians, attend the Sio Ke church and are members there. They, however, hold an evening service in their own village, and may at some future time be able to build a church of their own.

Thau Pau seems to have given its strength to others. Some of its members have died, others have moved away, and some have wandered from the truth. Liong has not yet repented of his evil ways, but is seemingly coming gradually to the path of repentance. He is coming again and again to

the chapel when there is service held. Though the mission work at Thau Pau has not prospered of late, yet the movement that began at that little mountain-village has spread until now there are at least six stations and churches not very far away that received the gospel from that village chapel.

Why Thau Pau has not gained and Toa Aw has gone steadily forward may be a question in the minds of many. More preaching and more care have been given to the former than to the latter place, yet the secret does not lie there. In the time of need Thau Pau did not receive the attention it should have had, and Liong, the leader of the people, was worse than no leader; while Toa Aw had the wisdom of the faithful Soe to guide and restrain the people. He was almost a pastor, and like a father cared for the people under his care. He could read the Bible, and the people of Thau Pau, after Liong turned away, could neither read nor had they one to read for them, except when the preacher was there. A simple explanation appears to meet the difficulty, and it is from the Bible: "My people are de-

stroyed for lack of knowledge." The places around Thau Pau will some day bring back the truth to the little village and show how much they value it by teaching the people there of the true God.

The girls' school at Ha Bun has increased in numbers, but, more than that, has now a fine large building and is doing the work for which it was intended. Already from it have gone forth many young women to be the wives of teachers, preachers and prominent workers for the gospel, and these are beginning to make their influence felt in the places where their husbands are settled.

The anti-footbinding society still lives and adds to its numbers; slowly is its power being felt farther and farther away from Ha Bun. Some of the best Christian families have brought up, or are bringing up, their daughters as large-footed women.

Once more we look for Khiau and Leng Tso, and go back to the time when the preacher, after his bargain for a chapel at Sio Ke, went to preach at a distant station.

Khiau grew restless; he was lonely. To him it seemed that he was left alone in the

world, and that no one cared for him. When he heard that the missionaries had rented a chapel at Sio Ke, he hoped that he should be sent there. The Foo city and Chang Bay having pastors—for the former place had just settled its first pastor—therefore he could not expect to be stationed at either of those places. But no order came for him to change. The mission was not so much in need of money now, and was able to add to the number of preachers, so needed not to change them often in order that each station might have—at least, part of the time—a preacher. Khiau learned that Leng Tso never came to Thau Pau any more, and scarcely ever visited the Foo city, but made most of her visits north of Ha Bun or in the vicinity of Chang Bay. Because she remained away from her old homes, near which he was usually stationed, Khiau supposed that she kept away to escape him.

“She does not wish to meet me,” was his thought, “and I will not compel her to see me; she shall enjoy her work without having me to interfere. Yet I would like to see her again and talk of the past. We could

meet as friends. And why should we not? We are both growing old now, and many of our friends are among the dead; we are both lonely. True, she has her son and his family and her brother's family, but I have almost no friends. I am so lonely! Why cannot she take pity on her childhood's friend and allow him to meet her once more?"

Khiau's wife had now been dead a considerable time, and the sharpness of the pain of bereavement had gone; yet Khiau missed her at times as much as at first, and so often he longed for one who knew her with whom he might speak of the dead. To those living where he was now stationed she had been a stranger, and this made his sense of loneliness all the more trying.

Leng Tso little thought that the absent preacher would have been glad to meet her. She supposed that he had forgotten her; it seemed so. He never came where she was—indeed, seemed to keep away from every place in which she happened to be until after she left; then, when she had gone only a day or two, he appeared. Was there not reason to believe that her old friend cared not to

meet her? She said not a word to any one of her feelings.

“What will it matter to me,” said she to herself one day, “if he never comes to see me here? He will meet me in heaven, where Khiau So is, and there he will know that I wished to see him, and that I remained a faithful friend to him. I do not ask that he marry me; it is not of that I think—we are both growing old, and I am well cared for by my son—but I do so long to have one of my old friends to talk to, and with whom I can talk of the times in Thau Pau, and one who will care for the feelings of an old woman. Lin is all that a son should be, and his wife is kind and loving, while the children are the best of children; but that is not all I want. They are all younger than I and have lived different lives from what I have, and they cannot quite understand me. If I might but see Khiau for a few minutes, it would be like cool water to a thirsty soul. But he does not come, and to me it seems that he wishes to stay away from the place in which I am.”

Was it strange that Khiau and Leng Tso

did not meet? But it was not natural that two such friends should remain as strangers when each longed to meet the other. How long they might have misunderstood each other's feelings cannot be told, but Khiau was called unexpectedly to Ha Bun, and not by the missionaries: he met with an accident that compelled him to visit the hospital there, and was obliged to remain in the city for some weeks. At evening worship and on the Sabbath he attended service in one of the churches. As the women in Chinese churches are separated from the men by a partition, Khiau could not see who were in the woman's part of the church, nor could Leng Tso, had she been at church, have seen Khiau unless he had occupied the preacher's platform; this he preferred not to do, as he was unable to preach. But Leng Tso was not in the audience, nor was she in the city: she had gone up to Chang Bay the same day Khiau reached Ha Bun.

The preacher asked one of the native pastors whether the Bible-woman that used to visit the Foo city and formerly lived there still visited among the women.

“Oh yes,” replied the pastor; “she went up to Chang Bay some time ago to make visits among the villages.”

“When did she go?” asked the preacher, after other questions had been asked and answered.

“Who go?” inquired the pastor.

“The Bible-woman,” answered Khiau. “When did she go to Chang Bay?”

When the reply was given, Khiau knew that she had gone up the very day he reached the city, and only a few hours afterward. He asked few questions after that, and soon left the home of the pastor.

“Can it be,” said he to himself, “that she knew that I was in the city and at once departed? She must be afraid to meet me. Why should she be? What have I ever done to make her dislike or fear to meet her old friend? Now, when I return, I cannot stop at Chang Bay, and yet I would like to see the brethren there, and to visit the church too. But I may meet her; her son is an elder there now, and certainly she will be at the church on the Sabbath, if I should stay there over the Lord’s day, and I wished to spend one Sab-

bath there. Yet now it will not be well, if she wishes not to see me."

When Khiau was able to return to his work, he visited the mission-house to receive orders for the future.

"I am glad that you have recovered so soon," said the missionary, when the preacher told the object of his visit, "and glad, too, that you can go to-day, for I was at loss whom to send to Chang Bay. The pastor is ill, and has asked that we help him by allowing either a student or some other preacher to go there for a few days—it may be weeks—until he is able to take charge of his work. You are just the man, as you are ready for work, having had a time of rest; and, besides, you have had nothing to do with the trouble there. I wish you would go and remain there as long as you are needed."

Khiau was surprised that he should be sent to Chang Bay. But another feeling took possession of his heart; it need not be described here. He went to Chang Bay, and at night conducted the evening worship. That Khiau looked into the woman's part of

the church for the face of the Bible-woman the reader will know without being told, but he did not see there the face of Leng Tso.

Leng Tso was in Chang Bay, though not at evening worship. She had just returned from her visits among the villages, and was too tired to attend service that night. When Lin came home, after the worship in the church, his mother asked who led the service and who would preach on the morrow.

“It is Khiau, the preacher who has been so long at the stations up the country, and was at the Hakka station before Tek Ko went.”

“What! Khiau, my old friend whose wife died just before I came down here to be with our little one before the angels took her?”

“It was the same,” replied Lin. “He has been down to Ha Bun for some weeks, in the hospital. He was hurt by an accident, he told me, and went there to be healed. He is well now, and is to remain here until the preacher has recovered.”

“He down at Ha Bun for several weeks,” said Leng Tso, “and in the hospital! Was he sick? Who cared for him?”

“I do not think he was ill,” replied Lin. “He did not say what the accident was, but from what he said—we had only a few moments to speak—I think it was nothing very serious.”

“I am glad that he is well again,” said Leng Tso. “Will he preach to-morrow? How long did you say he will stay?”

“He will preach to-morrow, but how long he will stay I cannot tell. He may stay several weeks—at least, until the preacher here recovers.”

“Did he ask if I were here?” asked Leng Tso. “We, as you remember, lived, when children, in the village of Thau Pau, and were very warm friends.”

“He had only a few moments to speak,” answered Lin, “and perhaps he had not time to speak about you, for he did not ask. He may have forgotten that I was your son. He never knew me well, as we did not often meet, and I have not seen him for a long time until to-night. He appears much older and careworn.”

“No doubt of it, since the loss of his wife, for she was a good woman and thought very

much of him. He was worthy of her love, for he is a noble man."

Lin looked at the earnest face of his mother as she spoke so favorably of the preacher, but he said nothing in reply.

The next morning Khiau turned his eyes to the woman's part of the room as soon as he took his seat on the platform, and there sat his old friend Leng Tso. Their eyes met, but not a nod of recognition, not a sign, showed that they were old acquaintances. Each looked steadily in the face of the other, as if to study whether they were to meet as strangers, acquaintances or dear friends.

The gong sounded for service, and the preacher's thoughts were called back to his duty. During all the sermon his eyes were directed to the men in front, hardly a glance being given to the women. At the close of the service he was greeted by the men, and as he was about leaving the house the Bible-woman, who had waited for others to speak, addressed him. It was the old welcome of years ago that she gave, and in a moment all Khiau's misgivings were over. He needed no explanation, and asked for none. Her

greeting told him that, whatever he might be to her, she was the same warm-hearted friend she had ever been. It was no place to talk of the past, and no time to ask for or to receive explanations. As the two parted at the church door two light hearts were carried thence; each knew and trusted the other.

Khiau called to see his old friend the next day, and the whole story of the past was told. It was a long story that each had for the other's ear, and neither was in haste to close. Lin was at his business, his wife at her household duties, and the children were either at school or at play; so that the two old friends had time and opportunity to talk of the past without fear or limit. The reader can guess the result of that call, and will not be likely to guess wrong.

Khiau remained till Lin came from his business, and then the two men had a private talk. Later, Lin said to his mother,

“I am glad that you and the preacher have not waited for a long time of bargaining and to call in some middle-woman to make the agreement between you. But,

mother, you need not marry the preacher for the sake of a home in your old age : my home is yours, and all I have belongs to my mother. Yet I know that you often feel lonely, and I am glad that you and your old friend will be able to drive away each other's loneliness. I hope that when you are married you will not give up your work while able to continue it. We need more like you to teach the women."

"I will never give up my work," spoke Leng Tso, "until old age or death compels. Marrying the preacher will not hinder, but help, me in that work. I can teach the women in the places where he is stationed, and as he is not well enough trained to become a settled preacher, and certainly never can be a pastor, he will no doubt be sent from one place to another after a stay in each for some months. So I will be able to stay longer at a place, yet go from one to another, and perhaps do more good in that way than if settled at one station."

"Well, mother, marry the preacher, and go on with your work together as long as you are able. When too weak and feeble to

work, then come to my home, both of you, and share in all that your son has. Part of my work will be to take care of those teaching the truth, and it matters not whether I take care of those who are at work or who are resting after their work is done."

"It is settled about the marriage," said Leng Tso to her son one day, "and, as the preacher may soon be sent to some distant station, we think it best to have the wedding at once, that I may go with him. He has been so lonely while at those distant places, so I will go along to make it more pleasant for him."

"I am willing, as soon as both of you think best, to prepare the wedding-feast," replied Lin. "You need not wait until he comes back; I too think it well that you marry at once and go with him. Not that I wish my mother to leave my home, but I wish her to do as she thinks best."

"Make no wedding-feast," spoke the Bible-woman; "we are too old for a great wedding, and wish as little ceremony as possible. We wish to honor the Church and the preachers, so would like to be

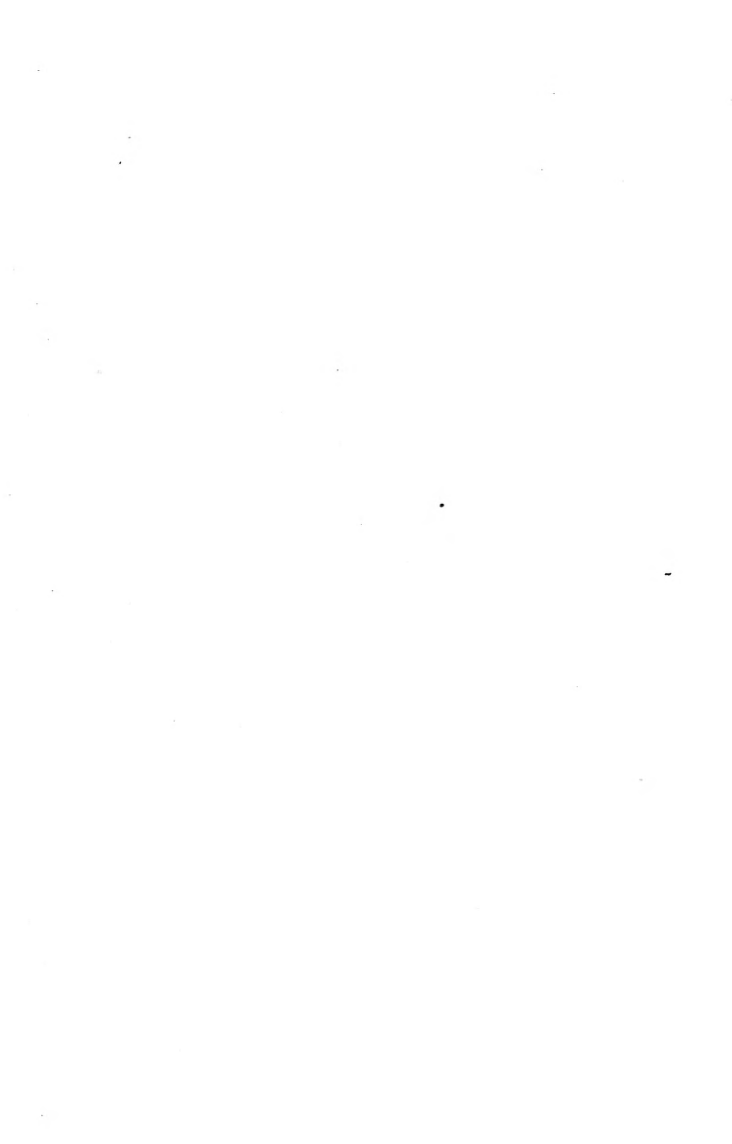
married in the church by one of the pastors, but more than that we do not wish. Make no feast and be at no expense; use the money for the Lord's work, rather."

Lin urged that he should have the privilege of providing a feast at his mother's wedding, thus showing that he cared for her and the man she had chosen. After continued persuasion he succeeded in convincing her that he should have his way, since she meant to have hers and take up her home away from under his roof.

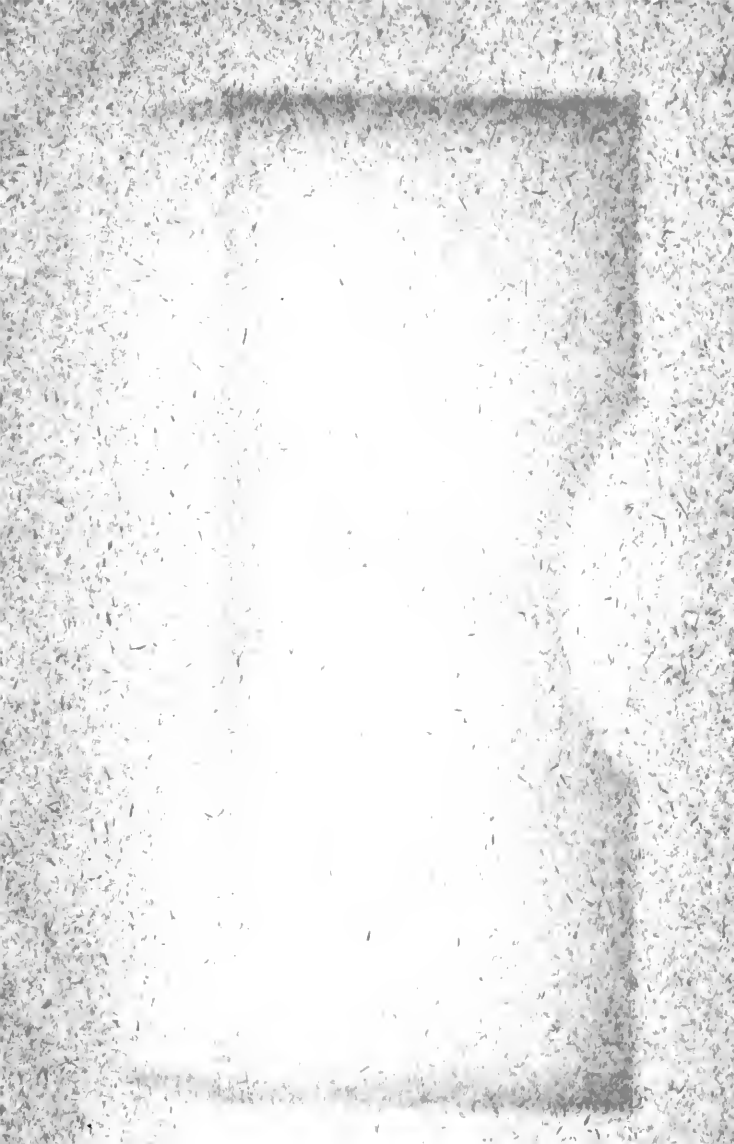
After the wedding the missionaries told Khiau that it was not fair to send a man to his field of work as soon as he was married, so he was allowed some weeks of vacation. Khiau deserved this vacation. He had been faithful to go and do as he was told, never asking for time to rest; and when the mission was in great need of men, none were more willing than the old preacher to take the most difficult and distant fields. When the vacation was over, the two started for their field of work; and there we leave Khiau and Leng Tso, united at last and happy in their work.

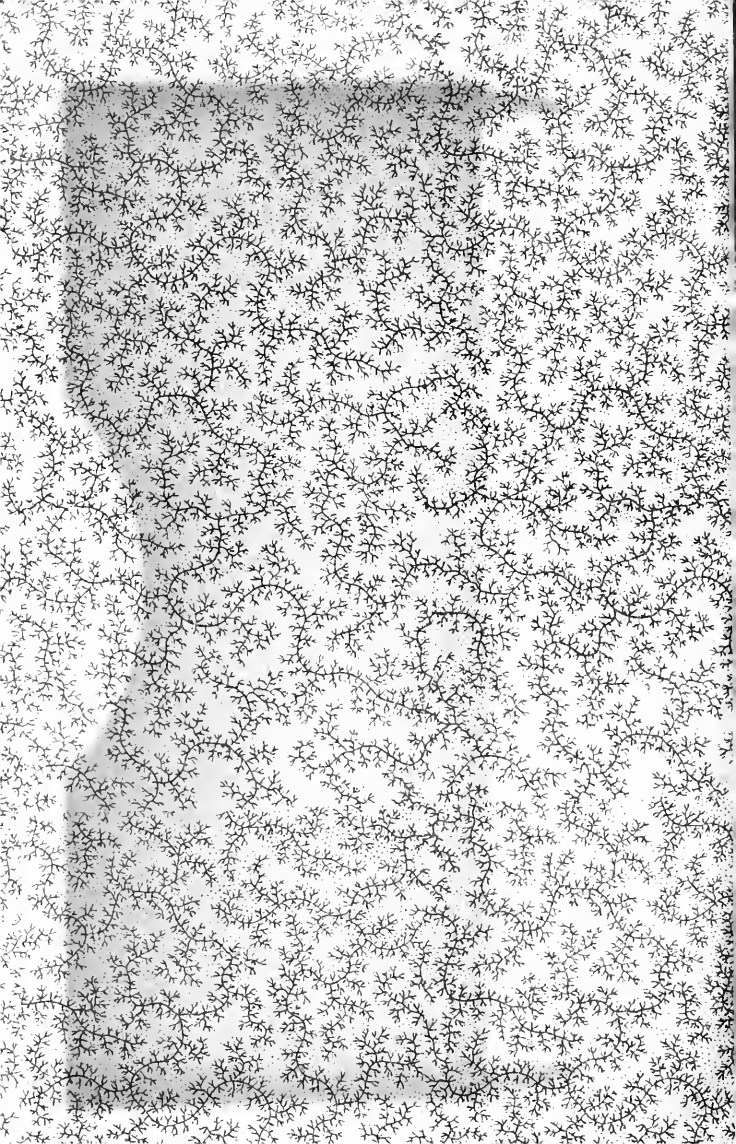
In that work of teaching the men—and the women—of China to trust in and love the true God and Jesus Christ, whom he has sent, there is need of many more men and women. Work for the women of China, reader—the women! Convert the women of that land, and all the missionaries may return home and the work be left to the native Christians there; but send out men alone to preach, and, though they be the means of converting every man in China, in half a century that nation, if the women remain idolaters, might again become a heathen people.

THE END.









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Title Leng Tsoi the Chinese Bible-woman

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